



National Transportation Safety Board

Transportation Accident Family Assistance in the United States: Legislation, Policies, and National Initiatives

NTSB Mission

- Independent federal agency with no regulatory authority
 1. Determine probable cause of transportation accidents
 2. Make safety recommendations to prevent reoccurrence
 3. Conduct special studies and investigations
 4. Airman and mariner certification appeals
 5. **Coordinate resources to assist victims and their families after an accident**



Fundamental Concerns of Family Members

Notification of Involvement



Is my loved one involved?

Victim Accounting



Where is my loved one?

Information and Resources



How do I get information and support?

Personal Effects



Where are their belongings?

US Federal Family Assistance Legislation

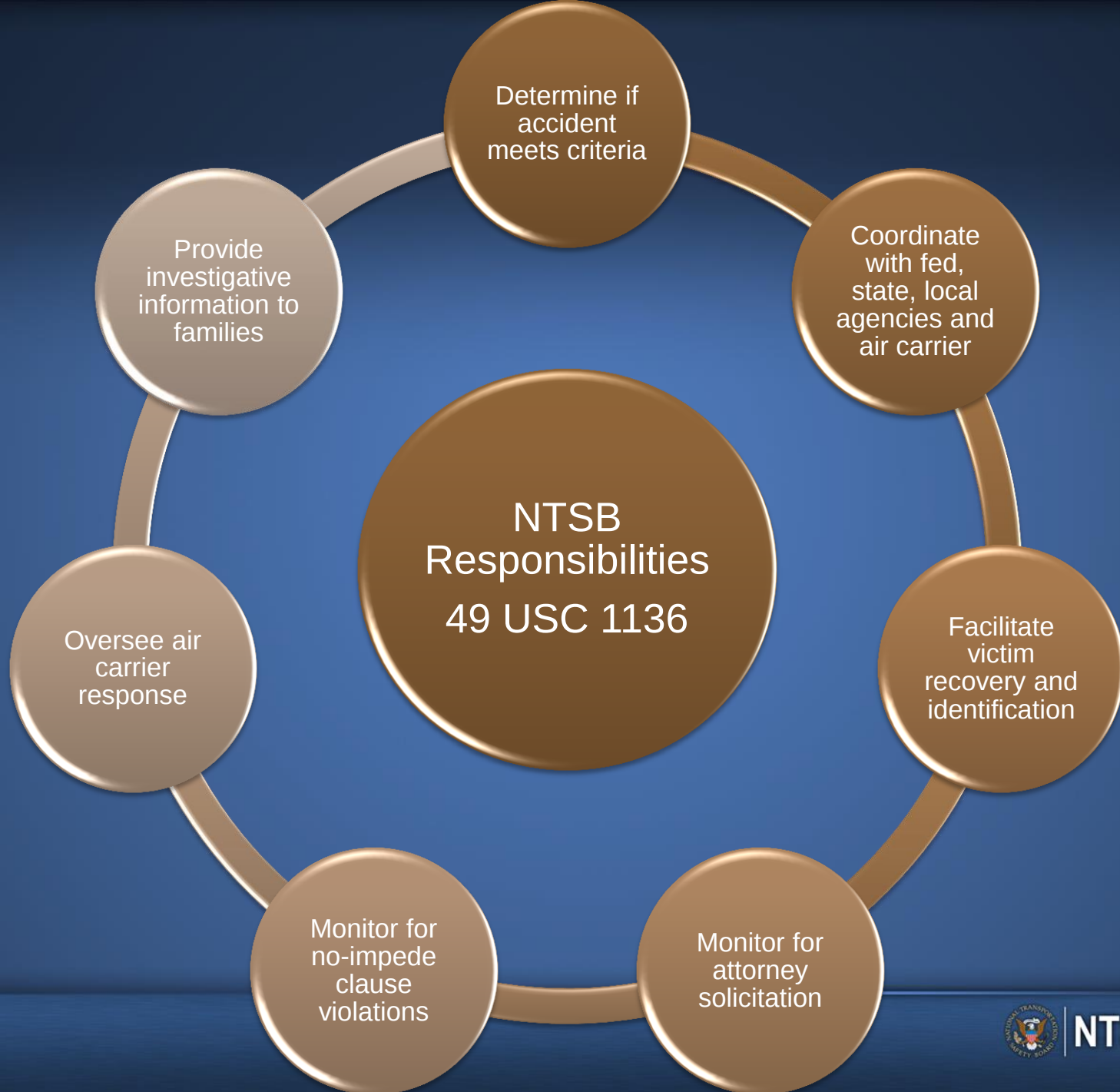
- Aviation Disaster Family Assistance Act of 1996
 - 49 USC § 1136: Role & Resp. of NTSB & the Designated Agency
 - 49 USC § 41113: Role & Resp. of U.S. Air Carriers
 - 49 USC § 41313: Role & Resp. of Foreign Air Carriers

Criteria for accident to qualify as “legislated”

- DOT Certificate of Public Convenience & Necessity (domestic) or Economic Authority (foreign)
- Any loss of life
- NTSB lead investigative agency



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Transportation Disaster Assistance Division



Victim Services



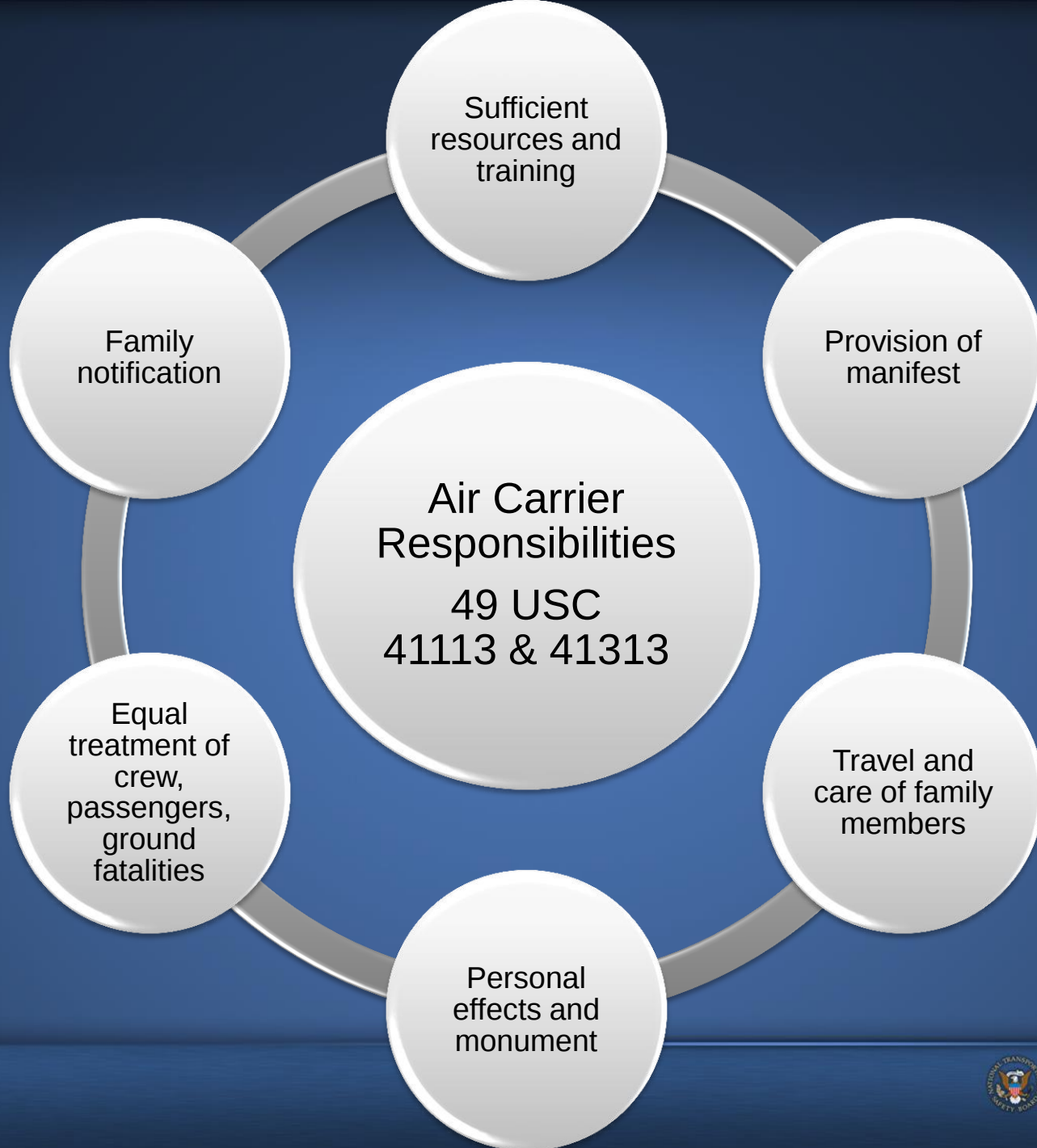
Emergency
Management



Victim
Accounting/
Medicolegal
Operations



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Primary Partner Agencies – Aviation/Rail Accident



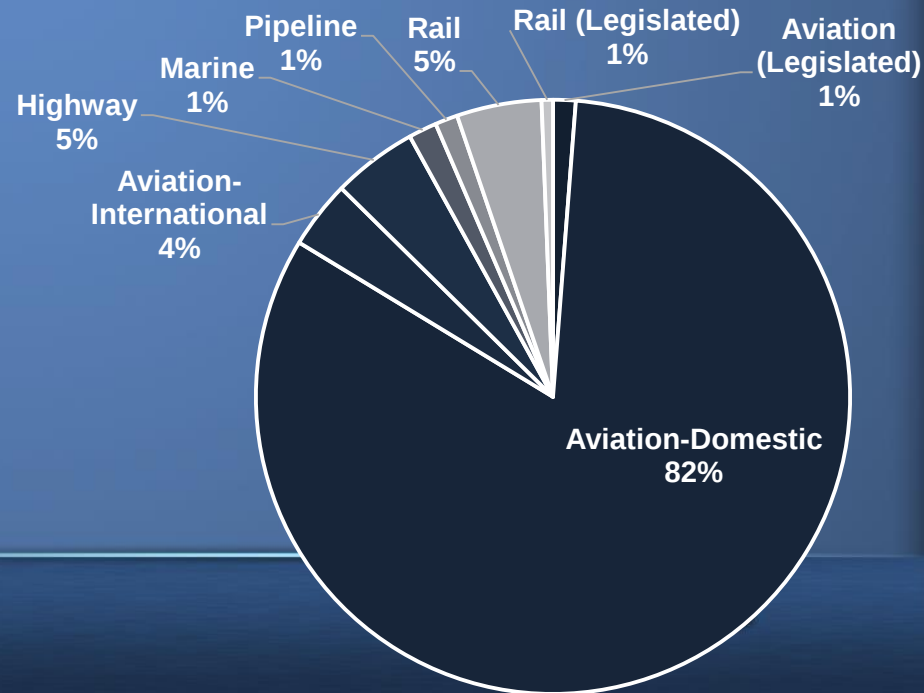
Family Assistance Challenges...

- Initiating contact with family assistance response community
 - Identifying relevant agencies & organizations
 - Working within the broader response efforts
- Information Management
 - Notification of involvement
 - Social media
 - 24 hr news cycle
- Shifting concept of operations from all-fatal to mass casualty incidents
 - Victim Accounting: effective family assistance hinges in part on an accurate and efficient accounting of all victims, their status, and their location.
 - Family assistance operations What does an MCI FAC look like?
- Concurrent criminal investigations (non-aviation)



Family Assistance Program Expansion

- Expansion of legislation to include rail passenger carriers in 2008
- Proposed legislation expanding NTSB responsibilities (2018)
- 83% increase in casework from 2010 to 2018
- 2017 casework:
 - 325 accidents
 - 1,373 accident victims & family members



Investment in Developing & Maintaining Relationships

- Federal, state, local agencies, American Red Cross, and carriers are critical partners in effective family assistance response.
- In 2017:
 - 63 outreach events, ~3,916 participants
 - Remote assistance with planning efforts for 258 agencies and organizations



Family Assistance in the U.S.

- **Independent** and **transparent** safety investigation
- Well-designed family assistance process with **single lead agency** and **effective partnerships**
 - Planning & preparedness
- **Address core needs** of family members
 - Within the confines of the investigative process and organizations mandate and capabilities
 - Build rapport & credibility
- **Empathy** supported by knowledge



Contact Information

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Questions?



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