



Aviation Safety Council

16F, 99 Fu-shing North Road, Taipei 105, Taiwan
Republic of China

Interim Flight Safety Bulletin

Date: March 21, 2003

Reference No.: ASC-IFSB-03-03-002

To: International Civil Aviation Organization

Subject: Aircraft Pressure Vessel Structure Repair Alert

Background Information

On May 25, 2002, a Boeing 747-200 aircraft, owned and operated by China Airlines, crashed in the Taiwan Straits during a scheduled flight from Taipei to Hong Kong. The Aviation Safety Council (ASC) of Taiwan has been conducting the investigation. The investigation is still in progress and the probable causal factors not determined. However, based on the factual information collected to date, the ASC has identified a safety issue that should be addressed.

Interim Safety Recommendation:

The ASC strongly recommends that all civil aviation accident investigation agencies to collaborate with their regulatory authorities to take appropriate action requiring all operators of transport-category aircrafts with pressure vessel repairs identified as a result of structural damage other than those covered by Boeing service bulletin documentation ASB 747-53A2489 for an immediate inspection on the repaired area to determine whether any hidden damage is present.

An improperly treated scratch on the aircraft pressure vessel skin, especially if covered under a repair doubler, could be a hidden damage that might develop into fatigue cracking eventually causing structure failure.