



**National Transportation
Safety Board**

Memorandum

DATE: 04/21/2011

FROM: Todd Gunther, Operations Group Chairman, CEN09MA142

SUBJECT: FAA Response to Training Program and Manual Discrepancies

During this investigation Empire Airlines personnel indicated that, during basic indoctrination training, pilots reviewed the ADP, FAA's meteorology handbook, and icing videos. Empire Airlines personnel also indicated that, during training at FlightSafety, pilots reviewed the ATR *Cold Weather Operations* publication and reviewed meteorological conditions likely to cause freezing drizzle and freezing rain. However, Empire Airlines' Flight Training Manual (FTM) included a document that indicated that Empire Airlines (not FlightSafety) was required to provide the required meteorology training, including the ATR publication, as part of the meteorology module.

Interviews with FlightSafety instructors revealed that they were not providing or using the publication during training. The flight crew did not recall receiving this document.

Review of the FTM also revealed that the "ATR42/72 Flight Profiles and Briefings" section, which addressed stall recovery procedures did not agree with the manufacturers published procedures.

Although Empire Airlines implemented special emphasis icing training for all ATR pilots after the accident, the NTSB was concerned that the FAA did not detect this training program discrepancy before the accident and that the manufacturer's stall recovery procedures were not being used.

When asked by NTSB investigators how they conducted oversight of the operator, Spokane FSDO personnel advised that they managed their oversight of Empire Airlines through the FAA's ATOS program. A review of the ATOS program table, "System/Subsystem/Element Chart—Operations and Cabin Safety Elements," revealed that, as part of the program, the FAA was required to provide oversight of an airline's FTM content and flight crewmember training. However, the inspectors did not detect that Empire Airlines was not providing the required meteorology training, including the ATR publication, as part of the meteorology training module.

NTSB investigators then queried the FAA to ascertain if this was an isolated incident or if this was a systemic problem. As a result, FAA contacted the certificate management offices of other ATR operators and determined that this was an oversight problem in the inspection process at Empire Airlines and not a systemic issue with ATOS. Additionally they took corrective action to assure that changes to Empire Airlines FTM were initiated to include the airplane manufacturer's

stall procedures and to assure that the required meteorological training was being conducted by the operator.