



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Research and
Special Programs
Administration**

400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

DEC 28 2004

The Honorable Ellen Engleman Conners
Chairman
National Transportation Safety Board
Washington, DC 20594

Dear Chairman Engleman Conners:

This letter provides an update on National Transportation Safety Board Recommendation H-02-25 issued to the Research and Special Programs Administration (RPSA). The recommendation states:

Recommendation H-02-25

Revise the information about hydrogen in the North American Emergency Response Guidebook so that it specifically identifies the unique chemical and flammability properties of hydrogen.

RSPA Response

On September 4, 2004, RSPA published and distributed the 2004 Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG) to all states for distribution to emergency responders. The emergency response guidebook is published quadrennially in three languages (English, French and Spanish). The ERG is available on RSPA's website at <http://hazmat.dot.gov>. Specific information about the unique chemical and flammability properties of hydrogen has been incorporated. The information is on Guide 115, since Hydrogen, compressed (ID No. 1049) is assigned to Guide 115. The information appears in two sections of Guide 15, as follows:

1. Under POTENTIAL HAZARDS, in the section on FIRE OR EXPLOSION, the caution statement states:

- Vapors from liquefied gas are initially heavier than air and spread along ground.

CAUTION: Hydrogen (UN1049), Deuterium (UN1957) and Methane (UN1971) are lighter than air and will rise. Hydrogen and Deuterium fires are difficult to detect since they burn with an invisible flame. Use an alternate method of detection (thermal camera, broom handle, etc.)

2. Under EMERGENCY RESPONSE, in the section on FIRE, the caution statement states:

- **DO NOT EXTINGUISH A LEAKING GAS FIRE UNLESS LEAK CAN BE STOPPED. CAUTION: Hydrogen (UN1049) and Deuterium (UN1957) burn with an invisible flame.**

RSPA believes the addition of the hydrogen information and publication and distribution of the ERG satisfy safety recommendation H-02-25. Based upon this information, I request that you close this recommendation as "Closed-Acceptable Action."

If you have any questions, please contact me or James Wiggins, Director, Office of Policy and Program Support at (202) 366-4831.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Bonasso', written in a cursive style.

Samuel G. Bonasso
Deputy Administrator