

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release*

Safety on the Radar at NTSB Hearing

How US Airways Flight 1549 was able to avoid tragedy after striking geese and safely ditching in the Hudson River on January 15, 2009 is the subject of a National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) hearing on June 9 and 10 in Washington DC. One of the topics scheduled to be reviewed at the hearing is developments in technologies such as radar for bird tracking.

Progress with avian radar has been significant. The FAA chose a North American Company's Accipiter[®] Avian Radar for initial assessment of commercially available bird radar systems. Dr. Tim J. Nohara, President of Accipiter Radar explains "avian radar can help mitigate bird hazards where they are most likely to occur around the airport. Real-time monitoring and alerting of approaching flocks of birds helps wildlife control personnel better manage bird hazards."

In the case of Flight 1549 Dr. Nohara maintains "the accident was unusual, happening at 2800 feet altitude and at quite a distance beyond the airport. While the coverage versus accuracy trade-off associated with today's avian radars would have been limiting for the 1549 accident, new antennas under development by Accipiter Radar will soon provide improved 3D bird localization accuracy to facilitate a warning to pilots even in this case."

The valuable information collected by avian radar day and night includes historical bird activity patterns that are important to existing wildlife control personnel so they can better manage bird hazards. The information can also be used by air operations personnel to issue advisories to pilots.

FAA AND CEAT

Radar has a long history with aviation, however, unlike existing airport radars used to manage aircraft; there are no relevant performance requirements, specifications or standards for avian radar. It's clear that the FAA's mandate of safety necessitates due diligence in the form of an independent assessment to develop guidelines on how to acquire, deploy, integrate, test, operate and maintain avian radars at civil airports.

In 2006, the FAA was timely in beginning an avian radar assessment program with Accipiter[®] Avian Radar, conducted by their research arm, CEAT (Center of Excellence for Airport Technology). The review uses science based methods with the objective of assuring the FAA and the public that use of commercial avian radar at airports is justified based on proven performance, without compromising safety and compatibility with existing airport wildlife control operations.

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PROGRESS TO DATE

Since the FAA embarked on the process of avian radar assessment; significant progress has been made by CEAT and Accipiter Radar. Systems are operating at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport where assessment is moving towards completion. Chicago O'Hare and JFK are also in operation as well as units at CEAT and the Department of Defense from Alaska to the Carolina's under the Environmental Security Technology Certification Program's IVAR (Integration and Validation of Avian Radar) Project. This integrated effort by many organizations has resulted in a streamlined approach to assessment that is crucial to the safe integration of avian radar at civil airports.

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About Accipiter Radar

Accipiter Radar offers the world's most advanced, commercially available, tracking surveillance radars using affordable PC-based processing to the Homeland Security and Aviation Safety markets worldwide. The Accipiter® product family encompasses the complete wide-area radar surveillance solution including target data acquisition, storage, management, analysis, distribution and visualization. Accipiter has won the business of the world's most demanding customers including the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration, every branch of the U.S. military and law enforcement agencies and corporations on both sides of the U.S. / Canada border.