



Office of the Chairman

# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

April 25, 2016

Mr. Rol Murrow  
President  
Air Care Alliance  
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Dear Mr. Murrow:

Thank you for your February 26, 2016, letter to the National Transportation Safety Board regarding Safety Recommendations A-10-102 through -104. We issued these recommendations to the Air Care Alliance (ACA) on June 9, 2010, as a result of our investigations of four accidents that killed eight people and seriously injured two others between September 26, 2007, and August 12, 2008; each accident involved flights providing charitable medical transportation.

## A-10-102

Require voluntary pilot organizations [VPO] to verify pilot currency before every flight.

Because your organization does not have any regulatory authority, we have previously indicated that your efforts urging that every VPO institute procedures to reinforce requirements for pilot currency under Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations, and to verify pilot currency by, at a minimum, requiring written or electronic self-certification by the pilot in command before every flight constituted an acceptable alternate response to the recommended action of requiring these actions. Your letter states that VPOs' reporting compliance showed that they require, and are able to depend on, pilots' self-certification regarding qualifications and currency, and that the requirements of many VPOs are higher than the FAA's minimum experience requirements. Consequently, Safety Recommendation A-10-102 is classified "Closed—Acceptable Alternate Action."

## A-10-103

Require that voluntary pilot organizations inform passengers, at the time of inquiry about a flight, that the charitable medical flight would not be conducted under the same standards that apply to a commercial flight (such as under [Title] 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 121 or Part 135).

As with Safety Recommendation A-10-102, we have previously stated that, because your organization does not have any regulatory authority, your action to urge that every VPO disclose to passengers at the time of inquiry or early during the intake process that the flights are operated by volunteer pilots and are not commercial flights, and that the pilots, aircraft, and flights are not required to meet the same standards as commercial flights, constituted an acceptable alternative action. We note that VPOs' reporting compliance has shown that they include this kind of information in the documents provided to those requesting charitable medical flights and to their passengers during the intake procedures. The organizations also require their passengers to sign documents affirming that they understand the flights are not commercial in nature. Consequently, Safety Recommendation A-10-103 is classified "Closed—Acceptable Alternate Action."

#### A-10-104

In conjunction with your affiliate organizations and other charitable medical transport organizations, develop, disseminate, and require all voluntary pilot organizations to implement written safety guidance, best practices, and training material for volunteer pilots who operate charitable patient transport flights under 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 91. The information should address, at a minimum, aeronautical decision-making; proper preflight planning; pilot qualifications, training, and currency; and self-induced pressure.

We note that, in collaboration with the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association's (AOPA) Air Safety Institute, you developed an interactive online multimedia safety course for volunteer pilots providing public benefit flights that addresses aeronautical decision-making; proper preflight planning; pilot qualification, training, and currency; and self-induced pressure. This course, which is titled "Public Benefit Flying: Balancing Safety and Compassion," is available to the public without any fee. In addition, you and AOPA have worked with the FAA to qualify the course for proficiency training credit in the FAA Wings program. We further note that ACA urges that each VPO use the course and that every VPO require its pilots to complete recurrent training annually. VPOs that have reported to you indicated that comply with ACA's recommendation and that some groups also require their flight coordinators and other appropriate staff to do so. You have completed the action specified in Safety Recommendation A-10-104, which is classified "Closed—Acceptable Action."

Thank you for your efforts to address these recommendations and for your commitment to aviation safety. We were pleased to read that, although you believe your actions satisfy the recommendations, you consider improving flight safety an effort that is always ongoing, and that you are committed to continuing to remind and urge VPOs and their member pilots to implement these recommendations.

Sincerely,