ICAO Action

The ATSB recommendation highlights a potential problem as these devices are installed in increasing numbers of aircraft. Accordingly, ICAO intends to take several actions to address this emerging threat, as follows:

a) advise States of the potential dangers of ballistic parachutes installed in aircraft and invite them to review the adequacy of the warning placards required for such devices and to ensure that emergency responders, such as police, ambulance, rescue/fire service and accident investigators, as well as maintenance personnel, are aware of the potential hazards posed by such devices and of the correct means to render such devices safe;

b) include in the Manual of Aircraft Accident Investigation (Doc 6920), which is currently being rewritten, reference to the potential hazards of such devices, as well as guidance on appropriate safety precautions; and

c) consider the development of an amendment proposal to Annex 8- Airworthiness of Aircraft for consideration by the Air Navigation Commission by adding a broad provision requiring warning placards to draw attention to special hazards on aircraft.

FURTHER FEEDBACK

During a request from the ATSB related to the progress of ICAO with the above, the following answers were provided on 9 January 2007:

At the time, ICAO had completed items a) and b). State letter AN 6/26-05/46, dated 12 August 2005, was sent out warning States of the danger of rocket-assisted recovery parachute systems and information on such systems has been included in the Manual of Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation and also in the Circular on Hazards at Accident Sites. These documents are currently being revised for printing.

Item c) was reviewed by ICAO's Airworthiness Panel (AIRP). During the review, the Panel concluded that requiring warning placards for aircraft equipped with rocket-assisted recovery parachute systems would not increase safety at accident sites. Warning placards may not be visible in some conditions such as during low visibility and it is also believed that personnel close enough to read the placards are already inside the danger zone of the equipment.