

Is Flying Still Safe?

by Brendan Driscoll

It seems that everyday that we turn on the news, we hear of yet another commercial plane crash. The reason we seem to hear of these crashes all the time, is because they are not an everyday occurrence. We continue to hear developments of plane crashes that happened over a year ago. However the totals of these plane crashes is remarkably low. Still, people raise concerns that flying is not as safe as it used to be. Although many of these people vow never to fly again, there really is no reason to fear, because flying is the safest it has ever been.

There has only been one minor commercial plane crash in United States air space in the past few years. However, there are still many concerns that it could happen here. On January 7th, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said that airlines in the United States would need to develop new safety management programs so there would be a similar process throughout the whole industry. Most plane crashes between 2001 and 2010 could have been averted with a proper safety management policy in place. The FAA wants to look for ways to make flying in the United States safer for everyone.

Often we ponder if it is safe to fly with international threats and planes disappearing around the world. In actuality, the number of plane crashes in 2014 was the lowest it has ever been in history. There were only six commercial plane crashes last year and only seven hundred fatalities. Although it had a few hundred more fatalities than 2013 which only had about two hundred, we see that air travel is not becoming more insecure, but rather is getting safer and more reliable. These numbers are half of what they were in 2000 with 12 plane crashes and over 14,000 fatalities. We do not realize how little the chance of us being in a plane crash is. When going on a plane you should choose an airline that you hear of all the time and that has a good safety record. However, if you choose one of the best 29 airlines in the world, there is only a one in 4.7 million chance of being in a crash and a one in 19.8 million chance of being killed in a crash. To put this into perspective, in 2013 three billion people got on a plane and only 210 died.

Many people see in the news the planes that go down like Malaysia Airlines flight 370 that is still missing. We still do not know what happened to MH370, but planes disappearing is a rare occurrence. Aviation has made many improvements over the years, such as being able to land in dense fog and in high winds. Many people are afraid to fly because they are afraid of being in a plane crash, but the fact is, you are more likely to be killed in a short ten minute car ride on the way to the airport, than being killed in a crash on the plane. Your chances of being in a car crash are one in 95 while in a plane crash is one in 71. There were only 200 aviation related deaths in 2013 compared to the 35,000 killed in car crashes.

We see now that some everyday activities are much more risky than flying. As many other things, like driving are improving in safety, but flying is still much safer. Many of the people that see these plane crashes, still refuse to fly even though flying is still very safe and improving in safety. We need to stop thinking of flying as an unsafe way to get from one place to another. It is actually one of the safest ways to travel long distances.