



**National  
Transportation  
Safety Board**

# The Virtues, Strengths, and Mission of the NTSB

Robert L. Sumwalt

# Friday, February 13, 1981



NTSB



NTSB is an independent federal agency, charged by Congress to investigate transportation accidents, determine probable cause, and issue safety recommendations.



Our mission:  
Prevent Accidents  
Reduce Injuries  
Save Lives



NTSB



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# The Board



Robert Sumwalt



Chris Hart  
Acting chairman



Earl Weener





**Breaking News: A plane has crashed.**



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# NTSB Response Operations Center



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# The Launch



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# Boots on the Ground



# The Hunt for ...



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# The “Black Boxes”



# Board Meeting



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# NTSB 2015 **MOST WANTED** LIST OF TRANSPORTATION SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Critical changes needed to reduce  
transportation accidents and save lives



[www.nts.gov/mostwanted](http://www.nts.gov/mostwanted)



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# DISCONNECT FROM DEADLY DISTRACTIONS

NTSB Most Wanted List



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# Mosby, MO. August 26, 2011 - 4 Fatalities -



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# Philadelphia, PA. July 7, 2010 - 2 Fatalities -



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# Chatsworth, CA. Sept 12, 2008 - 25 fatalities -



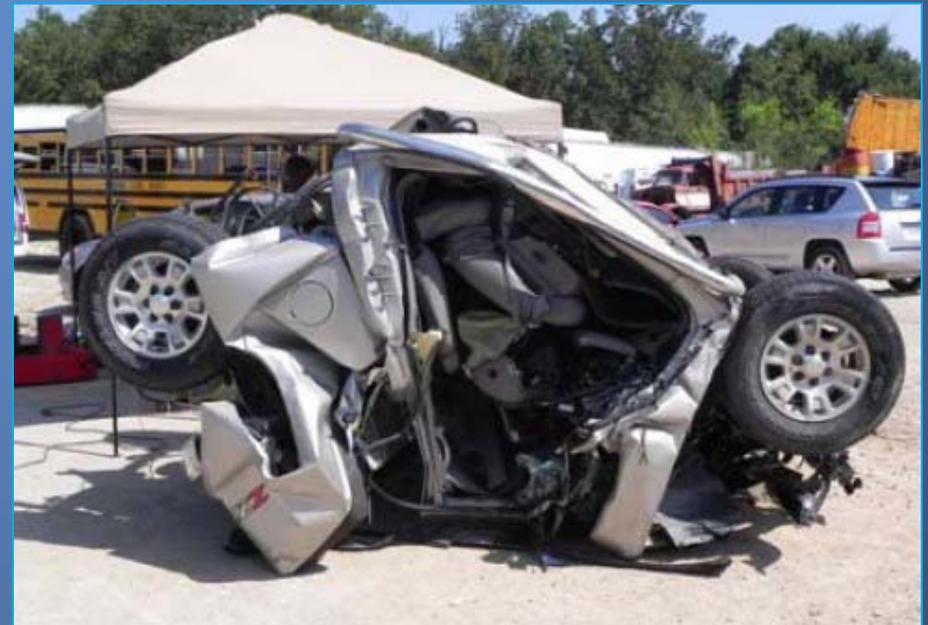
NTSB

# Munfordville, KY - March 26, 2010 - 11 fatalities -



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# Gray Summit, MO. Aug 5, 2010 - 2 Fatalities -



NTSB

# Recommendation to the states to ban the nonemergency use of PEDs for all drivers



# The Hands-Free Myth

- Many people believe that talking hands-free is safer than hand-held devices.
- Overwhelming data show there is no significant difference in crash risk.
- Laws and policies that only prohibit hand-held devices are perpetuating this myth.
  - Quite simply, they are sending the wrong message.



Alexandria, VA. Nov. 14, 2004  
- 0 fatalities -



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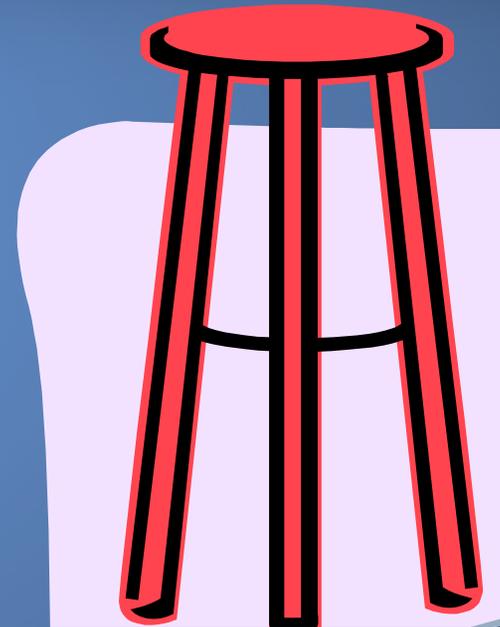
**“The bus driver’s cellular telephone conversation at the time of the accident diverted his attention from driving...”**



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# What is needed

- Enforceable state laws
- High visibility enforcement
- Education



# But...

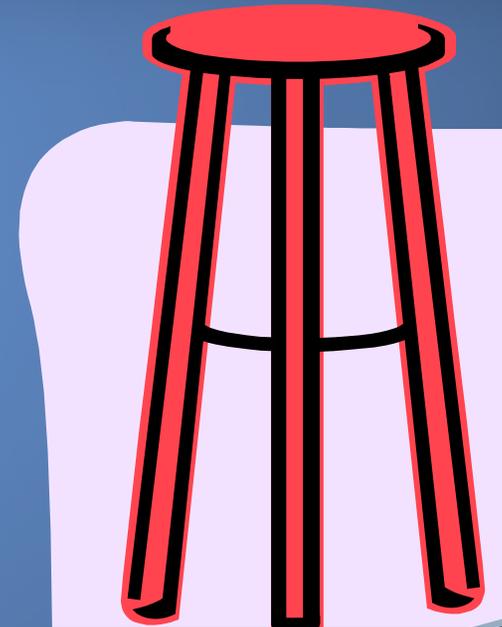
- Do you have to wait for laws to do the right thing in your organization?



# What is needed for organizations?

A commitment to do the right thing

- Top-level management buy-in and support
- Effective policies
- Education and buy-in of employees



“Don't be afraid of unpopular positions, of driving upstream. All progress has resulted from people who took unpopular positions.”

- *Adlai E. Stevenson*



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