



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

Office of the Chairman

October 23, 2013

The Honorable Cynthia Quarterman
Administrator
Pipeline and Hazardous
Materials Safety Administration
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Quarterman:

Thank you for your July 16, 2013, letter to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) regarding Safety Recommendations R-07-4 and R-08-13, stated below. The NTSB issued Safety Recommendation R-07-4 on April 25, 2007, to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) as a result of our investigation of the July 10, 2005, accident involving the head on collision of two Canadian National Railway freight trains in Anding, Mississippi. We issued Safety Recommendation R-08-13 on May 22, 2001, as a result of our investigation of our investigation of the October 20, 2006, derailment of a Norfolk Southern Company train while crossing the Beaver River railroad bridge in New Brighton, Pennsylvania.

R-07-4

With the assistance of the Federal Railroad Administration [FRA], require that railroads immediately provide to emergency responders accurate, real-time information regarding the identity and location of all hazardous materials on a train.

We are encouraged that PHMSA and the FRA are considering the use of technology by the railroads to update train consist information in real time to identify the location of all hazardous materials on a train, that PHMSA's *Hazardous Materials Automated Cargo Communication for Efficient and Safe Shipping* (HM-ACCESS) project continues evaluating the use of electronic shipping papers, and PHMSA will conduct pilot tests to evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of paperless electronic communication systems. Pending completion of these actions and the recommended action, Safety Recommendation R-07-4 is classified "Open—Acceptable Response."

R-08-13

With the assistance of the Federal Railroad Administration, evaluate the risks posed to train crews by unit trains transporting hazardous materials, determine the optimum separation requirements between occupied locomotives and

hazardous materials cars, and revise 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] 174.85 accordingly.

We are encouraged that the FRA has completed a review of 49 CFR Part 174, and that PHMSA and FRA are working together to determine the best path forward to modify, streamline, expand, or repeal regulations in 49 CFR Part 174 as recommended. Pending completion of the recommended action, Safety Recommendation R-08-13 is classified “Open—Acceptable Response.”

We encourage you to submit updates regarding your progress in addressing these recommendations at the following e-mail address: correspondence@ntsb.gov. If your response, including attachments, exceeds 10 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions. 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