

Summary of Rail Topic Group conference call May 27, 1998

Participants:

William Naughton, COHMED	Bill Sherman, NE HLRW Task Force
Bob Fronczak, AAR	Mike Butler, UETC
Ray English, DOE-NR	George Ruberg, UETC
Kevin Blackwell, FRA	Markus Popa, DOE-RW
Sandy Covi, UP	

The Rail Topic Group is currently in a transitional mode, moving simultaneously toward closure of the two rail information matrices, Comparison of CVSA Recommended National Procedures and Out-Of-Service Criteria for the Enhanced Safety Inspection of Commercial Highway Vehicles Transporting Transuranics, Spent Nuclear Fuel, and High Level Waste to Rail Inspection Standards, and Rail and Highway Regulations Relative to the Transportation of Radioactive Materials and their Applicability to States, Tribes, Shippers, and Carriers, (both submitted in draft to the TEC/WG in January) and into an initial review of the Western Governors' Association WIPP Transportation Safety Program Implementation Guide and its potential applicability to rail issues. Mike Butler (UETC) made a final request from Group members for comments on the structure and accuracy of the matrices.

The Group determined that the summary matrices should be released in final form to the TEC/WG membership at the July 1998 meeting in Milwaukee, with the message conveyed that they are intended to be "living documents" and therefore will be subject to periodic review and revision by rail and other relevant subject matter experts as circumstances dictate. The Group agreed to the planned review of the "Tribal Applicability" column of the regulatory matrix by the TEC/WG Tribal Issues Topic Group once that Group is constituted and active.

While activities related to the matrices are being closed out, the Group has decided to conduct a review of the WGA WIPP safety document in an attempt to examine the subject areas covered in that document and determine their relevance (if any) to rail transport issues. Rather than attempt to allocate tasks on the call, Group members each agreed to come up with no more than three (3) items for discussion from the WIPP-PIG for the next conference call. Mr. Bill Sherman (State of Vermont/NE HLRW Task Force) mentioned that in his opinion, only four chapters were likely to have significant overlap with rail issues—High-Quality Drivers and Carrier Compliance, Independent Inspections, Bad Weather and Road Conditions, and Highway Routing of WIPP Shipments. The Group agreed that its immediate objective should be to collectively determine the most important and relevant topics by the July meeting, at which time the Group will outline its strategy for addressing them.

The Group's next meeting is scheduled for June 22. Agenda items for that meeting will include the aforementioned items as well as a status review of the initial seven actions tasked to the Group by the TEC/WG membership upon its formation in fall 1996. Meeting-related materials will be distributed to the Group prior to that date.