

Target Date for Huerta, Foxx on New Pilot Training Rule is Fast Approaching

Buffalo, New York - November 1, 2013 – Responding to a statement made by National Transportation Safety Board member Earl Weener at a recent safety conference noting that the airline industry still has much room for improvement in the area of stall prevention and recovery, the 'Families of Continental Flight 3407' renewed their call for Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx and Federal Aviation Administration Administrator Michael Huerta to finalize a critical new pilot training rule by next Wednesday, November 6th. Both Foxx and Huerta had issued pledges to the group to have the rule completed by October 21st, and the revised date allows for the sixteen days that FAA, DOT, and White House Office of Management and Budget were on furlough during the government shutdown.

"Once again, the NTSB comes through in shining a bright light on what needs to be done in providing our pilots with the best training possible," stated Susan Bourque, of East Aurora, New York, who lost her sister and prominent 9/11 widow and activist Beverly Eckert. "Board Member Fleener's observations that there still remains much work to be done in the areas of training for high altitude stalls and stalls with the autopilot engaged, as well as enhancing the level of commercial simulator training offered, should serve as a strong reminder for Secretary Foxx and Administrator Huerta that this rule needs to be completed without further delay. As we learned the hard way with Colgan Air, you cannot just hope that a small regional airline does the right thing; you must require it of them."

Fleener's statement highlighted recent crashes including Flight 3407 and Air France Flight 447 where the autopilot was engaged when the plane went into stall. Fleener cited evidence that 71% of stalls occur when the plane is cruising on autopilot, and yet only a quarter of airlines provide training on recovering from high-altitude stalls. In addition to requiring more robust stall recognition and recovery training, the proposed new training requirements would also increase the amount of simulator training that airlines must utilize with their crew, require that all training be done in a full-crew environment, and mandate that all airlines implement remedial pilot training programs for pilots who display repeated training deficiencies.

"We have had excellent dialogue with both Secretary Foxx, Administrator Huerta, and their staffs throughout the process, and we remain optimistic that they will deliver on their promise to us by Wednesday," declared John Kausner of Clarence Center, New York, who lost his twenty-four year old daughter and law student Elly. "Yesterday's major announcement by their

agencies that will clear the way for passengers to utilize personal electronic devices throughout their entire flight including takeoff and landing certainly got our attention. Hopefully we haven't lost sight of the fact that a pilot who is trained to the highest degree possible on recovering from a stall is a 'have-to-have', while being able to read your Kindle during takeoff is a 'nice-to-have'. We look forward to being able to give kudos to FAA and DOT for completing this rule and taking a major step towards achieving a true 'One Level of Safety' for all passenger's on our nation's regional airlines."