

Docket No. SA-539

Exhibit No. 1-U

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Washington, D.C.

BFA Response to NTSB Recommendations

(5 Pages)

Balloon Federation of America

An Air Sport Organization of the NAA

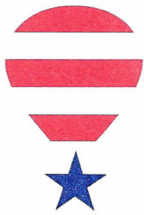
P.O. Box 400
Indianola, Iowa 50125-0400

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4-19-14

Deborah A.P. Hersman
Chairman
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, DC

Chairman Hersman,

This letter is in response to NTSB recommendation A-14-011 & -012.

I have included the Balloon Federation of America's official response to the recommendation from the NTSB and in the response you will read why the BFA is opposed to the type of regulation suggested.

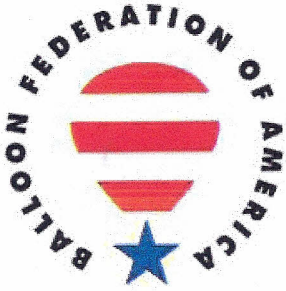
The Balloon Federation of America has been and will constantly be focused on the safe operation of all types and categories of balloons. The BFA is willing to have an open discussion with the FAA and NTSB concerning recommendation A-14-011 & -012 and would ask to be included in any further discussions regarding regulation and rule making.

Feel free to contact me regarding this issue or anything Ballooning related.

Respectfully,



Sam Parks
President
Balloon Federation of America



April 13, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information:

Sam Parks, President, BFA

[REDACTED]

Scott Appelman, Chairman, BFA BROD

[REDACTED]

BFA CAUTIONS NTSB RECOMMENDATIONS ARE UNNECESSARY AND BURDENSOME; OFFERS PARTNERSHIP WITH NTSB/FAA TO IMPROVE TOUR RIDE OPERATOR SAFETY

The NTSB's recent recommendation to the FAA that balloon tour ride operators be required to obtain a Letter of Authorization (LOA) will not improve safety, will prove burdensome to both the industry and the FAA, and is unnecessary given the BFA's recent initiatives in this arena and its ongoing safety education programs.

Recognizing the continued growth in the balloon ride industry in the USA and around the world, the Balloon Federation of America has, within the past year, established a new Balloon Ride Operators Division. This division seeks to represent tour ride operators, large and small. The division's many goals, already in development, include recommended safe operating guidelines and improved consumer education. While the division is still in its formative stages, the initial response from operators has been welcoming and membership is growing.

The BFA has long held that safety education and training is a constant priority not just for tour ride operators but also for all balloon pilots and crew. For more than 30 years the BFA has, in conjunction with the sport's insurance providers and regional balloon clubs throughout the country, encouraged its members to participate in annual BFA approved safety seminars as a means of obtaining recurrent safety/education training. To date, in 2014, some 23 such seminars have been conducted with more than 1,700 balloonists participating. These seminars also serve to qualify balloon pilots for the FAA's widely acclaimed WINGS safety program.

In contrast to these efforts, the NTSB's recommendation will not enhance safety, but will add another layer of unnecessary federal oversight to an already challenged FAA. Such a regulation would prove burdensome to the tour flight business owners and their pilots in both time and money to comply with the regulation. It would

likewise stretch the FAA's already thin resources of inspectors required to initially implement the program and then oversee its ongoing compliance and enforcement. Additionally such a regulation could require significant financial expenditure and investment of FAA personnel resources for the education and training of its inspector ranks, many of whom lack an extensive knowledge base of hot air ballooning and the unique business of balloon sight-seeing tour flights.

The Balloon Federation of America commends the NTSB for its desire to address and improve the safety of the sport. However, the accidents cited by the NTSB were the result of human factors and this recommendation does not address this causal link and therefore will not enhance safety. The BFA, and its Balloon Ride Operators Division, stands ready to work in partnership with the NTSB and the FAA to develop and implement qualitative programs that will achieve enhanced safety for balloon pilots, crew, and the flying public without adding unnecessary and burdensome regulation.

The Balloon Federation of America is the national aero club for hot air and gas balloonists throughout the USA and is a member organization of the National Aeronautic Association and the Federation Aeronautique Internationale.

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From: Sam Parks [REDACTED] >
Sent: Tuesday, April 29, 2014 10:18 PM
To: Correspondence
Subject: response to A-14-011 & -012
Attachments: Letter to NTSB.pdf

Please find attached a letter in response to NTSB recommendation A-14-011 & -012

Sam Parks
President
Balloon Federation of America