

**06PRL015**

---

## **Midway Airport Accident underlines need for 300m overruns or an EMAS alternative says IFALPA**

CHERTSEY 13 DEC 2005 : Last Thursday's tragic accident at Chicago Midway Airport demonstrates once again the need for Runway End Safety Areas (RESA) to be established at airports with airline operations. The International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) has been warning of the dangers of insufficient runway overrun areas for more than 20 years, arguing that runways at airports with airline operations should have, as a minimum, a RESA of 300 metres long by at least twice the runway width to allow for overruns, and also to provide ease of access for rescue and fire fighting equipment. Clearly at some airports, Chicago Midway being a prime example, the restrictions of the airport's surrounding topography will not allow a sufficient RESA. In this event, IFALPA argues that an Engineered Materials Arrestor System (EMAS) be installed to provide an equivalent or better level of safety to that provided by a 300m RESA.

At airports where they have been installed EMAS have proven that they provide an effective means of bringing an overrunning aircraft to a halt with minimal damage to the aircraft or its occupants. Clearly, installation of these systems where required would significantly improve passenger and crew safety.

Following the AF358 overrun at Toronto last August, IFALPA noted that, thanks to the skills of the cabin crew and rescue services and a measure of luck, fatalities and serious injuries had been avoided. However, we also warned that when the next overrun at an airport without an adequate RESA occurred the outcome may not be so fortuitous. Sadly, this has now proven to be the case.

Naturally, IFALPA does not comment on individual accidents while the investigation into their cause is underway. As such, IFALPA will not comment on the specifics of WN1248 other than to offer its condolences to the victim of this tragedy and his family, and its sympathy and wishes for a speedy recovery to those injured in the accident.

### **Notes to Editors**

*The International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations represents in excess of 100,000 pilots in more than 95 countries world-wide. The mission of IFALPA is to be the global voice of airline pilots, promoting the highest level of aviation safety and security world-wide and providing services, support and representation to all of its Member Associations. See the Federation website [www.ifalpa.org](http://www.ifalpa.org)*

For more information contact Gideon Ewers IFALPA Communications Officer +44 1932 579041  
[gideonewers@ifalpa.org](mailto:gideonewers@ifalpa.org)