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COYNE PROMOTES ON-DEMAND CHARTER SAFETY RECORD BEFORE HOUSE AVIATION SUBCOMMITTEE

Alexandria, VA, March 17, 2010 — Air Charter Safety Foundation (ACSF) President James K. Coyne testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Aviation today at a hearing titled “FAA’s Oversight of On-Demand Aircraft Operators.” The hearing’s focus was on the U.S. Department of Transportation Inspector General’s report issued last July 13, 2009, titled [“On-Demand Operators Have Less Stringent Safety Requirements and Oversight Than Large Commercial Carriers.”](#)

“The DOT IG’s report issued last July fails to present an accurate picture of the Part 135 regulatory environment,” stated Coyne. “The report cited numerous examples of differences between Part 135 and Part 121 regulations but did not offer adequate explanation for the reason for the variances and failed to explain the wide variety of aircraft included in this classification.”

Also, in an apparent effort to bolster an argument for adding a dispatcher requirement to Part 135, the IG attempts to assume the role of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) by suggesting that if a dispatcher had been present, the 2001 crash of a Gulfstream III aircraft may have been averted. The primary cause of that accident, as determined following an extensive NTSB investigation, was operation of the aircraft below approach minimums in violation of the regulations. Pressure to land was listed as one of the six contributing factors.

“The ACSF is quite alarmed that the DOT IG, performing perfunctory review of accidents, believed it was more knowledgeable and qualified than the NTSB to be able to make this assertion,” explained Coyne. “Assessing aircraft accidents, determining cause and suggesting procedural or regulatory changes to prevent similar future accidents is a role for which the DOT IG is poorly equipped, and it should be left to the experts at the NTSB.”

Coyne highlighted in his testimony how Part 135 accident rates have steadily improved in recent years, with two fatal accidents occurring in 2009. In addition, fleet trends and advancing technology promise continued safety improvements.

“The continued efforts of the FAA, NTSB and industry have made improvements to safety that have elevated it to the high level at which it stands today,” Coyne said. The FAA’s advancement of NextGen, SMS, and continual safety improvements in standardization and the safety recommendations program are essential components in improving Part 135 safety.”

[A copy of the complete written testimony can be viewed by clicking here.](#)

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Through research, collaboration and education, the Air Charter Safety Foundation advances charter and shared aircraft ownership industry standards and best practices; promulgates safety, security and service benchmarks; and promotes the universal acceptance of safety management systems.