



U.S. Department of  
Transportation

Federal Railroad  
Administration

**Railroad Safety Advisory Committee**  
**Task Statement: Hazardous Materials Issues**

**Task No.: 15-04**

**Date initially presented to the RSAC: November 5, 2015**

**Purpose:** With the participation of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), consider revisions to the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR), 49 CFR Parts 100-185, to enhance rail safety. The revisions to be considered by the working group will be the items discussed by FRA, PHMSA, ASLRRA and Labor during the November 5, 2015 RSAC meeting as memorialized in the official minutes of the RSAC. The working group may add issues if unanimously agreed to by working group members.

**Background:** Under Task 13-02, the Hazardous Materials Issues Working Group addressed special handling and/or operational controls of trains and vehicles transporting such materials and the classification of materials. Recent changes in the railroad operating environment, as it related to the transportation of hazardous materials by rail, call for an evaluation of the existing regulations. This will include addressing safety issues not previously contemplated as well as emerging and anticipated safety issues. This working group will be directed by a DOT Team consisting of participants from FRA and PHMSA.

**Description:** Review and evaluate the following:

- **49 CFR Part 171.** Review, discuss, and consider updates to regulations related to materials incorporated by reference in § 171.7, particularly the American Association of Railroads (AAR) Manual of Standards and Recommended Practices, Section C-III, Specifications for Tank Cars, Specification M-1002, as well as the definitions in § 171.8.
- **49 CFR Parts 173 and 174.** Review, discuss, and consider updates to regulations related to tank car loading and unloading operations including trans-loading operations (§§ 173.31(g)(1) and 174.67(a)(3)).
- **49 CFR Part 174.** Review safety data, discuss, and consider revisions to the regulations related but not limited to, train placement, movement of defective tank cars, shipping papers, notice to train crews, coupling speed restrictions, and movement of trailers or containers on flat cars, and the movement of energy products in large blocks or in unit trains.
- **49 CFR Parts 173, 179 and 180 Definitions.** Review, investigate, discuss, and consider updates to regulations with definitions of critical terms such as “tank car,” “tank car facility,” “failure,” etc. and the consistent application of those terms throughout the regulations.
- **49 CFR Part 179 Specifications for Tank Cars.** Review, investigate, and consider updates to regulations to organize, simplify and clarify the regulations related to tank car construction and quality assurance programs.

**Issues requiring specific report:**

The Hazardous Materials Issues Working Group will consider the issues presented in the description above as described and discussed by FRA, PHMSA and ASLRRA and Labor during the November 5, 2015 RSAC as memorialized in the official minutes. The working group may add issues if unanimously agreed to by working group members. The working group will report its recommendations to the Committee, and, if appropriate, develop draft regulatory language to address these issues.

**Refer to/establish following working group:** Hazardous Materials Issues Working Group

**Target Dates:** Report initial recommendations and ongoing work plan to the Committee by no later than one year from kick-off meeting date.

**Disposition:** Accepted

**Accepted Date:** November 5, 2015