

## THE CHAIRMAN'S CORNER



Friday, June 25, 2004

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Welcome aboard to Debbie Hersman, our newest NTSB Board Member. It was a privilege to be asked to swear her in with the official oath. It's a time of solemnity and reflects the honor one has in the privilege to serve as an appointed Board Member at the National Transportation Safety Board.

The Board always has a "busy season," and the recent accidents reported on last week reflect the dedication of the staff in their commitment to finding "what went wrong -- and why." Most importantly, out of the tragedy, good must come -- and our safety recommendations reflect our continuous and aggressive pursuit of safety. (See page two for story.)

Kudos to Joe Osterman and Bob Chipkevich and their respective departments for the excellence and thoroughness of

these investigations. Thanks, also, to Dr. Vern Ellingstad and the NTSB's Office of Research and Engineering, whose services not only provide much of the laboratory analysis but also provide the excellent modeling and simulations, animation and graphics that illustrate the accident reports.

Member Hersman is joining a great team at the National Transportation Safety Board-- dedicated, compassionate, committed to its mission and darn good at what they do!

*Ellen Engleman Conners*

## Debbie Hersman Becomes Safety Board Member



Chairman Engleman Conners, Member Hersman, Vice-Chairman Rosenker, Member Carmody and Member Healing (l-r)

**Deborah Hersman** was sworn in on June 21st as the newest Member of the National Transportation Safety Board. Before coming to the Board, Member Hersman spent five years as a senior professional staff member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation. She also served as Staff Director and Senior Legislative Aide to Congressman Bob Wise of West Virginia from 1992 to 1999. In her Senate position, Member Hersman was responsible for the legislative agenda, oversight and policy initiatives for surface transportation issues, including railroad regulation, safety and passenger issues, truck and bus safety, pipeline safety and hazardous materials transportation safety. She was also extensively involved with aviation and maritime issues, and worked on transportation security issues following the attacks of September 11, 2001.

She was a key staff member involved in the passage of the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act of 1999, which created a new truck and bus safety administration within the Department of Transportation, the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 and numerous transportation safety and security measures. She also worked extensively on issues related to Amtrak.

Member Hersman earned Bachelor of Arts degrees in Political Science and International Studies from Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia, and a Master of Science degree in Conflict Analysis and Resolution from George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia.

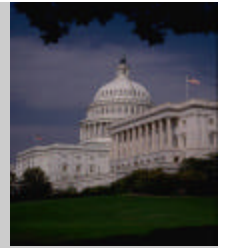
## NTSB ALL HANDS MESSAGES



Over 120 applicants have registered in the **SafetyJobs** system since its implementation on June 22. If you have not registered, the Human Resources Division is offering registration assistance on June 30<sup>th</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup> from 9:30-10:30 and 2:30-3:30. Contact **Marquee Holmes** to reserve your seat. Please get approval from your supervisor and bring a e-copy of your resume.

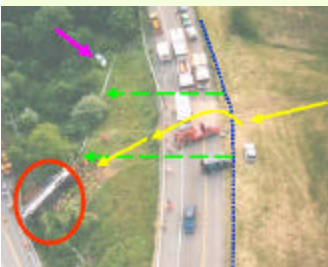
### On the Hill...

Chairman Engleman Conners met with the House Subcommittees on Aviation and Forests & Forests Health to discuss the NTSB's recent investigation into the crash of a firefighting aircraft near St. George, Utah.



## NTSB Meets on Two Accidents

On June 22nd, the National Transportation Safety Board met in its Washington, DC headquarters to determine the probable cause of two accidents that killed six people and injured 53 more.



The scene of an Arrow bus accident that occurred near Victor, New York

In the first accident, the Board determined that the driver of an Arrow Line, Inc. motorcoach fell asleep while driving due to his deliberate failure to get adequate rest during his off-duty hours. The accident occurred on Interstate 90 near Victor, New York on June 23, 2002 when the severely fatigued driver fell asleep and the bus ran off the road, vaulted over an entrance ramp, landed, and rolled onto its side. The report listed several factors contributing to the accident, including a second Arrow Line, Inc. motorcoach driver who, knowing that the driver was severely fatigued, did nothing to stop him from driving, inadequate oversight of drivers by Arrow Line, Inc and its holding company, Coach USA and the lack of occupant protection for motorcoach passengers. Five passengers on the bus were killed and 52 were injured.

In the second accident, it was determined that inadequate welding, insufficient radiographic inspection during manufacture and lack of periodic testing during the service life was the probable cause of an April 15, 2003 nurse tank failure that released 1300 gallons of anhydrous ammonia, killing one. Nurse tanks are used in agricultural operations for injecting anhydrous ammonia into the soil to increase the nitrogen content. Two loaders were filling the tank with the poisonous and corrosive gas at a tank filling facility near Calamus, Iowa when a 53.5 inch long split opened near the right center at the tank bottom. The accident seriously injured the two loaders, one of whom died nine days later.

More information on these accidents can be found on the NTSB website at the address: <http://www.nts.gov/events/Boardmeeting.htm>.



The failed seam on a nurse tank in Calamus, Iowa

### Did You Know...?

The Office of Highway Safety has over 25 investigators who conduct accident investigations from NTSB Headquarters in Washington, DC and regional offices in Parsippany, New Jersey, Atlanta, Georgia, Arlington, Texas and Gardena, California.