



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

Office of the Chairman

July 8, 2013

The Honorable Cynthia L. Quarterman
Administrator
Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety
Administration
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Quarterman:

Thank you for your April 24, 2013, letter to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) regarding Safety Recommendations H-11-1 and H-11-4 through -6, stated below. The NTSB issued these recommendations to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) on September 2, 2011, as a result of our investigation of the October 22, 2009, rollover of a truck-tractor and cargo tank semitrailer carrying liquefied petroleum gas and subsequent fire in Indianapolis, Indiana.

H-11-1

Require all intrastate and interstate hazardous materials carriers to submit annually the number and types of US Department of Transportation specification cargo tanks that are owned or leased in addition to data displayed on the specification plates of such tanks and, if necessary, modify the appropriate database to accept additional data fields.

We are disappointed that neither PHMSA nor the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) modified its registration forms or databases to collect the requested cargo tank information annually, as recommended. As the actions taken do not satisfy this recommendation and no further action is planned by either agency to address it, Safety Recommendation H-11-1 is classified "Closed—Unacceptable Action."

H-11-4

Work with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, as appropriate, to develop and disseminate guidance to assist hazardous materials carriers in implementing comprehensive cargo tank motor vehicle rollover prevention programs, including the active participation of drivers, dispatchers, and management through training, loading practices, delivery schedules, and acquisition of equipment.

We are encouraged by the efforts that PHMSA and the FMCSA have already completed to address this recommendation, including (1) development and distribution of a rollover prevention video for cargo tank drivers, (2) creation of an interactive mapping system showing areas on US roadways with the highest frequency of large truck rollovers, and (3) a research project analyzing driver-related factors and countermeasures relating to cargo tank motor vehicle rollovers. Pending completion of actions based on analysis of the human factors research project, Safety Recommendation H-11-4 is classified “Open—Acceptable Response.”

H-11-5

Conduct a comprehensive analysis of all available accident data on US Department of Transportation specification cargo tanks to identify cargo tank designs and the associated dynamic forces that pose a higher risk of failure and release of hazardous materials in accidents. Once such cargo tanks have been identified, study the dynamic forces acting on susceptible structures under varying accident conditions and develop performance standards to eliminate or mitigate these risks.

H-11-6

Once the performance standards in Safety Recommendation H-11-5 have been developed, require that all newly manufactured cargo tanks comply with the performance standards.

We support your continued comprehensive analysis of cargo tank rollover accidents and your efforts to ensure collection of complete and accurate data. Pending completion of these projects and the development and implementation of the recommended standards, Safety Recommendations H-11-5 and -6 are classified “Open—Acceptable Response.”

We encourage you to respond electronically to this letter and to submit future updates regarding your progress in addressing Safety Recommendations H-11-4 through -6 at correspondence@ntsb.gov. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

cc: Ms. Camille Mittelholtz, Acting Director
Office of Safety, Energy, and Environment
Office of Transportation Policy