



**U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Aviation
Administration**

SAFO

Safety Alert for Operators

SAFO 26002

DATE: 07/01/26

Flight Standards Service
Washington, DC

http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/safo/all_safo

A SAFO contains important safety information and may include recommended action. Besides the specific action recommended in a SAFO, an alternative action may be as effective in addressing the safety issue named in the SAFO. This is a guidance document. Its content is not legally binding in its own right and will not be relied upon by the Department as a separate basis for affirmative enforcement action or other administrative penalty. Conformity with the guidance document is voluntary only. Nonconformity will not affect rights and obligations under existing statutes and regulations.

Subject: Data Preservation for Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR).

Purpose: This SAFO provides safety information to operators that have CVRs installed on their aircraft.

Background: On January 5, 2024, a B-737-9 operated by Alaska Airlines experienced an in-flight separation of the left mid exit door (MED) plug and rapid depressurization during climb after takeoff from Portland International Airport. One flight attendant and seven passengers received minor injuries; the captain, the first officer, three flight attendants, and 164 passengers were uninjured; and the airplane sustained substantial damage.

Discussion: The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigated the accident and, on July 10, 2025, proposed a number of safety recommendations (A-25-025) to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The NTSB concluded that Alaska Airlines' procedures at the time of the accident were ineffective in ensuring that the CVR data from the accident flight were preserved, resulting in the loss of critical information for the investigation.

Among the recommendations is one for FAA to require operators of airplanes equipped with a CVR to incorporate guidance into company standard operating procedures, emergency protocols, and post-incident and post-accident checklists. These materials would apply to both flightcrew and non-flightcrew personnel and would detail actions to preserve CVR recordings as soon as practical after completion of a flight with a reportable event.

Recommended Action: The FAA recommends that each operator who has a CVR installed confirm that company manuals contain instructions that the CVR circuit breaker be pulled after a reportable event. The instruction that the CVR circuit breaker is pulled could be included in flight operation manuals, maintenance manuals, and dispatch manuals, increasing the likelihood that the task is accomplished.

Certificate holders operating under Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) parts 121 or 135 should use their safety assurance processes within their Safety Management System (SMS) to ensure the recommended risk controls are analyzed and assessed to meet the organization's safety objective. Those

operators with an FAA voluntary SMS program are encouraged to conduct the same analysis and assessment.

Contact: Direct questions or comments regarding this SAFO to The Air Transportation Division's Air Carrier Operations branch at 9-AFS-200-Correspondence@faa.gov.