



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, DC 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: June 18, 2015

In reply refer to: M-15-4

Thomas Allegretti
President
American Waterways Operators
801 North Quincy Street, Suite 200
Arlington, Virginia 22203

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we carry out special studies concerning transportation safety and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to provide assistance to victims and their family members affected by major transportation disasters. We are providing the following information to urge Kirby Inland Marine to take action on the safety recommendations being issued in this letter.

On June 9, 2015, we adopted our report concerning the collision between the bulk carrier *Summer Wind* and the *Miss Susan* tow, in which the tow attempted to cross the Houston Ship Channel in front of the bulk carrier, resulting in an oil spill.¹ Additional information about this accident and the resulting recommendations may be found in the report of the investigation, which can be accessed at our website, <http://www.nts.gov>, under report number NTSB/MAR-15/01.

As a result of this investigation, we reiterated Safety Recommendation M-07-6; reclassified and reiterated Safety Recommendations M-12-6 and -7; and issued four new recommendations, including one to the United States Coast Guard, two to Kirby Inland Marine, and the following recommendation to the American Waterways Operators:

¹ *Collision between Bulk Carrier Summer Wind and the Miss Susan Tow, Houston Ship Channel, Lower Galveston Bay, Texas, March 22, 2014.* NTSB/MAR-15/01. (Washington, DC: National Transportation Safety Board, 2015).

M-15-4

Inform your members of the circumstances of this accident and the need for towing vessels that transport hazardous materials to carry direct-reading air monitoring equipment, so that crews can identify combustible or explosive atmospheres, oxygen deficiency, and toxic substances that may present risk of serious injury.

Vice Chairman DINH-ZARR and Members SUMWALT and WEENER concurred in this recommendation.

The NTSB is vitally interested in this recommendation because it is designed to prevent accidents and save lives. We would appreciate receiving a response from you within 90 days detailing the actions you have taken or intend to take to implement it. When replying, please refer to the safety recommendation by number. We encourage you to submit your response electronically to correspondence@ntsb.gov. If it exceeds 10 megabytes, including attachments, please e-mail us at the same address for instructions. Please do not submit both an electronic copy and a hard copy of the same response.

[Original Signed]

By: Christopher A. Hart,
Chairman