

National Transportation Safety Board

Office of the Chairman

Washington, DC 20594



March 31, 2025

Mr. Rod Thomas
President
National Agricultural Aviation
Research & Education Foundation
1440 Duke St.
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mr. Thomas:

Thank you for the May 29, 2024, letter from Mr. Andrew D. Moore, Chief Executive Officer of the National Agricultural Aviation Association (NAAA) and Executive Director of the National Agricultural Aviation Research & Education Foundation (NAAREF), regarding Safety Recommendations A-14-29 and -31. We issued these recommendations to the NAAREF on May 13, 2014, as a result of our *Special Investigation Report on the Safety of Agricultural Aviation*.

A-14-29

Work with the Federal Aviation Administration [FAA] to develop and distribute agricultural operations-specific guidance on risk assessment and mitigation strategies that includes but is not limited to information and checklists for performing preflight and in-flight site surveys, with special emphasis on attention management and obstacle collision avoidance strategies; information on the effects of density altitude, crosswinds, and aircraft weight and balance on aircraft performance during takeoff, landing, and while maneuvering; fuel management; and aerodynamic stall awareness and avoidance.

You have reported that, in 2024, the NAAA and the NAAREF published *Agricultural Airman Guidelines (AAG)*, which is available on the NAAA website and contains agricultural operations-specific guidance on risk assessment and mitigation strategies, as recommended. You have featured parts of this guidance in *Fly Safe* safety alert messages and *Agricultural Aviation* magazine articles and maintain an education center with training material on the safety topics covered in the AAG on your website.

In addition to the actions described above, we are aware of your contributions to FAA Safety Alert for Operators 20004, Best Practices for Part 137 Agricultural Aircraft

Operations, which the FAA published in 2020, and includes guidance on checklists for preflight and in-flight site surveys, the effects of density altitude, aircraft weight and balance, fuel management, and aerodynamic stall awareness and avoidance. The Board has classified Safety Recommendation A-14-29 Closed–Exceeds Recommended Action.

A-14-31


Work with the Federal Aviation Administration to develop and distribute guidance that covers the [Title] 14 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 137 knowledge test subject areas and skills test items, including but not limited to comprehensive discussions of the knowledge test subject areas and illustrated descriptions of the safe and successful execution of the skills test maneuvers, with special emphasis on aerodynamic stall onset awareness and prevention.

You have told us that the AAG also contains guidance for pilots and FAA personnel on preparing for and administering a Part 137 knowledge test. The AAG features a comprehensive list of references with additional guidance, including illustrated descriptions of how to safely and successfully execute the skills test maneuvers. You have notified the agricultural aviation community about this guidance via the Professional Aerial Applicator's Support System Program, *Agricultural Aviation* magazine, e-newsletter articles, and the NAAA website. Finally, you reported that the education center on the NAAA's website includes training material on agricultural aviation knowledge and skills subjects.

We are aware that, in 2017, the FAA published Advisory Circular 137-1B, Certification Process for Agricultural Aircraft Operators, and updated Order 8900.1 with information on administering the Part 137 knowledge and skills test. We are also aware that you worked with the FAA and other members of the program development committee to create checklist guidelines for tests given by operators to pilots. The Board has classified Safety Recommendation A-14-31 Closed–Exceeds Recommended Action.

Thank you for your contributions to improving aviation safety.

Sincerely,



Jennifer L. Homendy
Chairman
On behalf of the entire Board

cc: Mr. Andrew D. Moore
Chief Executive Officer, NAAA
Executive Director, NAAREF