

Keith Radford

From: WKBW TV - Buffalo
Sent: Wednesday, May 06, 2009 12:27 PM
To: Keith Radford
Subject: FW: NTSB Info
Importance: High

From: Spitzer, Christopher [mailto:Christopher.Spitzer@abc.com]
Sent: Wed 5/6/2009 12:22 PM
To: WHAM TV Editorial; 9wsyr assignment desk; WKBW TV - Buffalo
Subject: FW: NTSB Info

Christopher Spitzer

ABC News

NewsOne, NorthCentral Regional Producer

212-456-2230

From: Schoenholtz, Howard D.
Sent: Wednesday, May 06, 2009 12:05 PM
To: Spitzer, Christopher
Subject: FW: NTSB Info
Importance: High

From: Schoenholtz, Howard D.

Sent: Wednesday, May 06, 2009 12:02 PM

To: Elvington, Glenn

Subject: NTSB Info

Importance: High

NTSB Advisory
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, DC 20594
March 25, 2009

UPDATE ON NTSB INVESTIGATION INTO CRASH OF COLGAN AIR DASH-8 NEAR
BUFFALO, NEW YORK; PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULED

5/6/2009

In its continuing investigation into the crash of Colgan Air flight 3407 in Clarence Center, New York, the National Transportation Safety Board has released the following factual information.

On February 12, 2009, about 10:17 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST), a Colgan Air Inc., Bombardier Dash 8-Q400, N200WQ, d.b.a. Continental Connection flight 3407, crashed during an instrument approach to runway 23 at the Buffalo-Niagara International Airport (BUF), Buffalo, New York. The crash site was approximately 5 nautical miles northeast of the airport in Clarence Center, New York, and mostly confined to one residential house. The 4 crew members and 45 passengers were fatally injured and the airplane was destroyed by impact forces and post crash fire. There was one ground fatality. Night visual meteorological conditions prevailed at the time of the accident. The flight was a Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 121 scheduled passenger flight from Liberty International Airport (EWR), Newark, New Jersey to Buffalo.

The NTSB has voted to conduct a public hearing on this accident. The hearing, which will be held May 12 – 14, 2009 at the NTSB's Board Room and Conference Center in Washington, D.C., will cover a wide range of safety issues including: icing effect on the airplane's performance, cold weather operations, sterile cockpit rules, crew experience, fatigue management, and stall recovery training. The public hearing is part of the Safety Board's efforts to develop all appropriate facts for the investigation.

"The tragedy of flight 3407 is the deadliest transportation accident in the United States in more than 7 years," Acting Chairman Mark V. Rosenker, who will chair the hearing, said. "The circumstances of the crash have raised several issues that go well beyond the widely discussed matter of airframe icing, and we will explore these issues in our investigative fact-finding hearing."

The hearing will be held "en banc," meaning that all Members of the NTSB will sit on the Board of Inquiry. Parties that will participate in the hearing will be announced at a later time.

The aircraft wreckage has been moved from the accident site to a secure location for follow-on inspections as may be needed.

A preliminary examination of the airplane systems has revealed no indication of pre-impact system failures or anomalies. Investigators will perform additional examinations on the dual distribution valves installed in the airplane's de-ice system. The de-ice system removes ice accumulation from the leading edges of the wings, horizontal tail, and vertical tail through the use of pneumatic boots. The dual distribution valves, which transfer air between the main bleed air distribution ducts and the pneumatic boots, were removed from the airplane for the examination.

The airplane maintenance records have been reviewed and no significant findings have been identified at this time.

The ATC group has completed a review of recordings of controller communications with the flight crew during the accident flight and conducted interviews with air traffic controllers on duty at the time of the accident. The group has no further work planned at this time.

Further review of the weather conditions on the night of the accident revealed the presence of variable periods of snow and light to moderate icing during the accident airplane's approach to the Buffalo airport.

Examination of the FDR data and preliminary evaluation of airplane performance models shows that

some ice accumulation was likely present on the airplane prior to the initial upset event, but that the airplane continued to respond as expected to flight control inputs throughout the accident flight. The FDR data also shows that the stall warning and protection system, which includes the stick shaker and stick pusher, activated at an airspeed and angle-of-attack (AOA) consistent with that expected for normal operations when the de-ice protection system is active. The airplane's stick shaker will normally activate several knots above the actual airplane stall speed in order to provide the flight crew with a sufficient safety margin and time to initiate stall recovery procedures. As a result of ice accumulation on the airframe, an airplane's stall airspeed increases. To account for this potential increase in stall speed in icing conditions, the Dash 8-Q400's stall warning system activates at a higher airspeed than normal when the de-ice system is active in-flight to provide the flight crew with adequate stall warning if ice accumulation is present.

Preliminary airplane performance modeling and simulation efforts indicate that icing had a minimal impact on the stall speed of the airplane. The FDR data indicates that the stick shaker activated at 130 knots, which is consistent with the de-ice system being engaged. FDR data further indicate that when the stick shaker activated, there was a 25-pound pull force on the control column, followed by an up elevator deflection and increase in pitch, angle of attack, and Gs. The data indicate a likely separation of the airflow over the wing and ensuing roll two seconds after the stick shaker activated while the aircraft was slowing through 125 knots and while at a flight load of 1.42 Gs. The predicted stall speed at a load factor of 1 G would be about 105 knots. Airplane performance work is continuing.

Since returning from on-scene, the Operations & Human performance group have conducted additional interviews with flight crew members who had recently flown with and/or provided instruction to the accident crew, as well as personnel at Colgan Air responsible for providing training of flight crews and overseeing the management and safety operations at the airline. The group also conducted interviews with FAA personnel responsible for oversight of the Colgan certificate, which included the Principal Operations Inspector (POI) and aircrew program manager for the Dash 8 Q-400. The team has also continued its review of documentation, manuals, and other guidance pertaining to the operation of the Dash 8 Q-400 and training materials provided to the Colgan Air flight crews.

The Operations & Human Performance group continues to investigate and review documentation associated with the flight crew's flight training history and professional development during their employment at Colgan as well as prior to joining the company.

Post-accident toxicological testing of the flight crew was performed by the FAA Civil Aerospace Medical Institute (CAMI) toxicology lab. Specimens taken from the first officer were negative for alcohol, illicit substances, and a wide range of prescription and over the counter medications. Specimens taken from the captain were negative for alcohol and illicit substances, and positive for diltiazem, a prescription blood pressure medication that had been reported to and approved for his use by the Federal Aviation Administration.

The Safety Board is also examining several other areas potentially related to the accident, including:

- The circumstances of a recent event involving a Dash 8-Q400, operated by Colgan Air, in which the airplane's stick shaker activated during approach to the Burlington International Airport (BTV) in Burlington, Vermont. A preliminary review of the FDR data from that flight shows the momentary onset of the stick shaker during the approach phase of flight. The airplane subsequently landed without incident. NTSB investigators have conducted interviews with the pilots and check airman on board this flight and will continue to investigate the incident.
- Reports of airplane deviations resulting from distortion of the instrument landing system

(ILS) signal for runway 23 at BUF. There is an existing Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) related to this distortion condition. To date, investigation into these reports has not revealed any connection to the accident flight.

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Keith Radford

From: Schoenholtz, Howard D [Howard.D.Schoenholtz@abc.com]
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2009 5:20 PM
To: Bob Dingwall; Keith Radford
Subject: HERE'S WHAT LISA STARK WILL INCLUDE IN HER WNT SPOT TONIGHT
Importance: High

Here's some of what Lisa Stark will include in her WNT spot tonight. Please note some of the information is from a single source; some from two sources.

OK?

Subject: Buffalo Crash - What I know.

Here's what I have so far: (

One source VERY close to the investigation:

Captain Renslow failed at least four check rides in his career, two with Colgan Air.

(Note - WSJ says FIVE failed check rides - I do not have that confirmed.)

He did NOT fail any check rides on the accident aircraft

Context: It is not unusual for a pilot to fail a check ride or maybe even two, but when you have a pattern like this it does raise a red flag

Training: Training on stall recovery appears to be inconsistent at Colgan Air.

Renslow DID receive simulator training on what to do during a stick shaker (that is when the control stick starts to shake warning of an impending stall)

He apparently DID NOT receive simulator training on stick pusher. This is when the auto pilot actually puts the nose of the plane down to gain speed to try to head off a stall. It happens after stick shaker if the crew doesn't put the nose down to gain speed. Renslow did get classroom instruction on this, but DID NOT experience that in a simulator. He reacted incorrectly by pulling the NOSE of the plane UP after stick shaker and stick pusher, probably actually putting the plane into a stall.

I am told that Colgan Air's training is inconsistent in this - some pilots DID get simulator training on stick pusher, some did not.

From TWO sources:

Cockpit Procedures - The Crew did violate sterile cockpit regulations. The FAA requires that ALL conversation below 10,000 feet be limited to aircraft operations and procedures. The crew was having "irrelevant chatter" below 10,000 feet.

Fatigue -

The first officer Rebecca Shaw took the red eye from her home in Seattle the night before to show up to work in the morning at Newark. The crew has two earlier flights that day canceled due to weather - so it's believed they were hanging around the airport all day prior to the accident flight. That meant Shaw's only rest was likely whatever she had on the red eye flight. She may also have been feeling sick - had complained of a cold (one source) - this may explain

why once the plane mishap unfolded she apparently said nothing or very little on the Cockpit voice recording - due to fatigue and illness, she just wasn't feeling sharp at all (one source) and

the resulted in a substandard performance.

Renslow had commuted up that morning from Tampa and had hung around the airport all day as well.

Other note: (one source)

Renslow's prior job was with Gulfstream Airlines. At this airline, new pilots PAY the airline to work for them - to get more training and time in an aircraft so they can get experience. Renslow paid

Gulfstream \$25,000. For that they put him in the first officer position of a Beach 1900B where he flew passengers, gaining training and experience. (He would already have had a commercial pilot's license when he was "hired" by Gulfstream.) It's an odd system that I didn't know about. My source

calls airlines that do this "bottom feeders."

Overarching Question:

What about the other regional carriers? Are the training, hiring and schedule shortcomings that have come to light on this accident unique? Are there similar lapses at other regional carriers. I don't know the answer - but it is a legitimate question.

Air Traffic Control Tapes - FAA may release these tomorrow. I see these as anti-climatic. We

basically found the tapes on line that night and used them then. There was no mayday call - just routine conversations with the crew until ATC lost contact.

Keith Radford

From: WKBW TV - Buffalo
Sent: Monday, May 11, 2009 2:53 PM
To: Keith Radford
Subject: FW: Statement from Colgan Air

From: Williams, Joe F [mailto:jfwilliams@pncl.com]
Sent: Mon 5/11/2009 2:38 PM
To: Williams, Joe F
Subject: Statement from Colgan Air

Below is a statement from Colgan Air regarding recent questions raised about Flight 3407.

Statement from Colgan Air

Recent news reports have raised a number of questions related to the ongoing investigation of Flight 3407. The company has issued the following points to clarify those issues:

Training – General

- Captain Reshow had all the training and experience required to safely operate the Q400.
- All Colgan Air flight crew training programs are certified in advance by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and exceed requirements set forth by applicable regulations.
- Colgan's Q400 training program is virtually identical to training provided by the manufacturer, through one of the world's leading aviation training companies.
- At the time of this accident, Captain Renslow was fully qualified in the Q400 and held an Airline Transport Pilot Type Certificate for that aircraft, the highest level of certification the FAA offers on any aircraft.
- Before Captain Renslow flew a single passenger as pilot in command of a Q400, he received:
 - 126 hours of Q400 flight and ground training
 - Four observation flights with experienced Q400 pilots
 - Over 20 hours flying with a check airman observing him
 - Two successful check rides

Stall Recognition and Recovery Training

- Colgan Air's FAA-approved training program does provide comprehensive training on the stall warning system, including the stick shaker and stick pusher, during initial Q400 ground school as well as annual recurrent ground school.
- A stick pusher demonstration in an aircraft simulator is not required by the FAA and was not part of the training syllabus used in the training provided by the aircraft manufacturer through one of the world's leading aviation training companies, and thus was not included in Colgan's Q400 training program.
- All pilots are taught how to recover from a stall in the earliest stages of their private pilot training. The technique in the Q400 is not substantively different from any other aircraft.
- All Colgan pilots, including Q400 pilots, are again taught how to recognize and recover from a stall during training, and are tested on those procedures during check rides that occur before a pilot becomes rated to fly an aircraft.

Winter Operations Training

- All Colgan Air Q400 pilots were trained on the use of all components of the Ice Protection Systems on the Q400 from the inception of this aircraft to our fleet. This was done in both ground school and simulator training. A pilot going through training would not be authorized to sit for a practical test if they had not completed and shown proficiency in the training module for procedures relating to the ice protection system and any malfunctions associated with those systems.
- In addition to this training, Colgan Air issued three separate communications to flight crews regarding winter operations in fall 2008. They included:
 - A Winter Operations Quiz, which tested and refreshed pilots on operating in a winter environment;
 - A “read and sign” memo to pilots reminding them how to obtain required flight speeds under icing conditions;
 - A winter operations bulletin regarding ground de-icing procedures at Newark-Liberty International Airport.

Flight Crew Fatigue

- If there was a fatigue issue with the flight crew, it was not due to their work schedule, which provided rest periods far in excess of FAA requirements.
- Captain Renslow had nearly 22 consecutive hours of time off before he reported for duty on the day of the accident. That was more than sufficient time for him to obtain adequate rest, and nearly three times the FAA-minimum required rest period.
- His schedule for the week of the accident was also light enough that he had ample time for rest.
 - On Monday, after having four full days off, Captain Renslow commuted from Tampa to Newark, arriving at 8:00 p.m.
 - On Tuesday, Captain Renslow had a report time of 5:30 a.m., flew three short flights and ended his day in Buffalo at 12:59 that afternoon.
 - On Wednesday, Captain Renslow had a report time of 6:15 a.m., flew three more short flights ending at his crew base in Newark at 3:44 p.m. that afternoon.
 - On Thursday, the day of the accident, Captain Renslow had a report time of 1:30 p.m., nearly 22 hours after he came off duty the day before.
- Flying fatigued or sick is not an option. Every Colgan Air pilot has an absolute obligation as a professional to show up for work fit for duty. In order to ensure all pilots are fit for duty, Colgan Air has the following policies:
 - First, Colgan carefully tracks its pilots’ scheduled and actual duty time to ensure that all duty time requirements are met or exceeded. Meeting these FAA-mandated duty time restrictions ensures that pilots have adequate time off to rest between flights.
 - Second, all Colgan Captains are required to certify as part of the dispatch process that they are “physically qualified for this flight.” It is the duty of every pilot to show up for duty properly rested and otherwise physically qualified for duty.

- Third, if at any point prior to or during a trip a pilot feels fatigued, he or she can simply call in “fatigued” without risk of discipline.
- Fourth, Colgan has reserve pilots standing by to take over a flight in the event a pilot cannot start or continue a flight due to fatigue or any other reason. In fact, throughout the day of this accident, there were five Q-400 pilots on duty and available at Newark Airport, with an additional 11 pilots available on short notice.

Captain Renslow's Qualifications

- Captain Renslow was fully qualified in the Q400.
 - He held an Airline Transport Pilot Type Certificate for that aircraft, the highest level of certification the FAA offers on any aircraft.
 - He had nearly 3,500 hours of total flight time.
 - Before he flew a single passenger as pilot in command of a Q400, he received:
 - 126 hours of Q400 flight and ground training
 - Four observation flights with experienced Q400 pilots
 - Over 20 hours flying the Q400 with a check airman
 - Two successful Q400 check rides
- Captain Renslow did have three unsatisfactory general aviation check rides with the FAA before joining Colgan – two of which we learned after the accident that he had not disclosed on his application – and two unsatisfactory check rides with Colgan.
- In the cases while with Colgan, he received additional training and successfully passed the check rides.
- The last unsatisfactory check ride was on the Saab 340, sixteen months before this accident.
- Since that time, Captain Renslow passed six consecutive check rides, one of them with the FAA, and completed three training sessions.

Keith Radford

From: Schoenholtz, Howard D [Howard.D.Schoenholtz@abc.com]
Sent: Sunday, May 10, 2009 11:19 PM
To: Bob Dingwall; Keith Radford
Subject: Fw: WSJ | Captain's Training Faulted In Buffalo Crash

From: Hartman, Brian
To: Schoenholtz, Howard D.
Sent: Sun May 10 22:17:17 2009
Subject: FW: WSJ | Captain's Training Faulted In Buffalo Crash

Hi.... I'd forward this to Keith Radford but don't know his email address

From: Bramwell, Marisa
Sent: Sunday, May 10, 2009 10:09 PM
To: #ABCTV Domestic News; Hosford, Matt A.; Stark, Lisa; Garcia, Barbara A.
Subject: WSJ | Captain's Training Faulted In Buffalo Crash

From: Bradley, Michael
Sent: Sunday, May 10, 2009 10:06 PM
To: Stachowiak, Scott A. -ND; Sheahan, Jack; Kneeland, Ken; Noble, Mike A.; Bramwell, Marisa; Bradley, Michael
Subject: from the w-s-j web site

Captain's Training Faulted In Air Crash That Killed 50

By [ANDY PASZTOR](#)

The captain of a commuter plane that crashed Feb. 13 near Buffalo, N.Y., had flunked numerous flight tests during his career and was never adequately taught how to respond to the emergency that led to the airplane's fatal descent, according to people close to the investigation.

All 49 people aboard were killed, as well as one person in a house below, when the plane crashed just a few miles short of the Buffalo airport en route from Newark, N.J. The Bombardier Q400 turboprop in the crash, which will be the subject of a National Transportation Safety Board hearing Tuesday, was operated by commuter carrier Colgan Air Inc., a division of Pinnacle Airlines Corp.

Capt. Marvin Renslow had never been properly trained by the company to respond to a warning system designed to prevent the plane from going into a stall, according to people familiar with the investigation. As the speed slowed to a dangerous level, setting off the stall-prevention system, he did the opposite of the proper procedure, which led to the crash, these people said.

The circumstances surrounding Continental Connection Flight 3407 have prompted

investigators and regulators to examine Colgan's hiring and training practices. At the NTSB hearing, witnesses are expected to provide new allegations about training shortcomings, as well as the prevalence of chronic pilot fatigue and lapses in cockpit discipline. The NTSB also is expected to be critical of the Federal Aviation Administration's oversight of the airline. The FAA, which is investigating the airline, declined to comment on issues likely to be raised at the hearing.

Pinnacle has said its pilot training programs "meet or exceed regulatory requirements for all major airlines" and crews "are prepared to handle emergency situations they might face." On Sunday, spokesman Joe Williams confirmed in an email that Capt. Renslow had five "unsatisfactory" training check rides in his career -- including two at Colgan -- but passed a subsequent series of training tests and was "fully qualified in the Q400" aircraft.

Testimony Tuesday

In recent weeks, Colgan's top two training officials resigned; Mr. Williams has said their decisions were voluntary and not connected to the accident. Darrell Mitchell, Colgan's departing director of training, is slated to testify at Tuesday's hearing.

Colgan, based in Manassas, Va., operates nearly 50 planes, carries 2.5 million passengers annually and employs about 480 pilots. It serves as a commuter airline that feeds larger carriers, such as Continental Airlines, United Airlines and US Airways.

Colgan serves 28 routes for Continental Airlines Inc., which said it retains "full confidence in Colgan and its ability to conduct its operations safely."

US Airways Group Inc. and UAL Corp.'s United Airlines said there haven't been any changes to their Colgan contracts.

Capt. Renslow, 47 years old, joined Colgan in September 2005 after graduating from a pilot-training academy, employment records show. He had a history of flunking check rides -- periodic tests of competency that are also required anytime a pilot begins flying a new type of aircraft. Before joining Colgan, he failed three proficiency checks on general aviation aircraft administered by the FAA, according to investigators and the airline. Colgan's spokesman said the company now believes Capt. Renslow failed to fully disclose that poor performance when applying for a job.

Once at Colgan, he failed in his initial attempt to qualify as a co-pilot on the Beech 1900 aircraft, and also had to redo his check ride to upgrade to captain on the Saab 340 turboprop, according to investigators. Repeated check-ride failures raise red flags, and large carriers rarely keep pilots who require such extensive remedial training, according to numerous industry officials. Colgan's Mr. Williams said Capt. Renslow's last unsatisfactory check ride occurred 16 months before the accident, and he subsequently passed six consecutive competency tests and completed three regular training sessions.

Capt. Renslow had about 109 hours of experience flying the Q400 as a captain, an unusually limited amount of time by industry standards. He had started flying the craft only two months earlier. According to investigators the co-pilot, Ms. Shaw, had a clean training record.

The pilots' families couldn't be reached for comment.

People familiar with the investigation of the accident -- the deadliest U.S. commercial crash in more than seven years -- gave the following account of the plane's last flight:

Both pilots were returning to work after a day off. Capt. Renslow was coming off weeks of late-evening and early-morning flying schedules, often sandwiched around only a few hours of rest. Ms. Shaw had spent the day before the accident skiing. She then took a red-eye flight from Seattle to report for work in Newark.

It was a frigid night. Other planes in the region had reported light to moderate icing, and the pilots observed ice buildup around their own windshield. Bombardier's twin-engine Q400 has a reputation as a workhorse used extensively in winter and isn't known to be susceptible to ice accumulation.

Approaching Buffalo

As the plane made its approach toward Buffalo with the autopilot engaged, the crew exchanged idle banter, according to people who have read transcripts of the conversation recovered from the cockpit voice recorder. Federal rules and airline policy prohibit pilots from having extraneous conversations while flying below 10,000 feet.

The crew initially didn't notice the plane's speed had dropped dangerously low, sliding under 115 miles an hour, and risked going into a stall. The slowing speed set off an emergency system called a "stick-pusher," which pushes the control column down in order to send the aircraft into a temporary dive so it can regain speed and recover from a stall.

However, Capt. Renslow tried to force the plane to do the opposite. He yanked back on the controls while adding thrust. His effort was strong enough to manually override the stick-pusher. Within seconds, the plane lost lift, bucked violently and started to roll. It slammed into a house five miles from the runway.

Colgan's standard training program stops short of demonstrating the operation of the stick-pusher in flight simulators. Without such hands-on experience, safety investigators argue, pilots could be surprised and not react properly when the stick-pusher activates during an emergency. The FAA is required to sign off on all airline training manuals.

On Sunday, Colgan said its FAA-approved program includes "comprehensive" classroom training on the stick-pusher but emphasized a demonstration in a simulator "is not required by the FAA and was not part of the training syllabus" Colgan received when it obtained its Q400s.

Mistaken Assumption

Investigators surmise the pilots didn't fully understand the operation of one ice-protection system, and therefore incorrectly programmed approach speeds into a flight computer. Startled by an initial stall warning at low altitude, Capt. Renslow reacted with the mistaken assumption that ice accumulation on the tail caused speed to suddenly drop well below normal, investigators believe. The NTSB has said the plane wasn't significantly affected by icing.

Since the accident, industry and government safety experts have uncovered what they claim are other shortcomings at Colgan. The airline began flying Q400s in February 2008, but Colgan pilots say it wasn't until nine months later that they received a detailed bulletin on how to use some of its ice safety features. However, the bulletin was delivered three months before the accident. Colgan said that since it started flying the aircraft, pilots "were trained on the use of all components of the ice protection system on the Q400."

More recently, Colgan removed several of its senior management pilots, known as check

airmen, who are responsible for evaluating the performance of crews in the air as well as in simulators. The airline said that "from time-to-time," it relieves check airmen of their duties if they fail "to perform to the company's high standards." And the airline's top two training officials have resigned; Colgan says their departures aren't connected to the accident.

FAA officials have issued 16 investigation letters questioning Colgan's compliance with flight-time and duty-time regulations between November 2008 and March 2009, since the accident. An FAA spokeswoman confirmed the inquiries but declined to elaborate. Colgan's spokesman, Mr. Williams, said the FAA is examining unusual circumstances when "pilots legally flew beyond daily, weekly or monthly" mandatory limits, but it is "not related in any way to the NTSB investigation" of the crash and "we don't expect any enforcement actions."

—Susan Carey contributed to this article.

Write to Andy Pasztor at andy.pasztor@wsj.com