



NTSB National Transportation Safety Board

Media Relations and Accident Related Communications

Managing Communications Following
a Major Motorcoach Accident

ABA MARKETPLACE
January 10, 2013

what we do

PUBLIC AFFAIRS MISSION

Keep the public informed of the Safety Board's work and its efforts to improve transportation safety.

media is.....



social media

twitter



You Tube

A screenshot of the NTSB website. The header includes the NTSB logo and the text "NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD". Below the header is a navigation menu with links for HOME, NEWS & EVENTS, TRANSPORTATION SAFETY, ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS, DISASTER ASSISTANCE, LEGAL, and ABOUT. The main content area features a "NTSB Investigation" section with a photo of a plane crash and a "Read More" button. Below this is a "MOST WANTED LIST" section with a photo of a Cessna 182 and a "Safety Management Systems" section with a photo of a tractor-trailer accident. The right sidebar contains a "News @ NTSB" section with a tweet about a missing Cessna 182 and a "Chairman Hersman" quote. The footer contains a grid of links for Resources, About Us, NTSB.gov, and Publications, along with logos for OPEN.GOV and USA.gov.



social media – youtube

ntsb.gov

- All press briefings by Board Members (uploaded within hours)

Other Material

- Announcements of forums/symposia
- Documentaries – San Bruno pipeline accident
- Media events such as “Most Wanted List” advocacy

social media – twitter

@ntsb

- Go-Team launch
- Press briefings
- On-scene activities
- Recorders – retrieval/arrival at lab
- Investigative process
- Photos (twitpics)
- YouTube videos

on-scene media relations

ON-SCENE INFO FLOW FROM NTSB

- Media briefings
- Photo opportunities
- One-on-one TV interviews (local and national)
- Social media: Twitter and YouTube

on-scene media relations



Member Rosekind at Washington Reagan National Airport
September 17, 2011

on-scene media relations

MEDIA BRIEFINGS

- On-Scene briefing: Plant the flag
- Daily Briefings (when news is made)

Grade-Crossing Accident
Midland, Texas
November 16, 2012

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Accte0lwn6Y&list=PL5aVmmm4Qt9EHc8tOxGQ2JHsQYs7FpTtq&index=5>

on-scene media relations

WHY WE TALK TO THE PRESS

- Official source of accident info
- Transparency fosters confidence
- If we don't, someone else will
- Parties and leaks

on-scene media relations

FACTUAL INFORMATION

- Information that doesn't change
- Often preliminary
- Without analysis
- We never speculate

on-scene media relations

FACTUAL INFORMATION NTSB MIGHT RELEASE

- Contents of interviews
- Information from vehicle recorders
- Measurements and specific times of accident events
- Other findings on-scene

on-scene media relations

FACTUAL INFORMATION is released:

- Only after the parties have been notified
- If Family Assistance Center has been established, family members are briefed before news media

on-scene media relations

QUESTIONS WE WON'T ANSWER

- Is it possible....
- Could that mean...
- Could you give us some possible reasons for...
- What's your personal opinion of...

on-scene media relations

NAMES

The NTSB does not release names of passengers, drivers or others involved in the accident.

HOWEVER...

on-scene media relations

NAMES

Names of those involved in the accident may appear in documents that will become publically available when accident docket is opened (usually more than 3 months following accident).

staying in your lane

INTERACTION WITH NTSB

Objective: Information Sharing

- Communicators should reach out to NTSB Public Affairs ASAP after occurrence of accident/incident to open channel of communication
- Once established, the channel will stay open throughout the course of investigation (12-18 months)

staying in your lane

RULE OF THUMB

If the question can be answered the day before the accident, it can probably be answered after the accident

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)

staying in your lane - operators

- Accident/incident effect on operations
- 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 IIC)

staying in your lane - operators

- Annual revenues, statistics and company information
- General information about safety protocols and processes
- Passenger list (coordinate with NTSB Office of Transportation Disaster Assistance)

staying in your lane

PRESS RELEASES

If press release or statement contains accident investigation related information, it must be cleared by the NTSB investigator-in-charge (IIC).

staying in your lane

PRESS RELEASES

Press release or statements that do not contain accident investigation-related information, do not need to be cleared by NTSB, however, we do recommend that these be shared with the PAO on-scene prior to release.

ROLE OF FBI

- Responds with NTSB to some major accidents without regard to any suspicion of criminal activity
- If criminal activity is determined to play a role, investigation is turned over to FBI

contact information

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Keith Holloway – PAO

Peter Knudson – PAO

Eric Weiss – PAO

Terry Williams – PAO

24-hour Communications Center

202-314-6290 (for emergencies)



NTSB