

NTSB Advisory

National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, DC 20594
January 21, 2009

NTSB ISSUES UPDATE ON INVESTIGATION INTO DITCHING OF US AIRWAYS JETLINER INTO HUDSON RIVER

In its continuing investigation of US Airways flight 1549, which ditched into the Hudson River adjacent to Manhattan at approximately 3:30 p.m. on January 15, 2009, the National Transportation Safety Board has developed the following factual information:

The right engine has been externally examined and documented. An examination of the first stage fan blades revealed evidence of soft body impact damage. Three of the variable guide vanes are fractured and two are missing. The engine's electronic control unit is missing and numerous internal components of the engine were significantly damaged.

What appears to be organic material was found in the right engine and on the wings and fuselage. Samples of the material have been provided to the United States Department of Agriculture for a complete DNA analysis. A single feather was found attached to a flap track on the wing. It is being sent to bird identification experts at the Smithsonian.

The left engine has been located in about 50 feet of water near the area of the Hudson River where the aircraft ditched. The NTSB is working with federal, state and local agencies to recover the engine, which is expected to occur sometime on Thursday.

The NTSB has learned that the right engine experienced a surge during a flight on January 13, 2009, and that subsequent maintenance actions included the replacement of a temperature probe. Investigators from the NTSB's Maintenance Records group are researching this report by examining applicable maintenance records and procedures.

The NTSB's Survival Factors group is in the process of interviewing passengers to learn more about the events surrounding the ditching and the emergency evacuation and rescue. The Operations and Human Performance group is interviewing US Airways flight operations training personnel.

The checked and carry-on baggage is in the process of being removed from the aircraft. Representatives from the NTSB's Office of Transportation Disaster Assistance are working to coordinate efforts with US Airways to return these items to the passengers.

The on-scene documentation of the airplane is expected to be completed by the end of the week. Preparations are underway to facilitate movement and more permanent storage of the airplane so that more detailed documentation of the damage can be performed at a later date.

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