

NASA HOLDS BACK SURVEY INFORMATION



The National Aeronautics and Safety Administration completed in 2004 an \$8.5 million survey named the National Aviation Operations Monitoring Service, involving 24,000 commercial and general aviation pilots. The survey covered the safety and danger elements up in the air. The costs of designing and conducting the survey were immense and almost entirely covered by the tax payers. NASA gathered the information for 4 years, meaning that the results should be of great interest to the public and increase passenger knowledge about the aviation industry. However, NASA has decided that no information shall be made public and that all results shall remain within the organisation itself.

The reason for this is that the surveys are believed to have revealed some unpleasant findings that mishaps on runways and in the air are more common than previously thought. Near collisions, bird strikes and runway interference are not as uncommon as we used to believe. Engine failure is thought to be another problem believed to occur more frequently than we imagine. NASA, along with the American government have been withholding details of these findings for fear of reducing public confidence in the airline industry and thus reducing profits. What is incomprehensible is why the government and NASA think that concealing the results of the survey would not make passengers more paranoid. Surely a sense of false security is much more unpleasant than knowing the truth. Not in NASA's eyes.

Besides this basic information, NASA does not seem to realise that the facts involving aviation speak for themselves. Last year, the whole industry had just one victim in the US, a mechanic unfortunate enough to fall from a Boeing 737 door whilst trying to close it. A further 760 million Americans flew without even a scratch on their skin as proof of any accident. Taking into consideration that an average 47 people die in the US every year due to lightning and a further 94 due to venomous plants and animals, the air must be considered to be extremely safe.

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