



THE CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

February 13, 2004

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Performance and results were highlighted this week at the NTSB. The Office of Highway Safety staff did an excellent job in presenting the accident report for the Omaha, Nebraska school bus accident that claimed the lives of three students and one adult.

SWAT results are up and a new partnership has begun with AASHTO. Additional emphasis on performance and timeliness was demonstrated by the

Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Investigations staff who produced the San Juan Capistrano, California report in less than one year.

Special thanks to all at the NTSB who are increasing their focus on our performance and results.

Ellen Engleman Conners

Safety With A Team

A New Partnership Begins

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Executive Director John Horsley, NTSB Chairman Ellen Engleman Conners, Director of Highway Safety Joe Osterman, and Director of Safety Recommendations Elaine Weinstein agreed to partner in safety and work to close outstanding safety recommendations. AASHTO is a nonprofit association representing highway and transportation departments in the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The NTSB has issued 49 recommendations to AASHTO, often asking for their help in increasing safety measures throughout the United States.



Joe Osterman, Ellen Engleman Conners, John Horsley, and Elaine Weinstein

Performance and Results Kudos to the RPH Staff

Congratulations to **Mike Flanigan**, Investigator-In-Charge, and the Office of Railroad, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials Safety for completing the investigation of a San Juan Capistrano, California railroad accident in less than one year. The accident occurred on April 1, 2003, when an eastbound National Railroad Passenger Corporation train struck and killed two maintenance-of-way workers. The NTSB determined that the probable cause of the accident was the inattentiveness of the assigned lookout as well as his failure to comply with applicable rules by posting advance lookouts or requesting another means of protection from train movements.

Did You Know?

The Office of Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety (RPH) has 39 total employees, 25 of whom are accident investigators. In 2003, they launched on 15 investigations, and are currently working on 21 accident reports.

National Transportation Safety Board

“Kids in the Back Seat” Campaign



"The back seat is a much safer place for children than the front seat, and we have been working for years to get that message out," said Chairman Engleman Conners.

At a press conference in Washington DC, Chairman Engleman Conners; Chuck Hurley, Executive Director, Air Bag & Seat Belt Safety Campaign; and the Rev. Douglas A. Greenaway, Executive Director, National Women, Infants & Children Association emphasized the importance

of properly restraining children in the back seat. A recent study by the Campaign found that the lives of more than 1,700 children have been saved between 1996 and 2001 because they were sitting in a rear seat. **Elaine Weinstein** and **Stephanie Perkins** also attended the press conference.

On the Hill...

The Office of Government and Industry Affairs updated Members of Congress on general aviation accidents that occurred in their states, prepared and sent the abstract for the Omaha, Nebraska bus accident to the Hill, and notified Hill staff of the February 26th Board meeting on the Charlotte, North Carolina Air Midwest Express final report. They also worked with the General Counsel's Office and the Office of Marine Safety to provide an update on the Staten Island Ferry Accident to Congressman Vito Fossella's staff.



Board Public Meeting Focuses on School Bus Safety



The Office of Research and Engineering developed an animation to demonstrate the view from the accident school bus driver's seat just prior to the accident.

The Board met to determine the cause of a fatal school bus crash in Omaha, Nebraska, on October 13, 2001, that claimed the lives of three children and one adult.

The NTSB determined that the probable cause of this accident was the failure of the Nebraska Department of Roads to recognize and correct the hazardous condition in the work zone created by the irregular geometry of the roadway, the narrow lane widths, and the speed limit. Contributing to the accident was the accident bus driver's inability to maintain the bus within the lane due to the perceived or actual threat of a frontal collision with the approaching eastbound motor coach and the accident bus driver's unfamiliarity with the accident vehicle.

Special thanks to the OHS team who worked on this report — Investigator in Charge **Gary Van Etten, Deborah Taylor, George Black, Larry Yohe, Ron Kaminski, Paula Sind-Prunier, Larry Jackson, Mark Bagnard, and Robert Accetta.**

Did You Know?

The Office of Highway Safety (OHS) has 34 total employees, 18 of whom are accident investigators. OHS worked over 5,000 hours (the equivalent of 2.5 man-years) on this investigation and report. In addition, since this accident occurred, they initiated 21 major investigations, 73 field or incident investigations, and completed 14 major board reports and two public hearings.