



Office of the Chairman

## National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

June 12, 2015

Mr. Timothy P. Butters  
Acting Administrator  
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials  
Safety Administration  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Acting Administrator Butters:

Thank you for your March 8, 2015, letter to the National Transportation Safety Board regarding Safety Recommendations H-09-1 and -2. We issued these recommendations to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration on March 5, 2009, as a result of our special investigation report of three accidents involving highway vehicles transporting bulk quantities of acetylene gas that occurred between July 25 and October 20, 2007, and our review of reports of a 2008 overturn accident of another vehicle.

### H-09-1

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.

### H-09-2

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

We are encouraged by your efforts to work with the Compressed Gas Association (CGA) and the International Organization for Standardization to develop the requirements necessary for the design, construction, and operation of mobile acetylene trailer systems. We note that, on January 23, 2015, you published a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) to incorporate by reference the CGA's Pamphlet G-1.6, *Standards for Mobile Acetylene Trailer Systems* (7th edition) (2011), and to require that mobile acetylene trailers be maintained, operated, and transported in accordance with that document.

We commend your cooperative efforts; however, on March 19, 2015, we submitted comments to the docket expressing our concern that the proposed NPRM changes do not address the cylinder securement, vehicle accident impact, or rollover protection requirements that we recommended. Nor do either the CGA standard or your NPRM require engineering controls to ensure that operators can perform an unloading procedure only correctly and in sequence. We urge you to reconsider your planned regulatory changes to address these shortcomings. Pending publication of a final rule that includes the recommended requirements, Safety Recommendations H-09-1 and -2 are classified “Open—Unacceptable Response.”

Please submit future updates electronically at [correspondence@ntsb.gov](mailto:correspondence@ntsb.gov) regarding Safety Recommendations H-09-1 and -2, and do not submit both an electronic and a hard copy of the same response.

Sincerely,

cc: Ms. Barbara McCann, Director  
Office of Safety, Energy, and  
Environment  
Office of the Under Secretary for Policy