

lane bridge on new location with a new roadway system.

An agency scoping meeting and a public scoping/information meeting are planned. Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate federal, state, and local agencies, and to private organizations and citizens who are known to be interested in this proposed project. Public input will be sought throughout the project via a series of public meetings to be held in 2003 and 2004. A Draft EIS will be prepared and a public hearing will be held. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the public meetings and public hearing.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the Nebraska Department of Roads, Iowa DOT or FHWA at the address provided in the caption **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation of Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Dated: January 16, 2003.

Edward W. Kosola,

Realty/Environmental Officer, Nebraska Division, Federal Highway Administration, Lincoln, Nebraska.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

Notice of Safety Advisory 2003-01.

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of Safety Advisory 2003-01.

SUMMARY: FRA is issuing Safety Advisory 2003-01 addressing the importance of the hazardous materials offeror's requirement to verify the compatibility of all packaging components, such as valves and gaskets, in the event a change is made to the chemical constituents of a hazardous material in a railroad tank car. This action is being taken to improve the safety and reliability of hazardous material shipments in transportation.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: William S. Schoonover, Specialist,

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On February 18, 1999, railroad tank car number UTLX 643593, spotted on an unloading rack at the Essroc Cement Corporation's Logansport cement plant near Clymers, Indiana, sustained a sudden and catastrophic rupture that propelled the tank an estimated 750 feet over a multistory storage tank. The 20,000-gallon tank car initially contained about 161,700 pounds (14,185 gallons) of a toxic and flammable hazardous waste being used as fuel for the plant's kilns. Fortunately, there were no injuries or fatalities. However, total damages, including property damage and costs from lost production, were estimated at nearly \$8.2 million. During the investigation of this incident, the safety relief device from this car and four other cars built to the same design were tested at a tank car repair facility to determine compliance with Federal regulations. Investigators determined that the gasket material in the safety relief devices exhibited varying degrees of brittleness, swelling, hardness, and cracking that contributed to the failure of the pressure relief devices to comply with Federal and industry requirements.

Incidents such as the one near Clymers, Indiana, result from noncompliance with the requirements in the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR). Specifically, these incidents derive from improper material selection and consideration of all components. The safety and reliability of hazardous materials shipments in transportation depend on a disciplined approach to material selection and maintenance.

FRA is issuing Safety Advisory 2003-01 to further discuss the requirements concerning gasket material selection in the event a change is made in the chemical constituents of the hazardous material shipped. This document provides general guidance only. Shippers should not rely on this document as a substitute for sound engineering, material selection, and maintenance management.

Tank car UTLX 643593, a DOT specification 111J100W1 tank car built in early 1993, was one of 52 tank cars designed for toluene diisocyanate (TDI) transportation. The certificate of construction for UTLX 643593, and the

other cars listed on the built certificate, indicates that these cars were approved for carriage of "Non-regulated commodities and commodities authorized in DOT Part 173 for which there are no other requirements and which are *compatible* with this design and class of car." [Emphasis Added] The service equipment from UTLX 643593 was on a 10-year maintenance and qualification cycle and was not due for requalification until 2003. The O-rings and gaskets for the pressure relief device were made of ethylene propylene rubber and Teflon®, respectively.

The hazardous material within the tank car, TDI waste matter, was loaded in October 1993 and stored until March 1998. It was transported to the Logansport facility for further storage until being moved for unloading in February 1999. On February 18, 1999, while spotted on an unloading rack, tank car UTLX 643593 sustained a sudden and catastrophic rupture that propelled the tank an estimated 750 feet over a multistory storage tank. Immediately after the incident, an investigation was conducted by the National Transportation Safety Board and FRA. Laboratory analysis obtained during the investigation revealed that two other constituents had been added to the material before shipping to the Logansport facility. A blending agent was added to the TDI to reduce its viscosity. The blending agents were HAN 906® (a mixture of flammable petroleum hydrocarbons such as naphthalene and trimethylbenzene) and monochlorobenzene (MCB). Both blending agents are classified as hazardous materials when shipped individually.

The transportation of the solvent blend wastes and TDI matter wastes in UTLX 643593 and the other tank cars approved for the transport of pure TDI constituted a change in the "compatibility status" of the tank and service equipment. This change in compatibility status, which resulted in deterioration of the components, was a key contributor to the pressure relief devices failure to meet Federal requirements (See 49 CFR 173.24(e)).

After the Clymers accident, FRA mandated, in a letter to the tank car owner, that the pressure relief devices from four of the 24 tank cars containing the TDI matter wastes in storage at the Logansport rail yard be pressure-tested in accordance with the HMRs before any of the tank cars could be transported for unloading. The tear down and inspection of the pressure relief devices from these five tank cars (the four cars that FRA required to be tested and UTLX 643593) demonstrated that the