



# National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

## Safety Recommendation

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**Date:** September 8, 2000

**In reply refer to:** H-00-25

Mr. Edward M. Emmett  
President and Chief Operating Officer  
National Industrial Transportation League  
1700 North Moore Street, Suite 1900  
Arlington, Virginia 22209

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The National Transportation Safety Board is an independent Federal agency charged by Congress with investigating transportation accidents, determining their probable cause, and making recommendations to prevent similar accidents from occurring. We are providing the following information to urge your organization to take action on the safety recommendation in this letter. The Safety Board is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives.

The recommendation is derived from the Safety Board's special investigation of truck parking areas. As a result of this investigation, the Safety Board has issued 10 safety recommendations, one of which is addressed to the National Industrial Transportation League. Information supporting the recommendation is discussed below. The Safety Board would appreciate a response from you within 90 days addressing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement our recommendation.

In April 1999, the Safety Board began a Truck/Bus Safety Initiative and to date has held four public hearings<sup>1</sup> to obtain information from a variety of sources about the relevant safety issues regarding trucks and buses and on how to address them. Participating in these hearings were representatives from the truck and bus industries, vehicle and equipment manufacturers, labor unions, safety advocacy groups, and various State and Federal agencies. One issue, emerging from hearing testimony, was the insufficient number of parking spaces<sup>2</sup> for truckdrivers who want or need to use them.

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<sup>1</sup> Held between April 14 and 16, 1999, the first hearing focused on motor carrier oversight. Held between August 31 and September 2, 1999, the second hearing examined advanced technology applications that may reduce the number of accidents involving trucks and buses. Held between October 20 and 22, 1999, the third hearing reviewed the highway transportation safety aspects of the North American Free Trade Agreement. Held on January 20 and 21, 2000, the fourth hearing examined commercial driver licensing and medical certification issues.

<sup>2</sup> Parking spaces refer to all authorized nonemergency parking areas, both public and private.

Several States have begun conducting studies to determine where parking shortages exist and to examine innovative ways to alleviate the shortages. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will use the information that has been developed by the States to support its upcoming Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21) section 4027 study, which builds on its 1996 research. The 1996 FHWA-funded study *Commercial Driver Rest and Parking Requirements: Making Space for Safety*<sup>3</sup> was conducted by the Trucking Research Institute<sup>4</sup> in response to Senate recommendations to evaluate “the adequacy of places for truckdrivers to stop and rest, both public and private.”<sup>5</sup>

The FHWA is conducting the follow-up commercial motor vehicle parking study, as mandated by Congress in TEA-21 section 4027 on June 9, 1998. The purpose of this study, which is to be completed in 2001, is “to determine the location and quantity of parking facilities at commercial truck stops and travel plazas and public rest areas that could be used by motor carriers to comply with Federal hours-of-service rules.” This study differs from the FHWA 1996 effort in that it covers the entire national highway system (150,000 miles) and all facilities, both public and private.

The complete undertaking is funded for \$500,000 per year for 3 years (FY ‘99 through FY ‘01). During FY ‘99, about \$80,000 was spent on the FHWA Rest Area Forum and its associated efforts. The results of the Rest Area Forum were published in *Rest Area Forum: Summary of Proceedings*,<sup>6</sup> which identifies for Federal, State, and private sector customers how best to proceed to improve parking. Approximately \$420,000 of the FY ‘99 funds were allocated to:

1. conduct a survey of 2,000 randomly selected drivers to understand their decisionmaking process for parking choices;
2. develop a methodology for assessing the parking shortages, performing an independent evaluation of the extent; and
3. present the geographical distribution of parking shortages.

The remainder of the funds are to be used to create partnership groups in each of the 50 States, to have a national contractor inventory, and to analyze the parking shortages in each State. In conjunction with the contractor, each State will then develop plans to reduce the parking shortages.

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<sup>3</sup> FHWA-MC-96-0010. May 1996.

<sup>4</sup> The research component of the American Trucking Associations Foundation, Inc., an affiliate of the American Trucking Associations.

<sup>5</sup> The study consisted of an inventory of parking, direct observation, surveys, and calculations of capacity and demand.

<sup>6</sup> FHWA-RD-00-034. December 1999.

On May 16, 2000, the FHWA cohosted with the contractor a meeting of stakeholders<sup>7</sup> in the truck rest parking study. Shippers, brokers, and consignees were not represented at this meeting. Shippers, brokers, and consignees frequently influence truck schedules, and, therefore, the Safety Board concludes that they should be an integral part of any solution to the truck parking area dilemma.

Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the National Industrial Transportation League:

Participate in the Federal Highway Administration ongoing truck rest parking study that is being conducted per the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century section 4027 legislation. (H-00-25)

The Safety Board also issued safety recommendations to the Federal Highway Administration; Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration; Governors of Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, and Washington; American Trucking Associations, Inc.; Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association; National Private Truck Council; and National Association of Truck Stop Operators. In your response to the recommendation in this letter, please refer to Safety Recommendation H-00-25. If you need additional information, you may call (202) 314-6170.

Chairman HALL and Members HAMMERSCHMIDT, GOGLIA, and BLACK concurred in this recommendation.

By: Jim Hall  
Chairman

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<sup>7</sup> Attending the meeting were the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration; the Safety Board; the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation; the University of Tennessee; the University of Maryland; the National Association of Truck Stop Operators; the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association; the American Trucking Associations Foundation, Inc.; the Parents Against Tired Truckdrivers; the National Private Truck Council; the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance; the International Association of Chiefs of Police; the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials; and truckdrivers.