NTSB LATEST

Safety Recommendation
The National Transportation Safety Board made the following recommendations to the (US) Federal Aviation Administration on 2nd March: Perform a technical review of Airport Surface Detection Equipment-Model X to determine if the capability exists systemwide to detect improper operations such as landings on taxiways. (A-11-12)

At those installation sites where the technical review recommended in Safety Recommendation A-11-12 determines it is feasible, implement modifications to Airport Surface Detection Equipment-Model X to detect improper operations, such as landings on taxiways, and provide alerts to air traffic controllers that these potential collision risks exist. (A-11-13)

Amend Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order 7210.3, Facility Operation and Administration, to direct that, at airports with air traffic control towers equipped with airport lighting control panels that do not provide direct indication of airport lighting intensities, the air traffic manager annually reviews and compares, with the airport operator, the preset selection settings configured in the tower lighting control system to verify that they comply with FAA requirements. (A-11-14)

Revise Advisory Circular 150/5345-56A, Specification for L-890 Airport Lighting Control and Monitoring System (ALCMS) to state that airport operators should inform air traffic managers of variances for, or modifications to, airfield lighting preset standards prescribed in Federal Aviation Administration requirements. (A-11-15)

Advisory Notice
On 11th March the NTSB issued a Safety Alert to warn pilots of low-flying aircraft about the dangers associated with unmarked towers built to record weather observations.

The Meteorological Evaluation Towers (METs), many of which fall just below the 200-foot FAA threshold for obstruction markings, can be difficult to see from the air and can be a danger to aircraft conducting low-flight operations, including helicopter emergency services, law enforcement, fire suppression and other low-altitude activities.

Pilots have been urged to maintain vigilance during low-altitude flights and are asked to encourage the markings of METs in their area.
Since 2003 the NTSB has investigated three fatal accidents involving in-flight collisions with METs, including one in January this year.