NTSB SAFETY RECOMMENDATION

The National Transportation Safety Board announced on 24th March that it had made a recommendation to the Federal Aviation Administration to prohibit air traffic controllers from providing supervisory oversight while performing operational air traffic duties. In its letter, the NTSB reported that NTSB investigations of several events have found ATC staffing scenarios in which the supervisory function was being performed by a controller who was also performing operational duties. In many instances, a sufficient number of personnel were on duty at the time of the events such that another qualified controller could have been designated to supervise; however, ATC management’s decisions concerning staffing utilization resulted in a lack of distinct supervisory oversight, thus diminishing or eliminating the effectiveness of the supervisory role.