

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D.C.

ISSUED: September 24, 1981

Forwarded to:

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SAFETY RECOMMENDATION(S)

H-81-64 and -65

The National Transportation Safety Board has concluded a special study 1/ which examined fatalities and injuries as a result of persons riding in the cargo areas of pickup trucks. 2/ The study was made to demonstrate the need for model guidelines prohibiting passengers from riding in the open cargo area of a vehicle, and to make available information about the dangers to passengers riding in the cargo area of a vehicle.

An average of 242 persons were killed each year from 1975 through 1979 in accidents while riding in the cargo areas of pickup trucks, according to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS). In addition, an average of 167 persons suffered incapacitating injuries and 142 persons received nonincapacitating injuries each year.

Although vehicle manufacturers do not represent that the cargo areas of pickup trucks are suitable for carrying passengers, they could provide several valuable services toward the resolution of this problem. Currently, there is no information on the vehicle that cites the danger of riding in the cargo area. A reminder, such as the printed stickers on gas caps about using "unleaded gasoline only," in plain view of passengers might deter some persons from riding there. An additional reminder would be useful if placed in the vehicle owner's manual. In that way, at least the owner of the vehicle (who drives the vehicle most often) will be reminded not to carry passengers in the cargo area.

1/ For more detailed information, read Special Study--"Fatalities and Injuries Associated with Riding in Cargo Areas of Pickup Trucks" (NTSB-HSS-81-2).

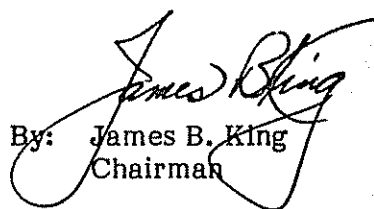
2/ Includes all pickup trucks, with or without caps, campers, stake, and small dump bodies.

Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association and the Automobile Importers of America, Inc.:

Encourage their members to provide an effective reminder to passengers not to ride in the open cargo area of a vehicle. (Class II, Priority Action) (H-81-64)

Encourage their members to include information in the vehicle owner's manual concerning the hazards of riding in the open cargo area of a vehicle. (Class II, Priority Action) (H-81-65)

KING, Chairman, and GOLDMAN and BURSLEY, Members, concurred in these recommendations. DRIVER, Vice Chairman, and McADAMS, Member, did not participate.


By: James B. King
Chairman