



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: July 12, 2012

In reply refer to: H-12-25 through -27

Mr. John Horsley
Executive Director
American Association of State Highway
and Transportation Officials
444 North Capitol Street, NW
Suite 249
Washington, DC 20001

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent Federal agency charged by Congress with investigating transportation accidents, determining their probable cause, and making recommendations to prevent similar accidents from occurring. We are providing the following information to urge your organization to take action on the safety recommendations in this letter, which are discussed more fully in the enclosed report of the investigation.¹

On June 5, 2012, the NTSB adopted its report concerning a March 12, 2011, accident, in which a motorcoach departed the roadway and collided with a vertical highway signpost, resulting in 15 fatalities and 18 injuries.

As a result of this investigation, the NTSB reiterated Safety Recommendations H-09-15 and -16, H-10-9, and H-08-13 to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and H-99-47 and -48 to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). In addition, the NTSB issued 16 new recommendations, including 7 to the FMCSA; 3 to NHTSA; 2 to the Federal Highway Administration; 1 to the American Bus Association, the National Motorcoach Network, and the United Motorcoach Association; and the following 3 recommendations to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials:

¹ *Motorcoach Run-Off-the-Road and Collision With Vertical Highway Signpost, Interstate 95 Southbound, New York City, New York, March 12, 2011*, Highway Accident Report NTSB/HAR-12/01 (Washington, DC: National Transportation Safety Board, 2012). The report can also be accessed at our website, <http://www.nts.gov>.

H-12-25

Work with the Federal Highway Administration to establish performance and selection guidelines for state transportation agencies to use in developing objective warrants for high-performance barriers applicable to new construction and rehabilitation projects where barrier replacement has been determined to be appropriate.

H-12-26

Evaluate the adequacy of barrier systems currently approved through National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report 350 or the *Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware* for safely redirecting commercial passenger vehicles and, if warranted, develop new barrier designs incorporating appropriate height and deflection characteristics capable of safely redirecting commercial passenger vehicles.

H-12-27

Once barrier testing has been completed and selection guidelines have been developed, revise chapter 5 of the *Roadside Design Guide* to incorporate guidance for the selection of high-performance barriers used in new construction and rehabilitation projects; this guidance should specifically address the unique considerations of shielding commercial passenger vehicles from point hazards.

These recommendations are derived from the NTSB's investigation and are consistent with the evidence we found and the analysis we performed. Chairman HERSMAN, Vice Chairman HART, and Members SUMWALT, ROSEKIND, and WEENER concurred in these recommendations.

The NTSB is vitally interested in these recommendations because they are designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate receiving a response from you within 90 days addressing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement these recommendations. When responding, please refer to Safety Recommendations H-12-25 through -27. We encourage you to submit your response electronically to correspondence@ntsb.gov. If your response includes attachments that exceed 5 megabytes, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions. To avoid confusion, please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

[Original Signed]

Deborah A.P. Hersman
Chairman