



# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

## Safety Recommendation

---

**Date:** July 29, 2015

**In reply refer to:** A-15-13 through -18

The Honorable Michael P. Huerta  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Washington, DC 20590

---

On July 14, 2015, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) adopted its report concerning the April 29, 2013, accident in which a Boeing 747-400 BCF, N949CA, operated by National Air Cargo, Inc., dba National Airlines, crashed shortly after takeoff from Bagram Air Base, Bagram, Afghanistan. All seven crewmembers died, and the airplane was destroyed from impact forces and postcrash fire.<sup>1</sup> Additional information about this accident and the resulting recommendations may be found in the report of the investigation, which can be accessed at our website, <http://www.nts.gov>, under report number AAR-15/01.

As a result of this investigation, we issued the following six new recommendations to the Federal Aviation Administration:

### A-15-13

Revise the guidance material in Advisory Circular (AC) 120-85, "Air Cargo Operations," chapter 201(a)(4), to specify that an operator should seek Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)-approved data for any planned method for restraining a special cargo load for which approved procedures do not already exist, and remove the language in the AC that states that procedures other than those based on FAA-approved data can be used.

### A-15-14

Create a certification for personnel responsible for the loading, restraint, and documentation of special cargo loads on transport-category airplanes, and ensure that the certification includes procedures; training; and duty hour limitations and rest requirements consistent with other safety-sensitive, certificated positions.

---

<sup>1</sup> National Transportation Safety Board, *Steep Climb and Uncontrolled Descent During Takeoff National Air Cargo, Inc., dba National Airlines, Boeing 747 400 BCF, N949CA, Bagram, Afghanistan, April 29, 2013*. AAR-15/01 (Washington, DC: National Transportation Safety Board, 2015).

A-15-15

Add a special emphasis item to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order 1800.56O, “National Flight Standards Work Program Guidelines,” for inspectors of 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 121 cargo operators to review their manuals to ensure that the procedures, documents, and support in the areas of cargo loading, cargo restraint, and methods for securing cargo on transport-category airplanes are based on relevant FAA-approved data, with particular emphasis on restraint procedures for special cargo that is unable to be loaded via unit loading devices or bulk compartments.

A-15-16

Include specific guidance in the Federal Aviation Administration inspector handbook that defines responsibilities for principal inspectors for the oversight of an operator’s loading, restraint, and documentation of special cargo loads.

A-15-17

Provide initial and recurrent training for all principal inspectors who have oversight responsibilities for air carrier cargo handling operations that specifically addresses operator cargo procedures, documents, restraint, and support for technical decisions related to special cargo loads.

A-15-18

Implement temporary risk-reduction methods any time that required surveillance items for 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 121 and 135 operators are deferred, and establish appropriate limitations on surveillance deferrals.

Chairman HART, Vice Chairman DINH-ZARR, and Members SUMWALT and WEENER concurred in these recommendations.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate receiving a response from you within 90 days, as required by 49 *United States Code* section 1135, detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement them. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendations by number and submit your response electronically to [correspondence@ntsb.gov](mailto:correspondence@ntsb.gov).

[Original Signed]

By: Christopher A. Hart,  
Chairman