

Randal Robert Craft, Jr.



After 52 years of providing advice and conducting litigation (including trials and appeals) concerning aviation, product liability, mass disasters, and insurance, Bob has retired from Holland & Knight LLP, where he was a partner and led the firm's National Aviation Industry Team.

Bob graduated from the University of Texas (Austin) with an aerospace-engineering degree. Following work in the aircraft industry, he obtained a law degree from Georgetown University Law Center, where he was selected as the Center's Outstanding Advocate.

Bob's primary role was as lead counsel in major air-crash cases and National Transportation Safety Board investigations throughout the United States, including, among major crashes, the TWA Flight 800 B747 crash near Long Island, the American Airlines MD82 accident at Little Rock, the USAir F28 crash at New York City, the runway collision between a USAir B737 and a Skywest Metroliner in Los Angeles, the United Airlines DC10 crash at Sioux City, and the American Airlines DC10 crash in Chicago. He further provided advice and representation for related investigations by the Federal Aviation Administration and Congress. As to major accidents outside the U.S., he was, for example, co-lead counsel for Pan American on the Tenerife B747 collision and lead counsel for UPS in connection with the B747 crash in Dubai, and he was U.S. lead counsel for Air France on the Concorde crash, for Turkish Airlines on the B737 crash in Amsterdam, and for General Electric, CFM, and SNECMA on the B737 crash in Kegworth, England. He also advised and represented clients involved in many other less-well-known U.S. and foreign crashes, including crashes of military, corporate, and general-aviation aircraft. And, among other appellate roles, he represented IATA as an amicus in the U.S. Supreme Court cases of *TWA v. Franklin Mint* and *Air France v. Saks*.

In non-aviation matters, Bob has extensive experience as U.S. lead counsel in numerous consumer and industrial product-liability cases for domestic and foreign manufacturers such as Lego. His clients additionally included numerous insurers.

In June 2015, Bob was given the rare honor of presenting the Spring Lecture at the New York State Court of Appeals (New York State's highest court), and he has been a frequent speaker and writer on the handling of aviation and space issues, mass disasters, and product liability. His articles have appeared in the *Journal of Air Law and Commerce*, *The New York Times*, the *National Law Journal*, the *Journal*

of Space Law, and various bar-association and foreign publications. In addition, he co-authored the first book on the government-contractor defense.

Because of his extensive experience in dealing with the NTSB, Bob was invited by the NTSB to be the moderator of the panel on accident investigation, proprietary information, and tort litigation at the NTSB Symposium on Transportation Safety and Law in Washington, D.C. in 2000, where he also served on the final panel discussing solutions for safety. In December 2007, he spoke at NTSB headquarters to NTSB technical staff on the roles and concerns of outside counsel of parties in NTSB investigations, and he was invited back to give the same presentation to NTSB Board members and other staff members in October 2008. In February 2015, Bob was a leading participant in the NTSB General Counsel's Listening Session. Much earlier, he was one of two defense counsel who participated in the by-invitation-only NTSB forum on the function of NTSB accident investigations sponsored by the RAND Institute of Civil Justice in Santa Monica in 1998. Also in 1998, he was featured in an Air Transport World strategic-management article, "In Disaster's Wake," which addressed airlines' readiness to respond properly to an accident.

Bob has spoken on numerous other occasions about handling NTSB investigations. In 2005, he was a speaker on what airline risk managers need to know about NTSB investigations at the IATA Airline Insurance Conference in London. In 2003, he was the moderator of a panel on NTSB accident investigations at the American Bar Association Aviation Litigation Seminar in New York City. As earlier examples, he spoke on this topic at the ABA Forum on Air and Space Law Conference in San Francisco in 1998, at the European Aerospace Risk Management Seminar in Amsterdam in 1994, and at the Air Line Pilots Association Attorneys' Accident Investigation Course in Washington, D.C., in 1990.

He was the General Counsel of the Wings Club Foundation for 30 years and earlier served on its Board. He also was the General Counsel of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics when it was headquartered in New York City. As one of the four founders, he became the second chairman of the Council of New York Law Associates, now named The Lawyers' Alliance for New York, which is the leading pro-bono provider of business and transactional legal services for non-profit organizations in the U.S. This led to his doing volunteer legal work for New York City Ballet, where he served as General Counsel and on the Board and the Executive Committee for over 40 years.