

Open - Acceptable Response



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

APR 29 2010

Office of the Chairman

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

Dear Ms. Quarterman:

Thank you for the May 19, 2009, letter signed by Ms. Cynthia Douglass, then-Acting Deputy Administrator, regarding Safety Recommendations H-09-1 and -2, stated below, which the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) on March 5, 2009, as a result of the NTSB's special investigation report (SIR) of three accidents involving highway vehicles transporting bulk quantities of acetylene gas that occurred between July 25 and October 20, 2007, and the review of reports of a 2008 overturn accident of another vehicle. We apologize for the delay in responding.

1 H-09-01

Modify 49 *Code of Federal Regulations* 173.301 to clearly require (1) that cylinders be securely mounted on mobile acetylene trailers and other trailers with manifolded cylinders to reduce the likelihood of cylinders being ejected during an accident and (2) that the cylinder valves, piping, and fittings be protected from multidirectional impact forces that are likely to occur during highway accidents, including rollovers.

2 H-09-02

Require fail-safe equipment that ensures that operators of mobile acetylene trailers can perform unloading procedures only correctly and in sequence.

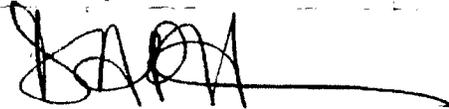
The NTSB considers the safety advisory (SA) that PHMSA issued on September 6, 2007, a good first step to inform and advise the industry about concerns with the handling of acetylene at cylinder changing plants and for mobile acetylene trailer systems. However, the NTSB points out that an SA, which does not constitute a regulation, cannot alone satisfy Safety Recommendations H-09-1 or -2, which request amendment to regulation 49 CFR 173.301.

The NTSB is pleased that PHMSA has been working with the Compressed Gas Association (CGA) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to address the issue of safe transport and the loading and discharge of acetylene from cylinders. The NTSB is also pleased that PHMSA is working with the CGA to revise CGA Standard G-1.6, *Recommended*

pleased that PHMSA is working with the CGA to revise CGA Standard G-1.6, *Recommended Practices for Mobile Acetylene Trailer Systems*, which the CGA has advised will include all NTSB recommendations and issues identified in the SIR and is scheduled for publication in 2010. We also support PHMSA's work with the International Standard Organization (ISO) in developing two new ISO standards, ISO 10961 and 11372, related to the design, construction, testing, and operation of acetylene cylinder assemblies.

The NTSB believes that PHMSA's continued cooperation with the CGA and ISO to address these issues will be beneficial. Pending the publication of the revised regulation, Safety Recommendations H-09-1 and -2 are classified "Open—Acceptable Response." The NTSB would appreciate receiving periodic updates on the status of PHMSA's efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DAH', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Deborah A.P. Hersman
Chairman

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