



AAR TANK CAR COMMITTEE

- The TCC sets high safety standards for tank car design, often exceeding federal rules.
 - Over 99.99% of hazmat rail shipments reach their destination without incident.
 - Railroads follow a unified interchange system.
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Railroads typically do not own the tank cars they transport; instead, shippers or leasing companies often purchase and maintain them. As common carriers, railroads must transport any freight, including hazardous materials, under reasonable terms and conditions.

The oversight of rail tank cars involves a multi-faceted system where industry practices sometimes surpass federal standards. While the Department of Transportation (DOT) regulates rail safety, including tank car specifications, it delegates certain safety matters to the TCC. For example, TCC handles technical design review. Regulation also mandates AAR's approval of facility quality assurance programs.

Additionally, the TCC establishes industry-wide interchange standards for tank cars in North America. These standards exceed DOT regulations while maintaining oversight. This approach has led to tank cars with improved safety features. They benefit from substantial investments in infrastructure, technology, training, and safety efforts totaling over \$23 billion annually. Consequently, the hazmat accident rate is down 75% since 2000. It is now at its lowest-ever rate, with over 99.99% of rail hazmat shipments reaching their destinations safely.

The TCC improves tank car safety.

Beyond regulatory requirements, the TCC establishes industry-wide interchange standards for tank car design and operation in North America. This is done under a voluntary agreement. While these standards can exceed DOT regulations, they never compromise minimum requirements or oversight. Because of this system, tanks cars have improved thermal protection, higher-grade steel, and enhanced valves and fittings. These factors significantly enhance tank car safety.

USDOT 2015 RULE FOR TOUGHER TANK CAR STANDARDS

To improve the puncture resistance of tank cars carrying crude oil and ethanol, the AAR's Tank Car Committee (TCC) voluntarily promulgated improved tank car safety interchange standards (CPC-1232) four years before PHMSA published its final rule setting forth similar DOT-117 tank car specifications. The tougher tank cars included:

HIGH CAPACITY PRESSURE RELIEF VALVE

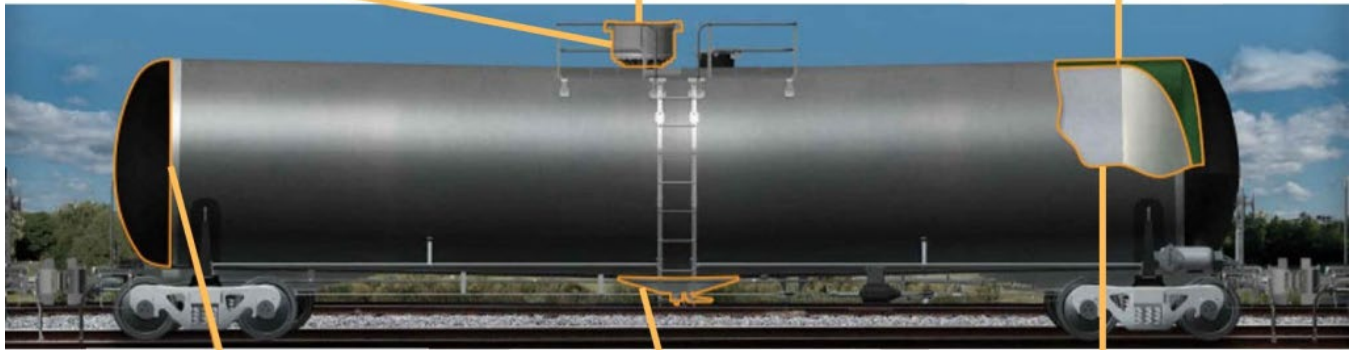
Protects against internal pressure increases from fire and allows faster release of product.

TOP FITTINGS PROTECTION

Secures valves and fittings used for loading product, preventing damage in an accident.

STEEL TANK

Requires a minimum ½-inch thick steel tank for durability and strength.



HEAD SHIELDS

½-inch thick, full-height head shields at both ends protect against punctures.

BOTTOM OUTLET HANDLES

Prevents accidental opening of bottom outlets during an accident.

JACKET & THERMAL PROTECTION

A steel jacket over thermal protection helps prevent overheating in a fire.



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Interchange System & the MSRP

Because no one railroad covers the entire country, railroads are often required to interchange equipment, including tank cars, during their operations to transport goods to their destinations. To facilitate these interchanges, the rail industry, including rolling stock owners and repair facilities, voluntarily agreed to accept and transport shipments. These shipments must meet a consistent set of standards contained in the Manual of Standards & Recommended Practices (MSRP).

TCC Stakeholders & Functions

The TCC comprises railroad representatives, shippers, and tank car builders and owners. Additionally, representatives from the Federal Railroad Administration, PHMSA, the National Transportation Safety Board, Transport Canada, and the Transportation Safety Board of Canada regularly attend. They participate in many of the TCC's quarterly meetings.

Ongoing Efforts to Eliminate or Alter TCC Oversight

In 2016, a group of shippers and tank car owners filed a petition for rulemaking with PHMSA. This challenged the current system of oversight for rail tank cars. They requested PHMSA to adopt regulations prohibiting any entity from requiring compliance with tank car specifications more rigorous than the minimum DOT safety standards. The filing of this petition was in direct response to efforts by the TCC to adopt improved standards. These standards were for tanks used to transport toxic inhalation hazards.