



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D. C. 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: April 1, 1992

In Reply Refer To: H-92-18

Honorable Lynn Martin
Secretary
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20210

On June 26, 1991, about 1:50 p.m., a Greyhound bus traveling from Cleveland, Ohio, to Washington, D.C., ran off the right side of the roadway and overturned on the Pennsylvania Turnpike near Donegal, Pennsylvania. One passenger was fatally injured, the driver and 14 passengers were injured, and 1 passenger was uninjured.

On August 3, 1991, about 6:45 a.m., a Greyhound bus traveling from New York City to Buffalo, New York, ran off the right side of the roadway, and overturned on State Route 79 near Caroline, New York. The driver and 33 passengers were injured, and 5 passengers were uninjured.¹

The Safety Board's investigation of these accidents focused on driver training issues. The Safety Board's 1986 study² on truckdriver training also addressed the issue of training extensively. In this study, the Safety Board recognized that commercial vehicle driving requires special skills and stressed the need for formal training to ensure that a driver has the skills necessary for safe operation of a commercial vehicle:

An upgraded training system can be expected to produce increasingly skilled new drivers. As pointed out, the more a person learns in training about proper truck handling, the less he or she will have to learn in service. Nevertheless, the instructive role of experience is unlikely to be eliminated. When a new driver is just beginning to build up on-the-job experience,

¹For more detailed information, read Highway Accident Report--Greyhound Bus Run-Off-The-Road Accidents: Donegal, Pennsylvania, June 26, 1991, and Caroline, New York, August 3, 1991 (NTSB/HAR-92/01).

²Safety Study--Training, Licensing, and Qualification Standards for Drivers of Heavy Trucks (NTSB/SS-86/02).

qualified supervision can help ensure that he or she develops only safe driving habits. Such supervision also can minimize the risk to the driver and to others on the road. An effective way of supervising new drivers would be through an apprenticeship program. There is currently no such nationally organized program in the United States.

Consequently, the Safety Board made the following recommendation to the Department of Labor (DOL):

H-86-26

Draft and issue national standards for apprenticeship programs in commercial truck driving, and include commercial truck driving in the Department of Labor's list of Occupations Recognized as Apprenticeable.

The recommendation has been classified as "Open-Acceptable Action" because officials at DOL stated that they were working on this. However, because the Safety Board concluded that the busdrivers in the Donegal, Pennsylvania, and Caroline, New York, accidents did not possess adequate training and experience to operate intercity buses safely, the Safety Board believes that the DOL should increase the scope of the commercial truckdriver apprenticeship program to include commercial busdrivers.

Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that the U.S. Department of Labor:

Increase the scope of the commercial truckdriver apprenticeship program to include commercial busdrivers. (Class II, Priority Action) (H-92-18)

Also as a result of its investigation, the Safety Board issued Safety Recommendations H-92-13 through -17 to the Greyhound Lines, Inc..

COUGHLIN, Acting Chairman, and LAUBER, HART, HAMMERSCHMIDT, and KOLSTAD, Members, concurred in this recommendation.

By: Susan M. Coughlin
Acting Chairman