

8. The truck driver did not have sufficient time to reduce the speed of the vehicle to a point where evasive actions may have been effective.
9. Had the truckdriver worn his seatbelt he would have been secured to the seat more firmly and might have been able to control his truck better after the initial impact with the curb.
10. The Ryder School did not provide behind-the-wheel training in counteracting the steering effects of blowouts; however, it is questionable whether training alone could have prevented the steering effect in this accident.
11. Answers to questions dealing with driver training with respect to controlling front tire failures must await completion of a BCMS study in this area.
12. The W-section guardrail installed on the median and shoulders of the Turnpike was not designed to retain and redirect heavy commercial vehicles, traveling at Turnpike speeds.
13. The automobile driver and the busdriver had no opportunity to take evasive action to avoid the errant truck.

PROBABLE CAUSE

The National Transportation Safety Board determines that the probable cause of the accident was the sudden deflation of the left front tire on the tractor which caused the driver to lose control of the vehicle. The sudden deflation resulted from a gross failure of the tire sidewall due to under inflation caused by an undetected nail puncture.

Contributing to the fatalities and injuries was the inadequacy of the median guardrail to prevent the tractor-semitrailer from entering into the opposing lanes of traffic.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the Federal Highway Administration:

1. Upon completion of the research dealing with the development of a commercial driver training course, distribute such training course information to all professional commercial driver training schools. (Recommendation H-75-9)
2. Amend the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (Section 391.11) to require that all candidate drivers be familiar through

formal training with such driving emergencies as front tire failures, brake fade, jackknife situations. (Recommendation H-75-10)

3. Expedite that portion of the FHWA research project, "Advanced Vehicle Protection Systems," that will provide data for design of new barrier construction and improvements to existing systems. Dynamic vehicle impact tests should be made using both intercity buses and heavy trucks. (Recommendation H-75-11)

BY THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

/s/ JOHN H. REED
Chairman

/s/ FRANCIS H. McADAMS
Member

/s/ LOUIS M. THAYER
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March 12, 1975