

Speaker Biographies

Robert L. Sumwalt
Board Member
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, D.C.

Robert Sumwalt was appointed by the National Transportation Safety Board in 2006 by President George W. Bush and reappointed to an additional 5-year term by President Barack Obama in 2011. He serves a two-year term as Vice Chairman of the Board. Since joining the Board he has been a fierce advocate for improving safety in all modes of transportation.

Robert was a pilot for 32 years, including 24 years as an airline pilot. He co-authored a book on aircraft accidents and wrote chapters pertaining to aircraft accident investigation in two books. He has written extensively on transportation safety matters, having published over 90 articles and papers.

He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of South Carolina and a Master of Aeronautical Science (with Distinction) from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, specializing in Aviation/Aerospace Safety Systems and Human Factors Aviation Systems.

Nathan J. “Nate” Snorteland, M.S., P.E.
Director, Risk Management Center
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Nate Snorteland has been the Director of the Risk Management Center since 2009. The Risk Management Center currently has a staff of more than 60 senior dam and levee engineers in Denver, Pittsburgh, Louisville, and other locations throughout the country. The Risk Management Center is responsible for supporting Headquarters' management of risks for the Corps of Engineers portfolio of more than 700 dams and more than 14,000 miles of levees. The RMC also provides dam and levee technical advice nationally and internationally. The RMC provides technical services to Headquarters, Divisions, and Districts at their request.

Mr. Snorteland spent the first part of his career in the Bureau of Reclamation's Technical Services Center working in the Materials Engineering and Research Laboratory performing seismic and construction-related research and supporting structural concrete and roller compacted concrete construction activities throughout Reclamation. He then moved to the Geotechnical Services Division designing and constructing modifications to Bradbury Dam, Pueblo Dam, Casitas Dam, Keechelus Dam, and Salmon Lake Dam and finally helping design and construct the new Ridges Basin Dam in Southwestern Colorado in 2005. He worked in Reclamation's Dam Safety Office first as the program manager for the Upper Colorado Region, then the Mid-Pacific Region, and finally as the Risk Manager for Reclamation's portfolio of dams. He also was the program manager responsible for the Folsom Dam modifications and Reclamation's portion of the Folsom Dam Joint Federal Project.

He holds a Bachelors of Science in Civil engineering from the University of Colorado, Denver and a Master's of Science in Geotechnical Engineering from Virginia Tech. He is a registered professional engineer in the State of Colorado.