

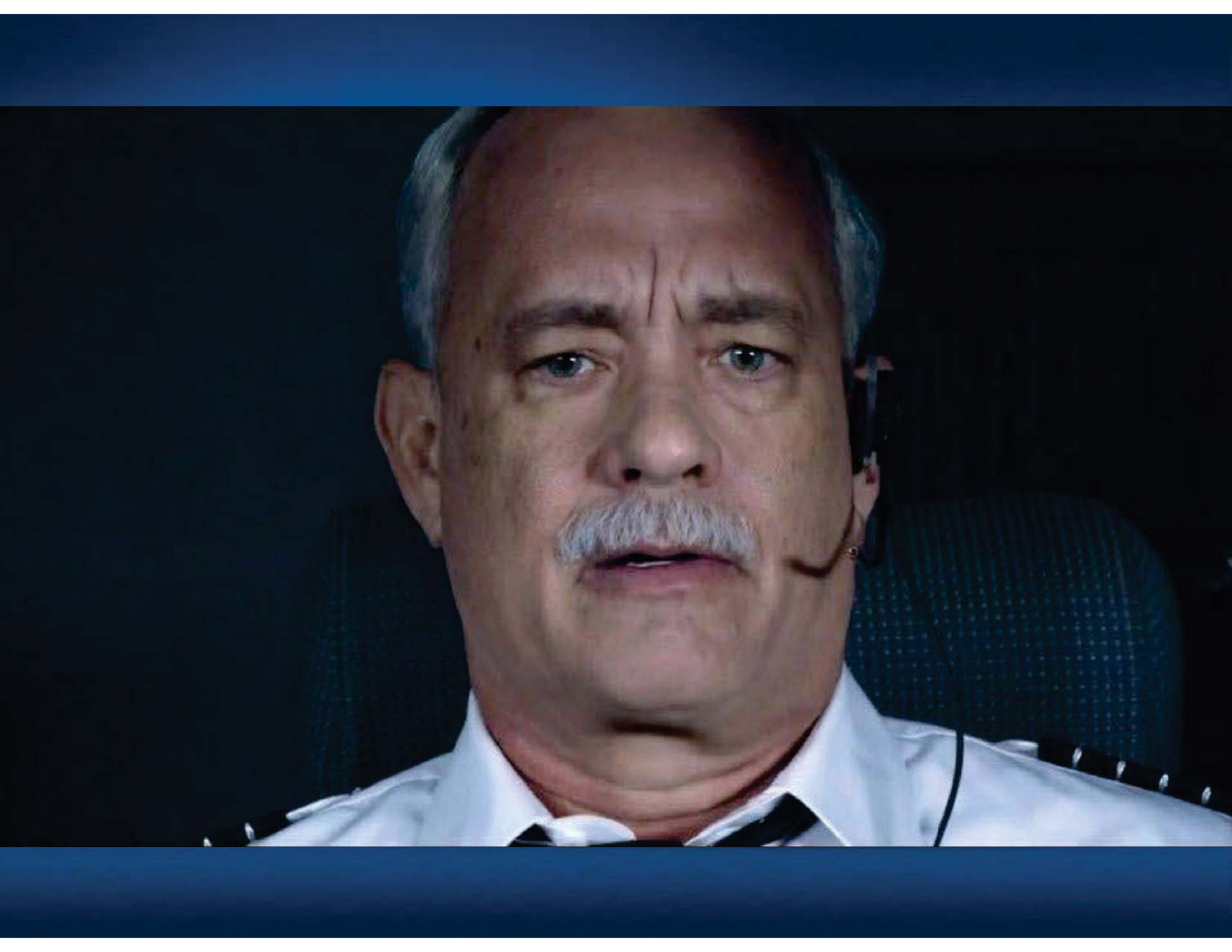


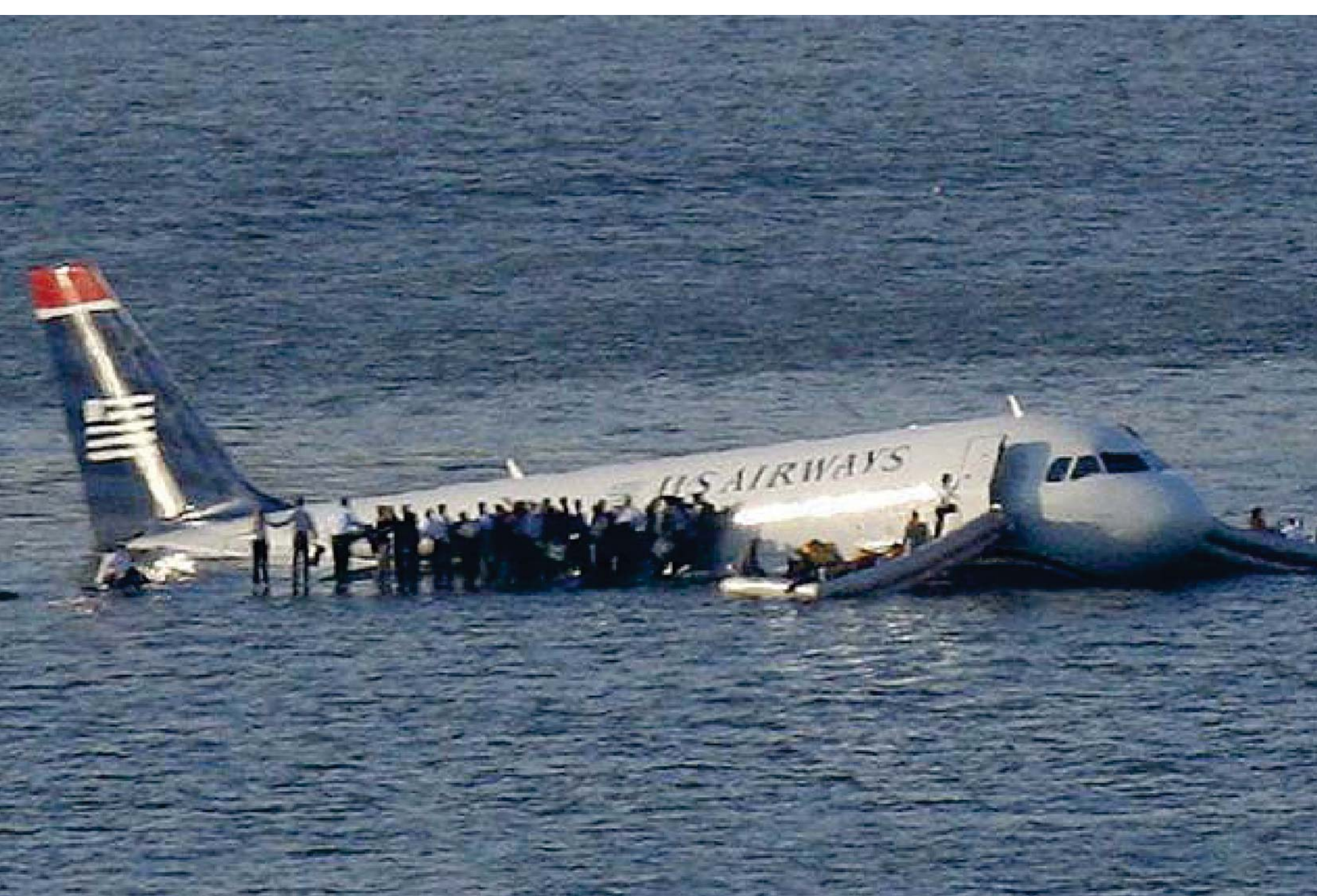
National Transportation Safety Board

Managing Communications Following a Major Highway Accident

Southeastern States Pupil Transportation Summer Conference
Ashville, North Carolina
July 24, 2017

Peter C. Knudson
NTSB Media Relations









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National Transportation Safety Board

Office of Research and Engineering

Flight Path

Ditching of U.S. Airways
Flight 1549, Airbus A320, N106US,
in the Hudson River

Weehawken, New Jersey
January 15, 2009
DCA09MA026



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Overview

- Accident Investigation Process
- Media Relations/Communications
- Communications Lanes
- Take aways
- Q&A







NTSB Headquarters Washington, DC



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Making transportation safer by:

INVESTIGATING

+

RECOMMENDING

+

ADVOCATING

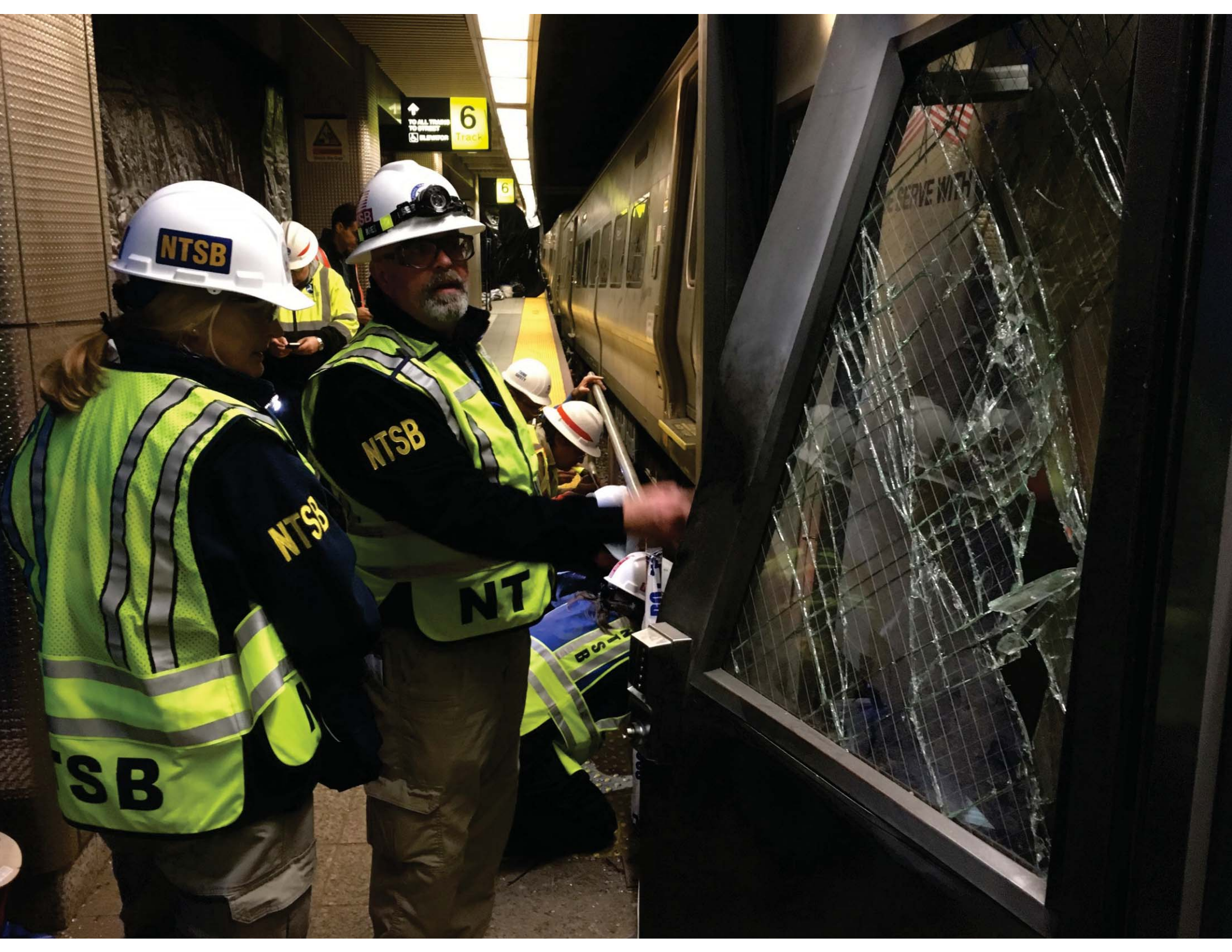


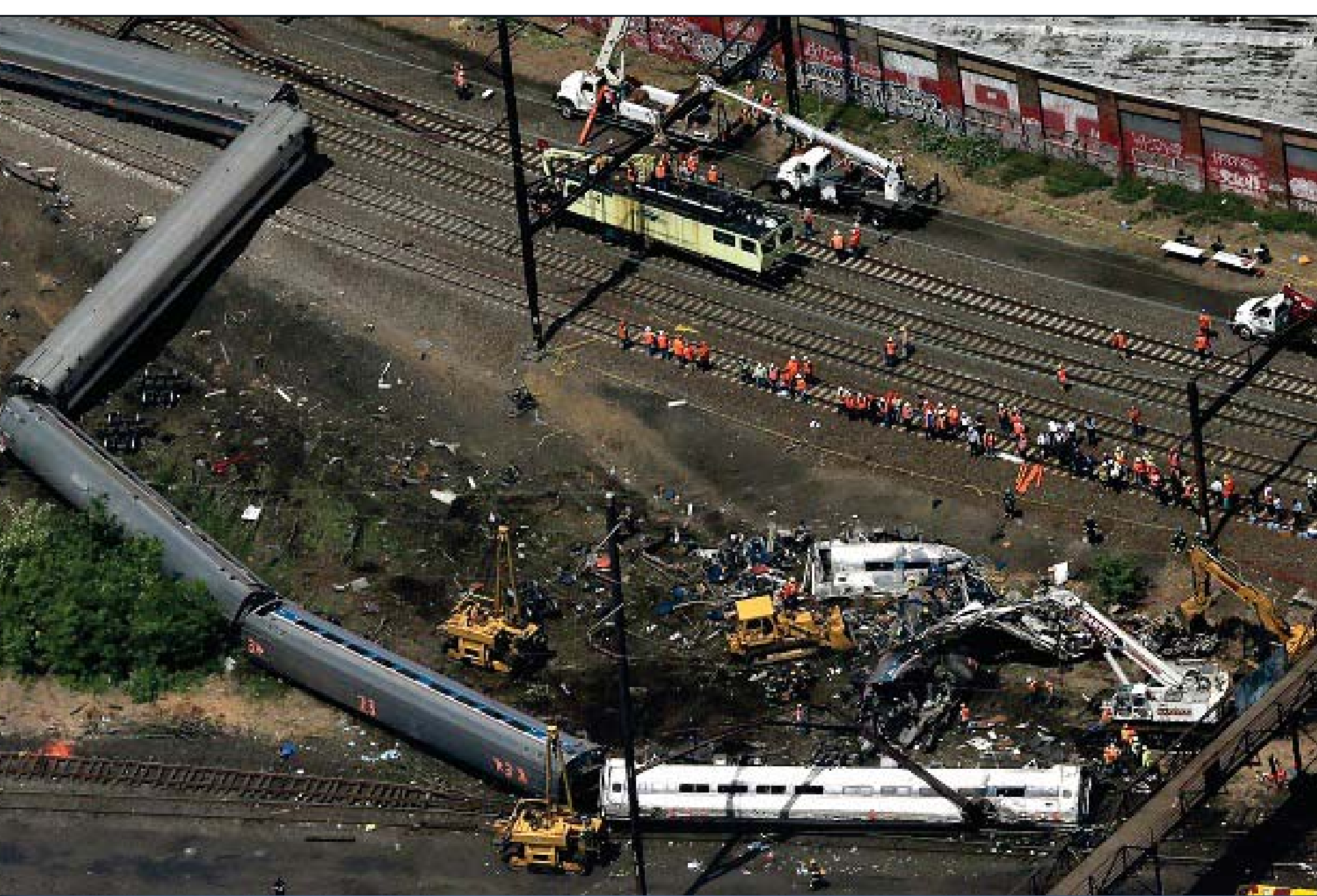
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INVESTIGATE...

- Every civil aviation accident in the U.S. (about 1,300 per year)
- Significant accidents in highway, rail, marine and pipeline
- In highway, that's about a 15-20 out of 10 million annually







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EL FARO
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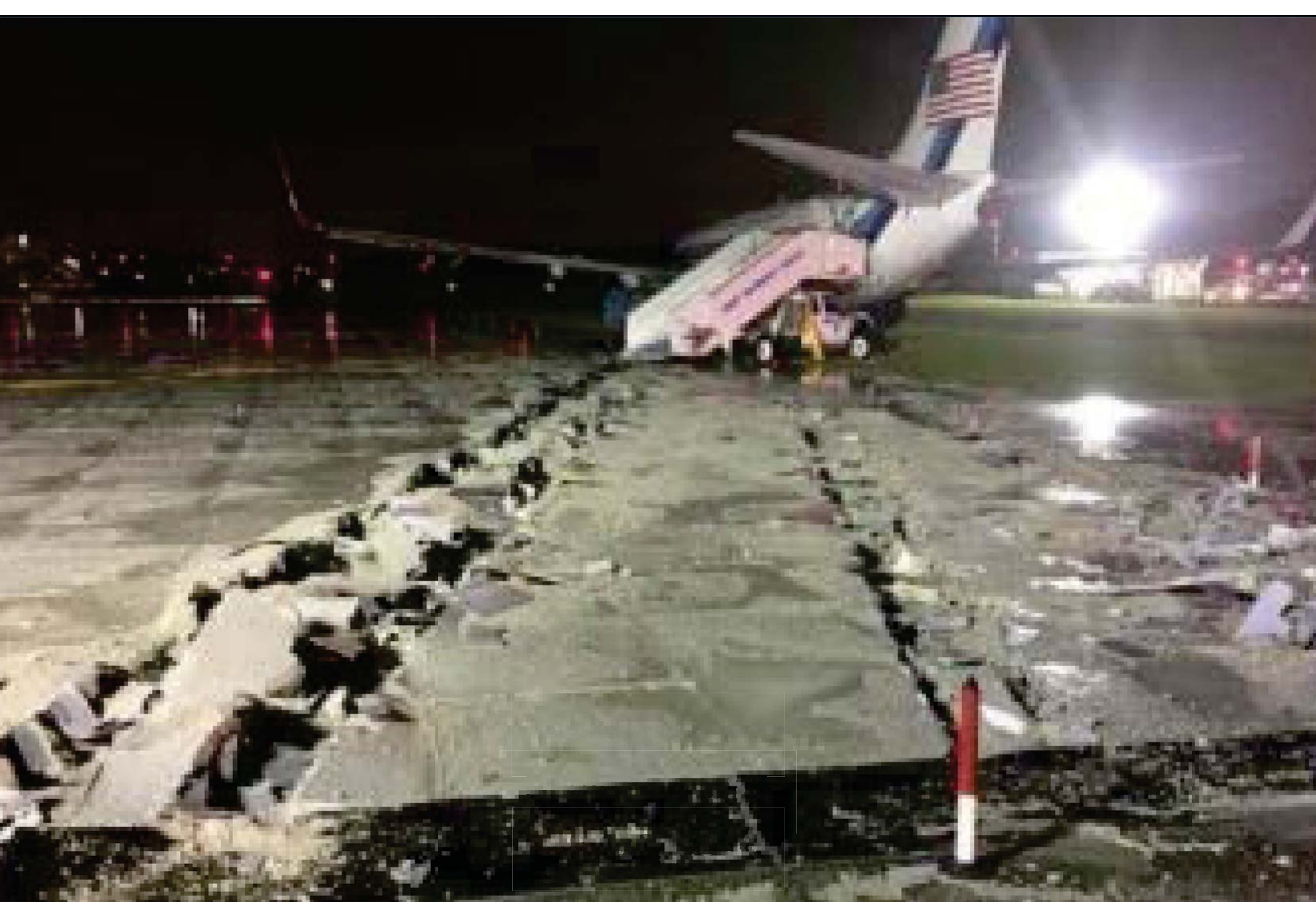
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Gray Summit, MO (August 5, 2010)



2 fatalities, 35 injuries



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Chesterfield, NJ (February 16, 2012)



1 fatality, 15 injuries



NTSB

Anaheim, CA (April 24, 2014)



10 injuries



NTSB

Knoxville, TN (December 2, 2014)



3 fatalities, 22 injuries



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Houston, TX (September 15, 2015)



2 fatalities, 3 injuries



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Baltimore, MD (November 1, 2016)



6 fatalities, 10 injuries



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Chattanooga, TN (November 21, 2016)



6 fatalities, 31 injuries



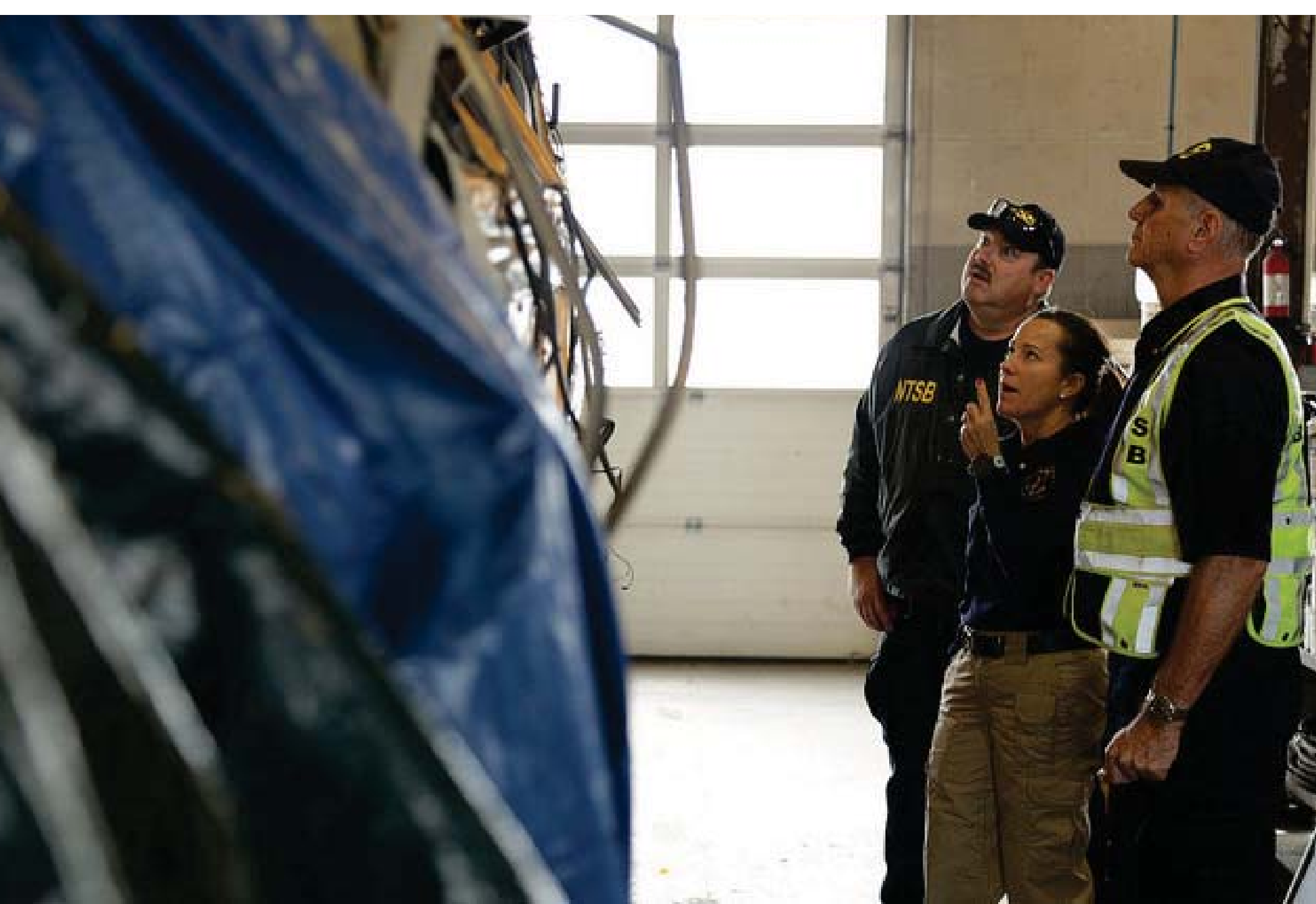
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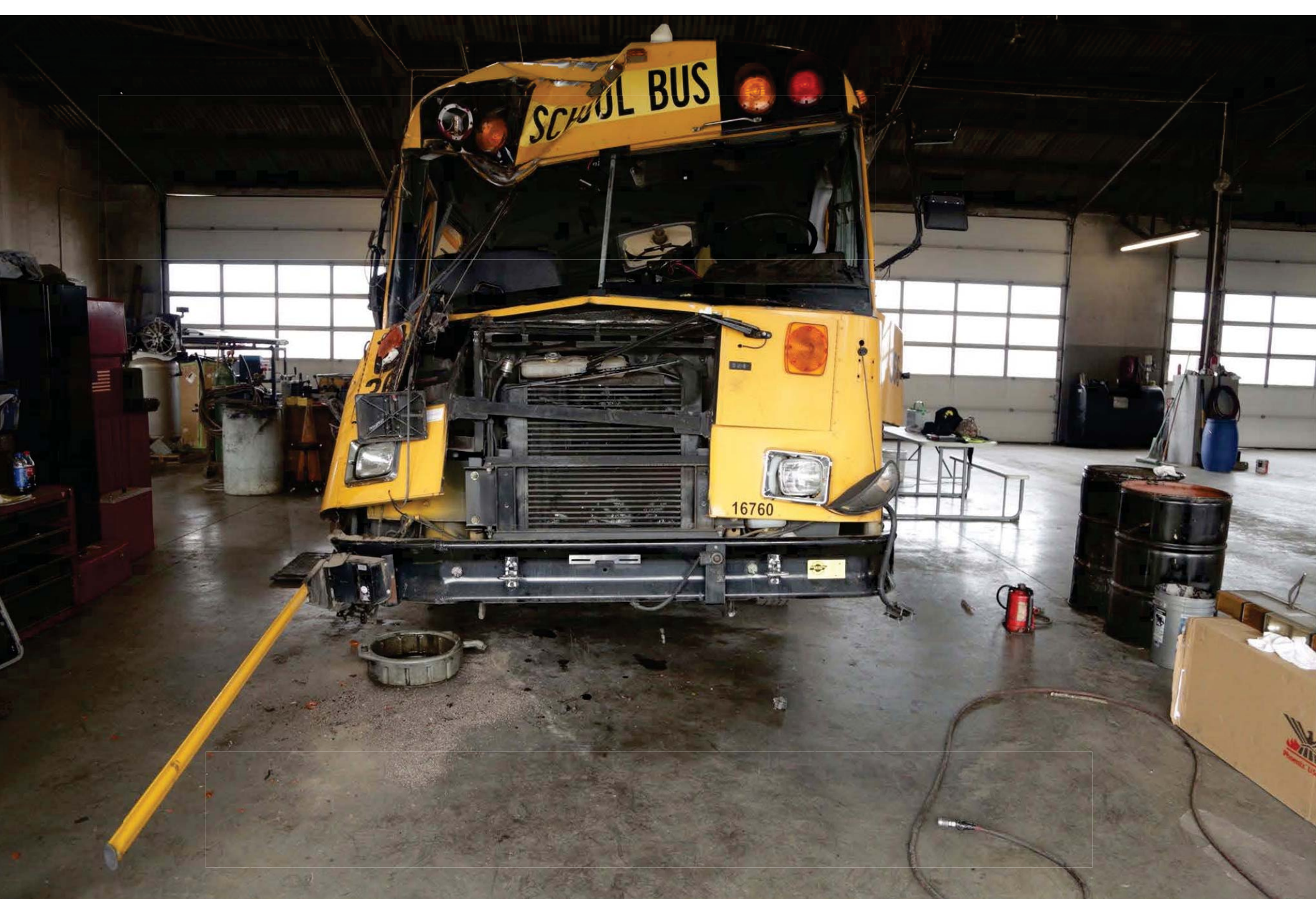
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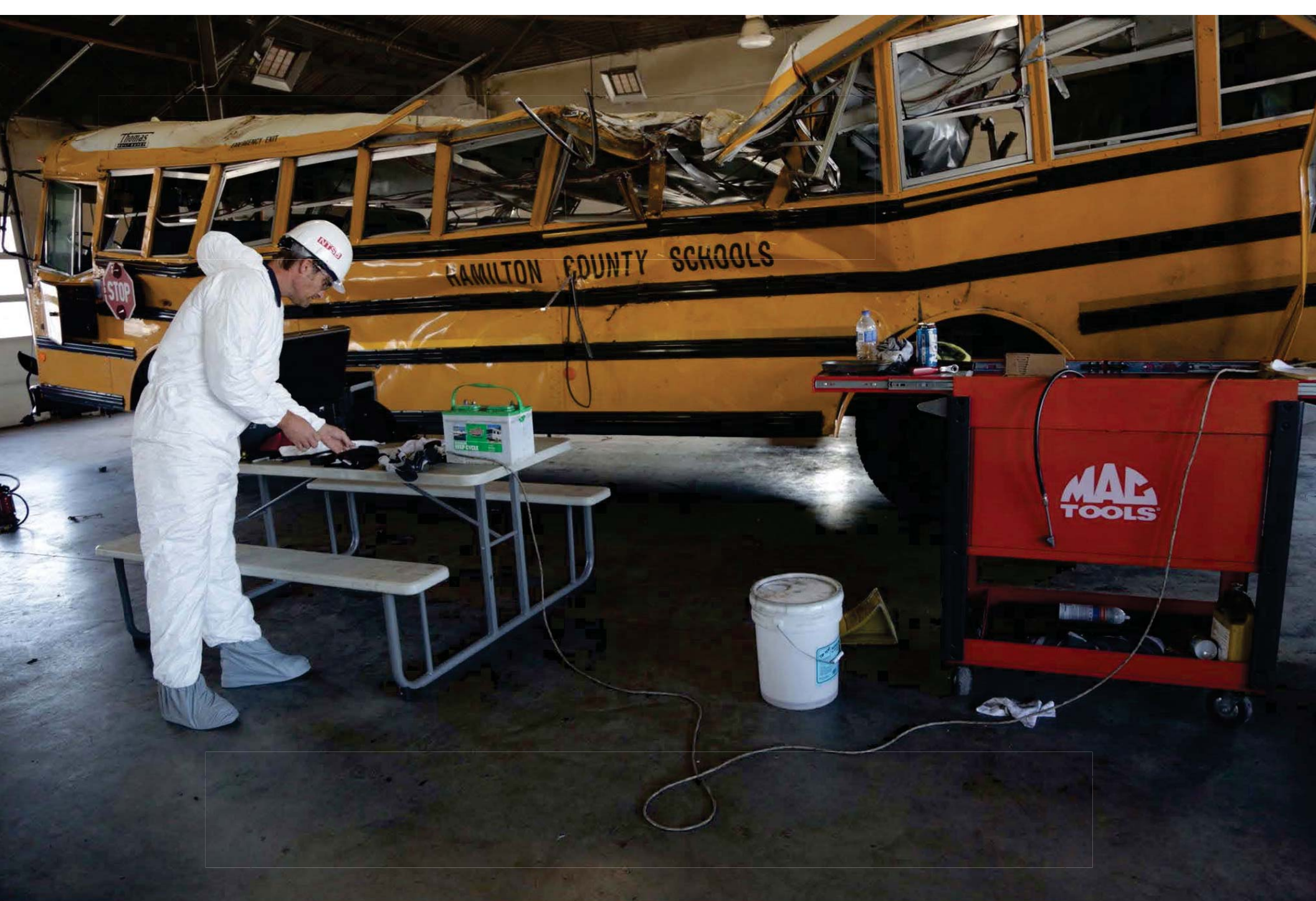
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School bus accident in Chattanooga, TN



Accident No: HWY17MH009
Accident Type: Office of Highway Safety
Location: Chattanooga, TN
Date: 11/21/2016

NTSB launched a Go Team to investigate the November 21, 2016 school bus crash in Chattanooga, TN.

[Photos on Flickr](#)

Resources:

[NTSB School Bus Safety](#)

Related Recommendations

Related Press Releases

- December 01, 2016
[Chattanooga School Bus Crash Investigation Update](#)

Related Reports

- [HWY17MH009_prelim](#)

More NTSB Links

- [Investigation Process](#)
- [Data & Stats](#)
- [Accident Reports](#)
- [Most Wanted List](#)

Related Media



Contact: NTSB Media Relations
Christopher O'Neil
(202) 314-6133
christopher.oneil@ntsb.gov



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Single most important tip to
managing communications
following an accident the
NTSB is investigating follows:



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Media Relations

ON-SCENE INFO FLOW FROM NTSB

- Investigative briefings to the news media
- Social media
- Photo opportunities
- One-on-one interviews (local and national)



Social Media



A screenshot of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) website. The header includes the NTSB logo, the text "NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD", a search bar, and navigation links: HOME, NEWS & EVENTS, SAFETY ADVOCACY, INVESTIGATIONS, DISASTER ASSISTANCE, LEGAL, ABOUT, and PUBLICATIONS. The main content area features a "NTSB News" section with a photo of investigators and a headline about Board Member Earl Weener. Below this is a "Training Center" link. The "NTSB Response Operations Center" section provides contact information and links to "Other Ways to Contact NTSB". A "Latest Report" section lists recent reports. A "Safety Compass Blog" section is also visible. On the right, a "Tweets" section shows a tweet from @NTSB about parasailing safety rules, and a tweet from @alexandrepera thanking the NTSB. A red circle highlights the "Tweets" section.



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@ntsb (Advocacy)

@ntsb_newsroom (Accident info
reports, briefings, updates)



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@NTSB_Newsroom Tweets

There have been no fatal crashes on Talley Road in the vicinity of the crash site within the past three years #chattanoogaabuscrash

School bus was not equipped w/seatbelts, but cameras were on board that could assist w/investigation. #chattanoogaabuscrash

3 cameras mounted on the bus – one facing back, one facing forward, and one facing boarding door. #chattanoogaabuscrash



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@NTSB_Newsroom Tweets

Videos have been downloaded & are being reviewed, download appears to be incomplete
#chattanoogaabuscrash

.@Chattanooga PD report that post-crash toxicology of the driver was negative for alcohol and commonly tested drugs.
#chattanoogaabuscrash



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Images



Uncontrolled/early access images

Images

IMAGE CLEARANCE PROCESS

1. Images of investigative activity are taken by staff from NTSB Public Affairs
2. Photos are submitted to investigator-in-charge for review.
3. IIC-approved photos are then reviewed by TDA.
4. Only those photos approved by both IIC and TDA are released.



One-on-One Interviews



One-on-One Interviews





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Just the
facts,
ma'am.



AP



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Factual Information

NTSB MIGHT RELEASE

- Contents of interviews
- Information from FDR/CVR
- Measurements and specific times of accident events
- Other findings on-scene



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Accuracy of Information



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**STAY IN
YOUR LANE**

CAUTION



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Staying in Your Lane

PARTIES ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED FROM...

- Releasing accident-related information to the news media.
- Commenting on or analyzing NTSB findings prior to the conclusion of the Board meeting to determine the probable cause of the accident.



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Staying in Your Lane

From Section VIII on Page 5 of the
Party Agreement:

Party participants or their respective organizations must refrain from providing opinions or analysis of the accident outside of the participants in the investigation. Failure to abide by these requirements may lead to removal of a party from the investigation.



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Lane Departures May Have Serious Consequences

[Home](#) > [News & Events](#) > [Press Releases](#)

SHARE   

NTSB Press Release

National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Public Affairs

NTSB Revokes Party Status of a Union and an Airline for Violating Agreements

August 25

The National Transportation Safety Board has revoked the party status of both the Independent Pilots Association and UPS Airlines from its ongoing investigation of UPS Flight 1354, an A300-600 air cargo flight that crashed on approach to Birmingham, Ala., last August.

The NTSB took the action after IPA and UPS violated the terms of the party agreement that each had signed at the start of the investigation. In letters to each organization, the NTSB wrote that both IPA and UPS took actions prejudicial to the investigation by publicly commenting on and providing their own analysis of the investigation prior to the NTSB's public meeting to determine the probable cause of the accident.

"NTSB investigations depend heavily upon technical input from the accident parties," said Acting Chairman Christopher A. Hart. "If one party disseminates information about the accident, it may reflect that party's bias. This puts the other parties at a disadvantage and makes them less willing to engage in the process, which can undercut the entire investigation."

Without first consulting with the NTSB, the IPA issued a press release on August 13 providing its own analysis of the accident, "UPS Pilots Call for End of Part 117 Carve-Out on Anniversary of Fatigue Crash," which is explicitly prohibited in the party agreement. UPS, also without first consulting with the NTSB, posted comments on a website responding to the IPA press release in which it also provided its own analysis.

"It doesn't matter who started it," said Hart. "Neither action is acceptable."



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Staying in Your Lane - Operators

- If fatal accident, condolences and arrangements for survivors and family members
- Accommodations made for affected customers
- How the operator is working with the NTSB (number of staff assigned, etc.)
- Accident/incident effect on operations
- Statistics and public information about the operator



Staying in Your Lane - Operators

- Actions the operator is taking to address any safety issues identified post-accident/incident (use caution here: be sure to clear all investigation related information with NTSB)
- General information about safety protocols and processes
- Passenger list (coordinate with NTSB)



Staying in Lane - Manufacturers

- How many vehicles have been manufactured
- How many vehicles are currently in service and hours/cycles operated
- How many major accidents the vehicles have been involved in worldwide
- General description of equipment and its functions
- How many company investigators are assigned to work with the NTSB



Staying in Lane – 1st Responders

- General description of accident and emergency response – who, what, where and when
- How many vehicles were dispatched
- What organizations participated in response
- How many transported to hospitals, number of fatalities
- Impacts and next steps in response activities



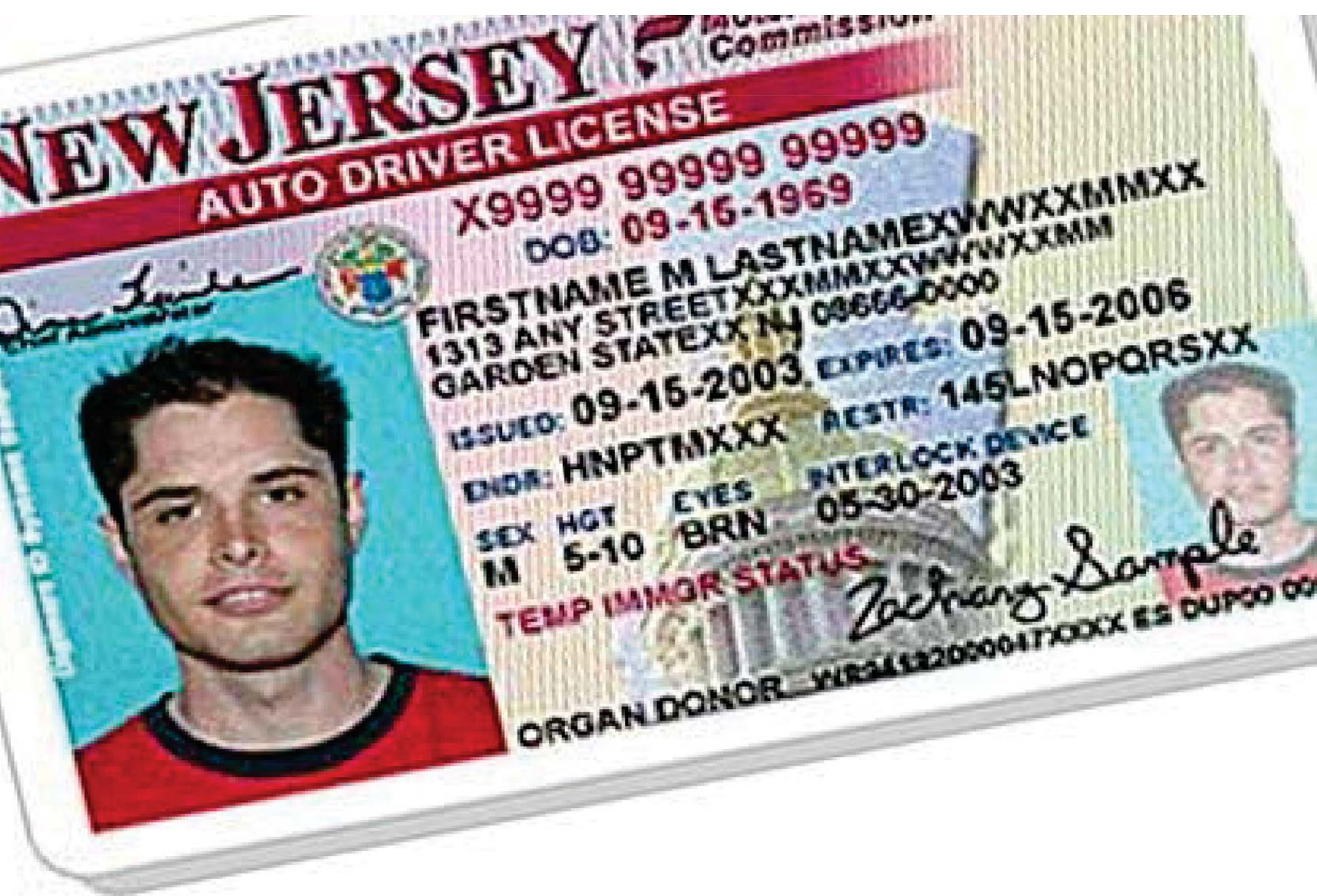
Press Releases

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On-scene Investigation

Organizational Meeting
Groups and Parties
Progress meetings
Family Briefings
Media Briefings
Press Releases



Preliminary report

Factual information



Public Hearing

Fact finding
Depositions
Witnesses
Docket



Board Meeting

Docket
Findings
Conclusions
Probable Cause
Safety Recommendations



Final Report

Investigation timeline: 12-18 months total



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NTSB Media Relations can be a very valuable resource to organizations involved in an NTSB accident investigation.



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Take-Aways

- Have a comms response plan and practice it
- Know your roles – and select the most effective communicator
- Have templates and pre-approved statements for traditional and social media



Take-Aways

- Take advantage of the resource that NTSB Media Relations can offer your organization
- Stay inside your lane
- Ask us if you are at all unsure



Resources

One-Day Course at Your Organization

American Airlines

Bombardier Aerospace

Boston Logan International Airport

Cathay Pacific Airlines

Chattanooga Metropolitan Airport

County of San Mateo, Calif.

Delta Air Lines

Denver International Airport

Embraer Commercial Airplanes

John Wayne Orange County (Calif.) Airport

Pratt & Whitney

http://www.nts.gov/Training_Center/Pages/TrainingCenter.aspx



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Contact Information

Peter Knudson peter.knudson@ntsb.gov
+1-202-314-6219 (email for post-accident
communications guidance document)

NTSB Media Relations: +1-202-314-6100

NTSB Main Number: +1-202-314-6000

24-hour Communications Center
+1-202-314-6290 (for emergencies)



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