



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Office of the Chairman

FEB - 4 2002

Honorable Ellen G. Engleman
Administrator
Research and Special Programs Administration
Washington, D. C. 20590

Dear Ms. Engleman:

The National Transportation Safety Board issued Safety Recommendation A-96-30, stated below, to the Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) on May 31, 1996, as a result of the Safety Board's investigation of the May 11, 1996, accident involving ValuJet flight 592, a McDonnell Douglas DC-9-32 that crashed into the Everglades swamp shortly after takeoff from Miami International Airport, Miami, Florida.

A-96-30

In cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration [FAA], prohibit the transportation of oxidizers and oxidizing materials (e.g., nitric acid) in cargo compartments that do not have fire or smoke detection systems.

On February 12, 1998, the FAA issued a final rule to upgrade the fire safety standards for cargo or baggage compartments in certain transport-category airplanes by eliminating Class D compartments as an option for future type certification. The Class D compartments in certain transport category airplanes manufactured under existing type certificates and used in passenger service were required to meet the fire or smoke detection and fire suppression standards for Class C compartments by March 2001. The Class D compartments in certain transport category airplanes manufactured under existing type certificates and used only for the carriage of cargo were also required to meet such standards or the corresponding standards for Class E compartments by the same date.

The FAA's elimination of Class D cargo compartments effectively removes any need for RSPA to take action. Therefore, Safety Recommendation A-96-30 is classified "Closed—No Longer Applicable" for the RSPA.

Sincerely,

Marion C. Blakey
Chairman

cc: Mr. Robert Clarke, Safety and Health Team Leader
Office of Transportation Policy Development

Ms. Jackie Goff, Director
Office of Intermodal Hazardous Materials Programs

