



About the NTSB

The NTSB is an **independent federal agency** charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant events in the other modes of transportation – railroad, transit, highway, marine, pipeline, and commercial space. **We determine the probable causes of the accidents that we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future occurrences.** In addition, we conduct transportation safety research studies and offer information and other assistance to family members and survivors for each accident or event we investigate

Our mission

Making transportation safer.

We carry out our mission by–

- » Maintaining our congressionally mandated independence.
- » Conducting objective, thorough investigations and safety studies.
- » Performing fair and objective pilot and mariner certification appeals.
- » Advocating for implementation of safety recommendations.
- » **Assisting victims and survivors of transportation accidents and their families.**

About the Transportation Disaster Assistance Division

What we do

The TDA Division is responsible for managing the NTSB's family assistance program.

- » **Provide information and support:** TDA specialists serve as the primary source of NTSB investigative information to survivors, families, and loved ones. We also coordinate access to support services and information available from other organizations.
- » **Coordinate resources:** TDA works with local, state, tribal, and federal agencies, as well as nongovernmental organizations, to support effective family assistance operations that address the fundamental concerns of survivors and families after transportation accidents.
- » **Investigative support:** TDA directly supports NTSB investigations by interfacing with survivors, family members, public safety agencies, medicolegal authorities, and healthcare systems for the collection and receipt of investigative evidence and information.
- » **Training and preparedness:** TDA offers training workshops, information, and resources to help agencies prepare for and respond to the fundamental concerns of survivors and family members after an accident occurs.

Our mandates

Air carrier accidents

- » [49 USC § 1136: NTSB & the Designated Organization](#)
- » [49 USC § 41113: U.S. Air Carriers](#)
- » [49 USC § 41313: Foreign Air Carriers](#)

Rail passenger accidents

- » [49 USC § 1139: NTSB & the Designated Organization](#)
- » [49 USC § 24316: Amtrak & High-Speed Rail Passenger Carrier Responsibilities](#)

All other NTSB investigations

- » [49 USC § 1140: Info for Families of Individuals Involved in Accidents](#)

The pillars of family assistance operations

A comprehensive family assistance response is designed to address the fundamental concerns of survivors and families. Although each accident or event presents unique complexities, the **four fundamental concerns** remain consistent and transcend any population. These concerns should be addressed in planning and preparedness efforts by agencies and organizations that have a role or responsibility in response.

Notification of involvement – *Was my loved one involved?*

- » Initial notification to family of their loved one's involvement
- » Immediate and factual information about the accident

Victim accounting – *Where is my loved one?*

- » Search and rescue efforts
- » Tracking of the uninjured, and injured transported to hospitals
- » Search and recovery of fatalities
- » Victim examination, identification, and repatriation process

Information and resources – *Where can I get help?*

- » Basic needs, financial, and logistic support
- » Emotional, psychological, and spiritual care
- » Investigative updates

Personal effects – *Where are my loved one's belongings?*

- » Recovery, processing, and return of associated and unassociated personal items

Why we collaborate

No single agency or organization can effectively address **all** the fundamental concerns **alone**. Meeting these concerns requires close collaboration amongst the entire response community. During planning and preparedness efforts, TDA can support agencies to plan for and implement an effective family assistance operation. However, a comprehensive family assistance response requires **collaboration and coordination among all those involved in supporting survivors and families** when tragedy occurs.