

Five Deaths Demand Justice Petition

<http://www.petitiononline.com/cgaqw/petition.html>

To The Honourable Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada

On the 28th of February 2005, five souls were lost after the air taxi they travelled in “disappeared” minutes after departure from Campbell River, British Columbia. Two days later, the body of one of the passengers was found not ten kilometers away. The autopsy showed he had no serious injuries, but had suffered extensively from hypothermia before slowly drowning. Countless family members, friends and fellow Canadians have been permanently scarred by these fatalities. Three women and ten children are now supported by WorkSafe BC pensions, instead of by their husbands and fathers.

Despite the far-reaching implications, government officials have virtually ignored the seriousness of this fatal accident. The families and volunteers from their communities spent huge amounts of money and their own valuable time to search for and recover the aircraft using information that was immediately available to the Joint Rescue Co-ordination Centre and the RCMP. The Transportation Safety Board (TSB) ignored witness reports and physical evidence of engine failure and poor management, instead taking the easy road and blaming the pilot. The TSB's failure to accurately report on the accident, resulted in Transport Canada Civil Aviation (TCCA) Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) department closing its file, thus failing to investigate infringements of the Canada Labour Code. The families and their communities continue with efforts to raise the aircraft engine from the ocean floor to provide conclusive evidence. Although the TSB continue to “investigate”, they contend that an engine failure “should not cause the accident” and they can learn nothing by retrieving the engine. Notwithstanding the age of the engine type and its known issues, the families' and many in the aviation community contend that R-985 is very much in use and can still be learned from, most specifically because of its age. Yet the accident remains a “Class 5 Occurrence” with no investigation for cause. More than two years have passed since these five men lost their lives, yet the BC Coroner Service, the RCMP and WorkSafe BC are unable to further their investigations. The engine remains in a documented location on the ocean floor, with the four missing souls likely nearby.

Significant evidence has been provided justifying a public inquiry by the TSB to: reduce the risk involved in the air taxi, and more specifically floatplane, transportation service sector; uncover otherwise hidden facts; initiate remedial action; reflect the actual extent of lost lives; appease public interest and concern; and to address the deficiencies of Transport Canada Civil Aviation.

Evidence indicates that both public and private sectors have much to learn from a speedy resolution to this investigation.

We the undersigned, demand that an official government body immediately begin a public inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the fatal accident of the aircraft mark C-GAQW and the subsequent investigation into five unnecessary deaths.

Sincerely,

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Sincerely,

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