

NATIONAL AIR DISASTER ALLIANCE/FOUNDATION (NADA/F)

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**Matt Ziemkiewicz
President**

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Welcome Address from NADA/F President

August 1, 1995 the *NATIONAL AIR DISASTER ALLIANCE AND FOUNDATION* were incorporated, and 15 years later, to the day, on August 1, 2010 President Obama signed into law HR5900, the “***Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act***” – truly historic safety legislation.

Thank you to the CO3407 family members (Buffalo crash Feb 12 2009) who worked so hard to get HR5900 done. Some made over 30 trips to Washington DC over a 15 month period of time.

The Bill addresses the need to increase flight hours, education and training for Part 121 (regional/commuter airlines and air cargo) co-pilots.

The Bill also strengthens **PRIA - the Pilot Record Improvement Act, first passed by NADA/F in 1996.**

HR5900 states “***one level of safety,***” the same language in our legislation in 1996. As you all know, we will stand for nothing less than the highest levels of safety.

NADA/F Founding Members defined our short term goal of support for victims’ families, and **2011 marks the 15th anniversary of passing the Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act of 1996.** Our founding members worked from October 1994 to October 1996 to write, promote and pass the Family Assistance Act. We are proud of our historic legislation that has served thousands of air crash survivors and family members through the years.

A year later, **December, 1997, the Foreign Air Carrier Family Assistance Act** was passed, with provisions from our original legislation. For more information go to: [“Benefits and History of the Federal Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act of 1996.”](#)

NADA/F founding members defined our long term goal as Aviation Safety and Security and the work continues.

Family members have made a difference during the 15 years, but we all know we measure success in small steps, and must continuously remind our government officials -- we will not go away. Family members must persevere.

Each year we hear that there are fewer aviation fatalities, which is good news. But we still average over one fatal plane crash a day in the U.S. We have also had a number of crashes with plane crash survivors, who still deal with the affects of being a survivor.

One in every four U.S. passengers flies a commuter airline, yet 7 of the last 8 fatal disasters in the U.S. involved regional carriers. There are fewer aviation deaths, but these regional airline crashes were preventable, and we must confront these preventable disasters.

Our founding members represented about six air crashes and 300 people. Fifteen years later NADA/F has thousands of members worldwide, hundreds of individual donor members, and members from over 60 countries. We greatly appreciate those membership donations that support and continue our work.

Our press list has grown from seven to almost 1,000, however, it is an even greater challenge to get the attention of the media about the need for higher standards of aviation safety and security. It is tragic that an aviation disaster often gets their attention, but preventing disasters rarely makes the news.

It has been busy recently; we have covered a lot:

- Presented the first International Aviation Safety Award to Dr. Takao Kawakita in Osaka, Japan.
- Hosted a regional international meeting in The Netherlands.
- Participated in a high level meeting with Japanese officials about Family Assistance and specifically what needs to be provided following an aviation disaster.
- Appeared in several documentaries, with Discovery Channel and Japanese National Television, and our on-going work with the media.
- Meetings with NTSB Chair Deb Hersman, FAA Associate Administrator Peggy Gilligan, and others, to push for safety improvements.
- Improvements to our web site and Jillian Gustafson's updates on Twitter. *NADA/F* is a leader in aviation Twitters.
- Summer 2010, *NADA/F* was a member organization on the FOQ ARC, (FAA First Officer Qualifications for Part 121, ARC, Aviation Rulemaking Committee). This high level working group reported to the Administrator and was a follow-up to rulemaking for HR5900.
- *NADA/F* is serving on the PRD ARC (Pilot Record Database, Aviation Rulemaking Committee). This Working Group is tasked to define a comprehensive Pilot Record Database to improve on PRIA (Pilot Record Improvement Act) from 15 years ago. We continue our work on other FAA ARAC (Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committees) and our seat on the FAA ARAC ExComm (Executive Committee).
- October 2010 we had a terrific Annual Meeting with Deb Hersman, Chair of the NTSB, Bob Jensen from Kenyon International, Jeff Skiles, co-pilot on US1549 "Miracle on the Hudson," whistleblowers, journalists, and especially air crash survivors and family members who have made a difference. Together we ALL make a difference.
- March 3, 2011, most recently, a regional lunch meeting in Colorado Springs CO.

During this year we are planning a small regional meeting in New Jersey to recognize a true friend to aviation safety and his continued support for family members. We call him "Uncle Frank" and Senator Frank Lautenberg.

Hopefully we are able to work with Earlene Shaw from Alaska 261 to have a regional lunch in Seattle with aviation author and expert John Nance. *NADA/F* will also continue to attend air crash memorials whenever we can.

We represent survivors and family members from over 200 aviation disasters, and we are a very diverse non-profit organization. We encourage our members to check the **Memorial Calendar** on our website to be sure that we have remembered their event also.

It is an honor to serve as President of *NADA/F*, one of nine members on the Board of Directors, and we also have thirty Board Members representing many different aviation disasters. If you would like to volunteer in any way please let us know.

Everything I do to promote aviation safety, I do as a tribute to my sister Jill (TWA800) and for all those who have been forever affected by an aviation tragedy. It is important that we stay true to our founding goals to raise the standard of Aviation Safety, Security, Survivability and Support for Victims' Families.

Together we have been successful; together we will continue to be the voice of the victims.

Matt Ziemkiewicz
President