

September 27, 2001

Ms. Jo Strang, Associate Director
Railroad Division
National Transportation Safety Board
Office of Railroad, Pipeline, and Hazardous Materials Investigations
490 L'Enfant Plaza East, SW
Washington, DC 20594

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Dear Ms. Strang:

I would like to express my appreciation to you for taking the time to meet with my staff on Thursday, September 13, 2001, to listen to our data needs for performing consequence evaluations of an accident where a spent nuclear fuel cask is consumed in a tunnel fire. We plan to incorporate in our evaluation the thermal conditions that existed in the July 13, 2001, Baltimore rail tunnel fire. The meeting was very useful to my staff and provided invaluable insight into the events surrounding the Baltimore rail tunnel fire of July 13, 2001.

As my staff discussed in the meeting, we would like to make a formal request for specific information you graciously offered to provide to us. We understand that some of the information provided is preliminary and pre-decisional, and we agree to use this information for our own internal use and not release it to the public until such time as your investigation is completed or upon obtaining your approval.

The items that we request are listed below:

1. A time vs. temperature plot of the hottest cross section of the tunnel, as well as a temperature distribution from the bottom of the tunnel to top. If possible, include a temperature distribution for a railcar in the hottest section of the tunnel during the fire.
2. Electronic (digital) pictures of the tunnel, as well as pictures of the burnt rail cars.
3. Diagrams of the derailed condition of the train, a copy of the cross section of the tunnel, with dimensions, and copies of drawings of the tunnel.
4. Descriptions of preliminary fire investigations performed to date, as well as any files generated by a computational fluid dynamics investigation of fire behavior in the tunnel.
5. A list of rail car materials, what materials melted during the fire, and the melting points of those materials.
6. Information on the amount of Tripropylene that leaked from the rail tanker car, how much was burned, and what are the combustion characteristics of Tripropylene (i.e., combustion/flame temperature, consumption rate, etc.)

J. Strang

Again we thank you and your staff for taking the time to meet with us and for the ongoing cooperation between our two agencies.

Sincerely,

/RA/

M. Wayne Hodges, Deputy Director
Technical Review Directorate
Spent Fuel Project Office
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

cc: Jay Kivowitz, NTSB

September 27, 2001

J. Strang

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Again we thank you and your staff for taking the time to meet with us and for the ongoing cooperation between our two agencies.

Sincerely,

(ORIGINAL SIGNED BY)

M. Wayne Hodges, Deputy Director
Technical Review Directorate
Spent Fuel Project Office
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

cc: Jay Kivowitz, NTSB

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