



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

AUG 7 2003

Office of the Vice Chairman

Mr. Samuel G. Bonasso
Acting Administrator
Research and Special Programs Administration
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Bonasso:

Thank you for the April 29, 2003, response to the National Transportation Safety Board regarding Safety Recommendations H-90-91, H-93-34, and H-95-14, stated below. The Safety Board appreciates receiving a copy of the final rule under Docket HM-213, "Hazardous Materials: Requirements for Cargo Tanks," published on April 18, 2003. A brief discussion of the final rule as it relates to each of the three recommendations follows.

Safety Recommendation H-90-91 was issued to the Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) on September 12, 1990, as a result of the Safety Board's investigation of the cargo tank accident near Ashland, Virginia, on December 28, 1988.

H-90-91

Require controls for internal shut-off valves for the discharge system to be installed at remote locations on all newly constructed and currently authorized DOT specification cargo tanks that are used for the transportation of any hazardous materials.

The Safety Board notes that the final rule requires all MC 330, MC 331, and MC 338 cargo tank motor vehicles (CTMVs) to be equipped with on-truck remote shutoff devices; the retrofit must be accomplished by October 1, 2006. This part of the final rule meets the objective of Safety Recommendation H-90-91, which is classified "Closed—Acceptable Action."

Safety Recommendation H-93-34, stated below, was issued to RSPA on October 4, 1993, as a result of the Safety Board's investigation of the tank truck transfer accident near Rockville, Maryland, on May 12, 1993.

H-93-34

Require remote control mechanisms for internal shutoff valves to be marked for emergency use on all cargo tanks authorized for the transportation of hazardous materials.



The Safety Board notes that the HM-213 final rule requires all manually activated on-truck remote shutoff devices for closure of the internal valve to be marked "Emergency Shutoff," effective October 1, 2005. This part of the final rule satisfies Safety Recommendation H-93-34, which is classified "Closed—Acceptable Action."

Safety Recommendation H-95-14, stated below, was issued to RSPA on August 1, 1995, as a result of the Safety Board's investigation of the cargo tank semitrailer accident near Deltona, Florida, on September 6, 1994.

H-95-14

Revise inspection/testing requirements for all cargo tanks constructed of mild and high-strength, low-alloy steel that are used to transport hazardous materials to require at least once each year, or immediately when visual inspections indicate corrosion, measurement of the thickness of appurtenances (including ring stiffeners) that form air cavities adjacent to external cargo tank sheet material when the cargo tank sheet material cannot be visually inspected. If the thickness of the appurtenance materials has corroded to a predetermined percentage of its manufactured thickness, require that access to the tank sheet material within the air cavity be made and that the thickness of the tank sheet material be measured.

The Safety Board notes that the HM-213 final rule requires thickness testing of ring stiffeners and appurtenances on cargo tanks that are constructed of mild steel; high-strength, low-alloy steel; or aluminum. The rule also requires that the testing must be performed when the ring stiffeners and appurtenances are installed in a manner that precludes an external visual inspection of the cargo tank. In view of the requirement to test every 2 years instead of 1 year (as called for in the recommendation), Safety Recommendation H-95-14 is classified "Closed—Acceptable Alternate Action."

The Safety Board appreciates your efforts in completing this important rulemaking to improve the safety of CTMVs.

Sincerely,



Mark V. Rosenker
Vice Chairman

cc: Ms. Linda Lawson, Director
Office of Safety, Energy, and Environment
Office of Transportation Policy