

Women In Trucking Association participates in NTSB Truck and Bus Safety Forum

May 13, 2011

Washington DC: The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) held a Public Forum to discuss truck and bus safety. Robert Sumwalt, NTSB Member Chaired the forum with the objective of evaluating the progress since the 1999-2000 hearings and to discuss emerging issues related to the safety of heavy vehicles. The hearings were held over two days (May 11-12) at the NTSB boardroom at L' Enfant Plaza.

The Chairman noted that the past year was one of the safest years on record for highway safety and showed a forty percent drop from the ten years prior, but he cautioned the audience, "We must remind ourselves that each little data-point these figures represent, it means another family member will never come home."

The NTSB Technical Panel included Chairman Sumwalt and members of the NTSB staff, who questioned the panelists after their presentations. The panelists were comprised of subject matter experts from government agencies responsible for highway safety to vendors supplying safety products to carriers and bus operators who provided case studies.

Women In Trucking President, Ellen Voie, was invited to serve as one of the parties to the forum. These groups represented government agencies, advocacy groups, drivers, carriers and state agencies. Voie was seated at the Driver and Union table alongside Todd Spencer, OOIDA, and representatives from the Teamsters Union and United Transportation Union.

The parties and the technical panel questioned the subject matter experts who gave presentations on subjects including driver health and safety, hours of service, carrier entrant and screening, truck and bus operations, and enhanced vehicle safety technology.

"One of my goals was to determine the effect women have had and will continue to have on the trucking industry," said Voie, "and I learned that there is very little information on gender related statistics regarding safety or driver health issues. Perhaps we can have more definitive information by the time the NTSB holds its next forum on highway safety."

The NTSB is an independent agency charged by congress to investigate accidents and is led by five board members, chaired by Deborah A. P. Hersman who was appointed to the position by President Obama in 2009.

Women In Trucking (www.womenintrucking.org) was established to encourage the employment of women in the trucking industry, promote their accomplishments and minimize obstacles faced by women working in the trucking industry. Women In Trucking Association, Inc. is supported by its members and the generous support of Gold Level Partners, Frito-Lay North America and Walmart.

The hearings can be viewed on the NTSB website at ntsb.gov.

Ellen Voie
President/CEO
Women In Trucking Association, Inc.