



Office of the Chairman

National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

JAN 23 2002

Honorable Ellen G. Engleman
Administrator
Research and Special Programs Administration
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Ms. Engleman:

This is in reference to the National Transportation Safety Board's Safety Recommendations I-93-1 and -2, stated below, which the Safety Board issued to the Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) on November 30, 1993. These recommendations were issued to RSPA as a result of the Board's investigation of the March 1, 1993, incident involving a leak from a compressed gas cylinder on a tractor/semitrailer along Interstate 35 near Des Moines, Iowa.

I-93-1

Coordinate with the Compressed Gas Association, Inc. [CGA] in amending Pamphlet C-6, *Standard for Visual Inspection of Compressed Gas Cylinders*, to require the use of a thread gauge, such as an L9 or equivalent, to measure the interior section neck threads for acceptance or rejection during periodic examination of cylinders that are used to transport gases with corrosive properties.

I-93-2

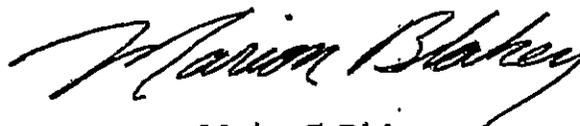
Prohibit the use of cylinders that do not meet the acceptance criteria for cylinder neck threads established in CGA Pamphlet C-6, *Standard for Visual Inspection of Compressed Gas Cylinders*.

In previous correspondence dated February 13, 2001, RSPA informed the Safety Board that it was working with the CGA to develop an alternative inspection method for determining the adequacy of neck threads during periodic examination of cylinders because RSPA and the CGA did not believe that use of a thread gauge, as called for in I-93-1, was a workable solution in that a thread gauge does not adequately detect all thread corrosion that can result in significant leakage. In our letter dated July 20, 2001, the Safety Board indicated that we looked forward to receiving the results of RSPA and CGA's efforts to develop an alternative inspection program, but because of the time that has elapsed, Safety Recommendations I-93-1 and -2 were classified "Open—Unacceptable Response."



The Safety Board pointed out again in its July 20, 2001, letter that the severity of the corrosion to the cylinder threads on the cylinders involved in the Des Moines incident was not evident during the post-incident visual inspections. Thus, visual inspection alone should not be the criteria by which cylinders are rejected or accepted. The Safety Board is aware that the CGA's Pamphlet C-6 was recently revised and published last August. The revisions to Pamphlet C-6 do not accomplish the objective of the Board's recommendation in that criteria for accepting or rejecting cylinders are still based on visual inspection rather than some quantifiable measure of cylinder neck threads, such as a micrometer or a controlled-diameter go/no-go device that gauges the thread crests in the L-9 portion of the threads. Since the intent of the Board's Safety Recommendations I-93-1 and -2 has not been met, and in view of the time that has elapsed since the recommendations were issued, we have classified Safety Recommendations I-93-1 and I-93-2 "Closed—Unacceptable Action."

Sincerely,



Marion C. Blakey
Chairman

cc: Mr. Robert Clarke, Safety and Health Team Leader
Office of Transportation Policy Development