



Brian Smith

Trinity Industries

Dear Mr. Smith:

It has come to our attention from various sources that w-beam guardrail terminals using the ET-PLUS head may not be performing as intended. We appreciate the time you took to meet with Mr. Nicholas Artimovich of my office at the recent meeting of the American Traffic Safety Services Association in Tampa, Florida, to explain the crash test performance of the current ET-PLUS terminals. However, even though it appears that the ET-PLUS terminal can still meet crash testing requirements, the number of highway crashes with fatal injuries involving the ET-PLUS terminals does not match the excellent history of the original ET-2000 terminal.

FHWA letter CC-12G, dated January 18, 2000, is our initial letter to Trinity Industries on the ET-Plus design, and the drawings attached to that letter show the width of the c-channel feeder rails to be 5 inches in both the ET-2000 and ET-Plus designs. In support of FHWA Letter CC-94 dated September 2, 2005, Texas Transportation Institute conducted two tests of the ET-PLUS terminal for the 31-inch tall Midwest Guardrail System (MGS). The information contained in our files for these two letters do acknowledge a number of improvements you made to the ET-2000 to develop the ET-PLUS, but make no mention of one of the more visible differences between the older extruder heads and the ones you are currently selling: the change in width of the feeder rails from 5 inches down to 4 inches.

We ask the following of Trinity:

1. Drawings of the extruder head used in the 2005 tests at TTI, specifically those used in TTI Test No. 220601-1&2.
2. If available, you locate the extruder head(s) used in the 2005 tests at TTI and document the internal and external dimensions.
3. You conduct an in-service performance evaluation of the current Trinity extruder terminals to determine their performance. Please include an investigation into the crashes documented by Mr. Joshua Harman. Listed in the enclosed document.