



Michael Clara <donmiguelslc@gmail.com>

Re: Proposed Resolution to Heater Hose Incident

1 message

Michael Clára <donmiguelslc@gmail.com>

Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 4:58 PM

To: "Martin, Murrell" <Murrell.Martin@schools.utah.gov>

Cc: Archie Archuletta <loarch@msn.com>, Cristina Flores <cflores@kutv2.com>, Ben Wood <benwood@deseretnews.com>, Debbie Dujanovic <ddujanovic@ksl.com>, susana danso <susana.danso@gmail.com>, James Evans <james@utgop.org>, evansjme <evansjme@sisna.com>, "Dinha, Nineveh" <nineveh.dinha@fox13now.com>, Lisa Schencker <lschencker@sltrib.com>, "gwillmor@utah.gov" <gwillmor@utah.gov>, Eric Peterson <epeterson@cityweekly.net>, "kj524@msn.com" <kj524@msn.com>, Luz Robles <lrobles@utahsenate.org>, Angela Romero <angelaromero@le.utah.gov>, Angela Romero <angela.romero37@gmail.com>, "Salamanca, Rosa (CRS)" <Rosa.Salamanca@usdoj.gov>, Steve Woods <Steve.Woods@slcschools.org>, Kelly Orton <Kelly.Orton@slcschools.org>, Jane Larson <Jane.Larson@slcschools.org>, "Joan M. Andrews (jandrews@fabianlaw.com)" <jandrews@fabianlaw.com>, Britta Barney <Britta.Barney@slcschools.org>, "Douglas Nelson (doug@mdxperts.com)" <doug@mdxperts.com>, Heather Bennett <Heather.Bennett@slcschools.org>, "Roberts, Janet" <janet.roberts@slcschools.org>, Kristi Swett <Kristi.Swett@slcschools.org>, Laurel Young <Laurel.Young@slcschools.org>, "Withers, McKell ." <mckell.withers@slcschools.org>, Rosemary Emery <rosemary.emery2@gmail.com>, Tiffany Sandberg <Tiffany.Sandberg@slcschools.org>, Allison Sisam <Allison.Sisam@slcschools.org>, Craig Ruesch <Craig.Ruesch@slcschools.org>, Katie Haslam <Katie.Haslam@slcschools.org>, "Roberts, David" <David.Roberts@schools.utah.gov>, Kristina Kindl <Kristina.Kindl@slcschools.org>, Patrick Garcia <Patrick.Garcia@slcschools.org>, "Martinez, Ken" <ken.martinez@slcschools.org>
Bcc: Michael Clara <donmiguelslc@gmail.com>

Mr. Martin,

Thank you so much for your prompt and thorough response. I also appreciate your in-depth analysis and conclusions of the incident.

I am also gratified by your forward thinking in raising the level of awareness on this matter.

I am confident, that due to your demonstrated leadership, we can rest assured that the likelihood of this occurring to other students in Utah have been significantly diminished.

Un abrazo,

Michael Clára

801-205-0389

Board Member, District 2

On Thu, Aug 21, 2014 at 3:45 PM, Martin, Murrell <Murrell.Martin@schools.utah.gov> wrote:

Dear Board Member Clara,

Thank you for your phone call yesterday, and for giving me the opportunity to review the Standards for Utah School Buses and Operations as they relate to heater hoses in all Utah school buses. Concerning the incident that took place in the Salt Lake City School District back in June of this year, I have reviewed the Utah Highway Patrol report of the incident, and have also reviewed the details of the incident with Salt Lake City School District School Bus Shop Supervisor Ken Martinez.

I am providing a copy to others who have been included in the emails so they will be up to date on how I am proposing we go forward from my perspectives at the Utah State Office of Education.

With the information available to me, it is my opinion that Salt Lake City School District pupil transportation staff were operating in good faith with the information available to them prior to June 2, 2014, when the heater hose ruptured in such a manner as to direct hot fluid through a 1/16 inch gap between the hose shielding and the interior side wall of the bus.

In perspective, I believe the pupil transportation staff at Salt Lake City School District had every reason to believe that the heater hose shielding on their buses met the requirements of Standards for Utah School Buses and Operations, namely *"Heater lines on the interior of the bus shall be shielded to prevent scalding of the driver or passengers."*

I am not aware of any other cases in Utah where heater hoses have ruptured in such a manner as to direct hot fluid through gaps between the hose shielding and the interior side walls of a bus in a way that scalded passengers.

In my opinion, with this case, it is appropriate for Salt Lake City School District to take additional precautions above and beyond what our Standards for Utah School Buses and Operations currently identify.

In reviewing the additional precautions Salt Lake City School District has taken to prevent such future incidents, I have been informed that they have done the following:

1. Made sure all their buses, that had recall notices related to heater hoses, were addressed by the bus manufacturer representatives.
2. Carefully inspected all their buses and applied sealant to gaps between the shielding and the interior walls to prevent the possibility of a hot stream of fluid from being directed through the gaps.
3. Installed caps to any service openings where a hot fluid might be directed into the interior area of the buses.
4. Started a program of shutting down bus interior fluid circulation during times when the heaters are not in use.

I am sure the Salt Lake City School District Pupil Transportation Department will also make sure their drivers are aware of these additional precautions and will review the importance of reporting any identified interior leaks immediately, and quickly accessing if there is a need to move or evacuate their passengers in the event of a fluid leak.

Even though in a larger perspective of the nearly 500,000 school buses in operation in the United States, there appears to be a low incident rate of rupturing heater hoses with a potential of scalding passengers, any such case is a tragedy that needs to be evaluated to determine how to prevent it from happening in the future. Please express our concern to the students involved, and their families, and please express that on a state level we will do the following:

1. We are in the process of making all other school districts and school busing entities in Utah aware of the incident and the extra precautions taken by Salt Lake City School District to prevent this type of incident in the future.
2. In preparation for our next review of Standards for Utah School Buses and Operations (that will start in the near future), we will ask the Bus Body and Chassis Writing Committee to address this issue and identify how our standards may address prevention in the future.
3. As our Bus Body and Chassis Writing Committee completes their work, we will forward a recommendation for consideration by the National Congress on School Transportation (NCST), set to meet in May of 2015. This will first go to the NCST Bus Body and Chassis Writing Committee for their review.

As difficult as this process has been for all involved, we appreciate knowing that Salt Lake City School District has processed through it, and has put progressive things in place in an effort to prevent this type of incident in the future.

Sincerely,

Murrell Martin – Pupil Transportation Specialist

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