

proposed data collection, the types of questions that respondents should be asked, ways to enhance data quality and utility, and ways to minimize the burden of the data collection as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before June 10, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to NHTSA, Docket Section, Room 5111, Docket #96-027-N01, 400 7th Street SW, Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Marvin M. Levy, Ph.D., Contracting Officer's Technical Representative, Office of Program Development and Evaluation (NTS-30), Washington, DC 20590, Phone Number (202) 366-5597.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

Speeding—exceeding the posted speed limit or driving too fast for conditions—is a prevalent factor contributing to crashes. In 1994, speed was a factor in 30 percent of all fatal crashes and more than 12,000 lives were lost in speed related crashes. The economic cost of speed related crashes to society is estimated by NHTSA to be more than 23 billion dollars per year. Recently, the NMSL was rescinded and several states now permit higher speed limits. Other unsafe driving behaviors—“running” red traffic lights and stop signs—contribute to crashes.

NHTSA is committed to the development of effective programs to reduce the number of deaths and injuries related to speeding and other unsafe driving behaviors. The objective of this study is to develop and implement a nationwide survey of the driving public to determine: (1) the characteristics of drivers who speed and do not obey traffic signals or stop signs; (2) the situations and driver motivations that accompany these unsafe behaviors; (3) the public's attitudes regarding speed limits, including the NMSL, and the enforcement of these limits; and (4) countermeasures the public would support to reduce the occurrence of these unsafe driving actions.

II. Method of Data Collection

Data will be collected voluntarily and anonymously from a national probability sample of 6,000 adult drivers. Each respondent contacted will be interviewed with the same questionnaire. Bilingual interviewers will be employed and a Spanish version of the questionnaire will be prepared to increase participation by potential respondents. Interviewers will use

computer assisted telephone interviewing to reduce interview length and minimize recording errors.

III. Use of Findings

The findings will provide better specification of the characteristics of drivers who speed and violate the law regarding traffic lights and stop signs; the situations in which such driving infractions commonly occur and, of these, those situations that drivers consider hazardous; the extent to which speed limits influence driving speeds; and the steps that safety officials and enforcement agencies might take to reduce speeding.

The findings will be used to assist NHTSA in formulating programs and in preparing recommendations to Congress dealing with the problem of speeding. Additionally, findings will be used to support decision making by State and local highway safety agencies, law enforcement agencies, and citizen activist groups regarding the effective allocation of resources to address this problem. The data being sought will be instrumental in the development and targeting of countermeasures to reduce speeding and traffic signal and stop sign violations.

IV. Data

OMB Number: None.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular Submission.

Affected Public: The adult population of the United States living in households with telephones.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 6,000.

Estimated Time Per Respondent: 20 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: 2000 hours.

Estimated Cost Per Respondent: \$35.

V. Requests for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) the need for the proposed collection and the uses of the data to meet the objectives of the study, (b) the types of questions that should be asked of respondents, (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information collected, (d) the accuracy of the burden estimate, and (e) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection.

James H. Hedlund,

Associate Administrator for Traffic Safety Programs.

[FR Doc. 96-8714 Filed 4-8-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-59-P

Discretionary Cooperative Agreements to Support Vehicle and Occupant Protection Systems Research

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), DOT.

ACTION: Announcement of discretionary cooperative agreement to support vehicle occupant protection systems research.

SUMMARY: The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) announces a discretionary cooperative agreement program to support research studies to evaluate potential improvements in occupant protection during motor vehicle crashes and solicits applications for projects under this program.

DATES: Applications must be received at the office designated below on or before May 29, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Applications must be submitted to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Office of Contracts and Procurement (NAD-30), ATTN: Ms. Amy I. Poling, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Room 5301, Washington, DC 20590. All applications submitted must include a reference to NHTSA Cooperative Agreement Program No. DTNH22-96-H-07150, and identify the program area for which the application is submitted. Interested applicants are advised that no separate application package exists beyond the contents of this announcement.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

General administrative questions may be directed to Ms. Amy I. Poling, Office of Contracts and Procurement, at (202) 366-9552. Programmatic questions relating to this cooperative agreement program should be directed to Dr. William T. Hollowell, Safety Systems Engineering & Analysis Division (NRD-11), 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Room 6226, Washington, DC 20590 (202) 366-4726.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Each year in the United States, more than 40,000 deaths and millions of injuries occur as the direct result of motor vehicle traffic accidents. As part of its mission to alleviate this toll, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration vigorously conducts an extensive research program to develop and evaluate new technologies and methodologies which have the potential for improving the crash worthiness of passenger vehicles and protecting their occupants. NHTSA is conducting crash worthiness research in four broad areas:

- I. Accident Statistics Studies and Fleet Characterization
- II. Development of New Computer Modeling Methodologies
- III. Development of New Experimental and Test Methodologies
- IV. Development of New or Enhanced Injury Countermeasures

Objectives

The proposed cooperative research agreement program seeks to establish collaborative research efforts between NHTSA and qualified research organizations to study advanced methodologies for occupant protection in passenger vehicle crashes. The collaboration will include problem definition, sharing of scientific and technical data, and joint research and development of new methodologies and technologies for occupant crash protection.

To improve and better understand occupant crash protection, NHTSA seeks collaborative research efforts in any of the four broad research areas stated above. Examples of specific NHTSA interests are summarized below.

Accident Statistics Studies and Fleet Characterization—Collaborative efforts are being sought in which data from the National Accident Sampling System, the Fatal Accident Reporting System, and from State accident data files are evaluated for investigating:

- Air bag injury reduction effectiveness.
- Vehicle aggressiveness metrics.
- Geometric vehicle-to-vehicle incompatibility including bumper-door sill incompatibility.

Development of New Computer Modeling Methodologies—Collaborative efforts are being sought to advance the state of the art in finite element analysis methodology for:

- Models for simulating human interaction with vehicle structures.
- Models for simulating human interaction with restraints.
- Models of vehicle structures under crash loading.
- Models of humans or human surrogates under crash loading.
- Methods or techniques for rapidly generating finite element models of complex vehicle or biomechanical structures for simulation of response to crash loading.
- Material models for describing the behavior of engineering and biomechanical materials under crash loading.
- Models of the air bag and inflator during the early deployment phase.
- Models which simulate glazing under crash loading.

- Modeling of internal air bag pressure, temperature, flow rates and particulate distribution during deployment and interaction with the occupant.

Development of New Experimental and Test Methodologies—Collaborative efforts are being sought in which nonintrusive measuring techniques are developed including:

- Nonintrusive door velocity measurement instruments for side impact.
- Nonintrusive floorpan intrusion measurement instruments for frontal-offset impacts.
- Nonintrusive measurement of internal air bag pressure, temperature, flow rates and particulate distribution during air bag deployment.

Also, collaborative efforts are being sought for developing improved test methods for detecting and quantifying liquid and/or gaseous fuel leaks in crashes.

Development of New or Enhanced Injury Countermeasures—Collaborative efforts are being sought in the development of new or enhanced countermeasures for reducing crash victim injuries, including research into:

- Advanced occupant restraints.
- Advanced air bag inflator methodologies.
- Non-azide air bag inflators.
- Adaptive air bag Systems to tailor bag deployment over the expected range of crash severities, occupant heights, occupant ages, occupant positioning, etc.
- Advanced occupant seating systems.
- Ejection prevention technologies.
- Internal and/or external air bag systems for higher speed collisions and configurations of other frontal impacts.
- Anticipatory crash sensing technologies and algorithms.
- Pedestrian protection technologies.
- Heavy truck safety technologies.
- Motorcycle safety technologies.

The above list of potential program areas constitutes only a sampling and applicants are encouraged to suggest from these and others those which are believed by the applicant to provide the potential for practical improvement of current occupant crash protection and are most amenable to the special skills and experience of the applicant.

It is envisioned that three broad phases may be applicable to these programs: (1) Preliminary studies identifying the system performance improvement desired, an estimate of additional production costs related to the improvement, the benefits to be appreciated from such improvement, and the approximate magnitude of

national injuries and fatalities now occurring due to the absence of the improvement. (2) Prototype development and establishment of reliable production costs. (3) Prototype demonstration. The duration of each phase will vary according to current state-of-the-art and in some instances may be overlapped.

NHTSA Involvement

The NHTSA will be involved in all activities undertaken as part of the cooperative agreement program and will:

1. Provide one professional staff person, to be designated as the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), to participate in the planning and management of the cooperative agreement and coordinate activities between the cooperative agreement participant organization and the NHTSA.
2. Make available information and technical assistance from government sources, within available resources and as determined appropriate by the COTR.
3. Provide liaison with other government agencies and organizations as appropriate.
4. Stimulate the exchange of ideas, problems, and solutions among cooperative agreement recipients who agree to such sharing, and, if appropriate, NHTSA contractors and other interested parties; and
5. Share nonproprietary information developed at Government expense with the scientific and industrial community.

Period of Support

The research and development effort described in this notice may be supported through the award of a cooperative agreement. The NHTSA reserves the right to make multiple cooperative agreement awards for the effort described in this notice depending upon the relative merit of the applications received and the Federal resources and amount of Federal funding available.

Contingent upon the availability of funds, a cooperative agreement(s) will be awarded to an eligible organization(s) for project periods of up to five years. It is currently intended that no cooperative agreement awarded as a result of this notice shall exceed \$50,000 per year.

Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible to participate in this cooperative agreement program, an applicant must be a for-profit business organization (small or large), a non-profit organization, or an educational institution. Consortiums of organizations from any of the above categories may apply. Regardless of the

type of organization applying for Federal funding assistance, no fee or profit will be allowed.

Application Procedure

Each applicant must submit one original and two copies of their application package to: Office of Contracts and Procurement (NAD-30), NHTSA, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Room 5301, Washington, DC 20590. Applications are due no later than 45 days after the appearance of this announcement in the Federal Register. Only complete application packages received by the due date shall be considered. Submission of three additional copies will expedite processing, but is not required. The applicant shall specifically identify any information in the application which is to be treated as proprietary, in accordance with the procedures of 49 CFR Part 512, Confidential Business Information.

Application Contents

The application package must be submitted with a Standard Form 424 (rev. 4-88), Application for Federal Assistance, which shall include the certified assurances, and provide a program narrative statement which addresses the following:

1. A description of the research to be pursued which addresses:
 - a. The objectives, goals, and anticipated outcomes of the proposed research effort;
 - b. The method or methods that will be used;
 - c. The source of crash and injury statistics to be used;
 - d. The primary occupant protection system (e.g., inflatable or padded interior) which will be most probably benefitted;
2. The proposed program director and other key personnel identified for participation in the proposed research effort, including a description of their qualifications and their respective organizational responsibilities.
3. A description of the vehicle occupant population and crash modes to be addressed, test facilities and equipment currently available or to be obtained for use in the conduct of the proposed research and development effort.
4. A description of the applicant's previous experience or on-going research program that is related to this proposed research effort.
5. A detailed schedule and budget for the proposed research effort, including any cost-sharing contribution proposed by the applicant as well as any

additional financial commitments made by other sources.

6. A statement of any technical assistance which the applicant may require of NHTSA in order to successfully complete the proposed program.

Review Process and Criteria

Initially, all applications will be reviewed to confirm that the application contains all of the information required by the Application Contents section of this notice.

Each complete application from an eligible recipient will then be evaluated by a Technical Evaluation Committee. The applications will be evaluated and ranked using the following criteria:

1. The applicant's understanding of the purpose and unique problems represented by the research objectives of this cooperative agreement program as evidenced in the description of their proposed research and development effort. Specific attention shall be placed upon the applicant's stated proposed development and demonstration effort.
2. The potential of the proposed research effort accomplishments to make a timely and an innovative and/or significant contribution to occupant protection technology knowledge as it may be applied to saving lives and reducing injuries resulting from motor vehicle crashes.
3. The technical and financial merit of the proposed research effort, including the feasibility of the approach, practicality, planned methodology, and anticipated results. Financial merit will be estimated by the cost of the cooperative agreement to be borne by NHTSA and the in-kind contribution provided by the applicant as compared to the anticipated benefits to vehicle crash occupants or pedestrians.
4. The adequacy of test facilities and equipment identified to accomplish the proposed research effort.
5. The adequacy of the organizational plan for accomplishing the proposed research effort, including the qualifications and experience of the research team, the various disciplines represented, and the relative level of effort proposed for professional, technical, and support staff.

Terms and Conditions of the Award

1. The protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects in NHTSA-sponsored experiments is established in NHTSA Orders 700-1 and 700-3. Any recipient must satisfy the requirements and guidelines of the NHTSA Orders 700 series prior to award of the cooperative agreement. A copy of the NHTSA Orders 700 series may be

obtained from the information contact designated in this notice.

2. Prior to award, the recipient must comply with the certification requirements of 49 CFR Part 29—Department of Transportation Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants).

3. During the effective period of the cooperative agreement(s) awarded as a result of this notice, the agreement(s) shall be subject to NHTSA's General Provisions for Assistance Agreements; the cost principles of OMB Circular A-21, A-122, or FAR 31.2, as applicable to the recipient, and the requirements of 49 CFR Part 29. Each agreement with a non-profit organization or an educational institution shall also be subject to the general administrative requirements of 49 CFR Part 19.

4. Cooperative agreement(s) awarded as a result of this notice will include the provisions of Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 52 contract clause 52.227-11 Patent Rights Retention by the Contractor (Short Form).

Reporting Requirements

1. Written Research Reports

The recipient shall submit bimonthly research reports suitable for public dissemination which shall be due 15 days after the reporting period, and a final research report within 45 days after the completion of the research effort. An original and three copies of each of these research reports shall be submitted to the COTR.

2. Oral Briefings

The recipient shall conduct semiannual oral presentations of research results for the COTR and other interested NHTSA personnel. For planning purposes, assume that these presentations will be conducted at the NHTSA Office of Crashworthiness Research, Washington, DC. An original and three copies shall be submitted to the COTR.

3. Data Reports

Dynamic and other data measured in research, development, and prototype evaluation and demonstration tests will be provided by the recipient(s) within three (3) weeks after the data is obtained, in the format of a data package as described below. The recipient may be relieved of the data package report requirement for certain activities by agreement from the COTR.

A data package consists of high speed film, paper test report, and magnetic tape complying with NHTSA Data Tape

Reference Guide, Volume III: Component Data Base. The NHTSA's Safety Systems Engineering & Analysis Division maintains a Vehicle Crash Test and a Component Data Base which it provides upon request to the public, including educational institutions and other research organizations.

To facilitate the input of data as well as the exchange of information, any recipient of a cooperative agreement awarded as a result of this notice must provide the magnetic tape in the format specified in the "NHTSA Data Tape Reference Guide." A copy of this document may be obtained from the programmatic information contact designated in this notice.

Issued on: April 4, 1996.

William A. Boehly,
Associate Administrator for Research and Development.

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[Docket No. 96-36; Notice 1]

Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 1990 Through 1996 Mercedes-Benz Type 463 Short Wheel Base Gelaendewagen Multi-Purpose Passenger Vehicles Are Eligible for Importation

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Request for comments on petition for decision that nonconforming 1990 through 1996 Mercedes-Benz Type 463 Short Wheel Base Gelaendewagen multi-purpose passenger vehicles (MPVs) are eligible for importation.

SUMMARY: This notice requests comments on a petition submitted to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) for a decision that 1990 through 1996 Mercedes-Benz Type 463 Short Wheel Base Gelaendewagen MPVs that were not originally manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards are eligible for importation into the United States because they have safety features that comply with, or are capable of being altered to comply with, all such standards.

DATES: The closing date for comments on the petition is May 9, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to the docket number and notice number, and be submitted to: Docket Section, Room 5109, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St. SW., Washington, DC 20590. [Docket hours are from 9:30 am to 4 pm.]

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Entwistle, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance, NHTSA (202-366-5306).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Under 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(A) (formerly section 108(c)(3)(A)(i)(I) of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act (the Act)), a motor vehicle that was not originally manufactured to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards shall be refused admission into the United States unless NHTSA has decided that the motor vehicle is substantially similar to a motor vehicle originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States, certified under 49 U.S.C. § 30115 (formerly section 114 of the Act), and of the same model year as the model of the motor vehicle to be compared, and is capable of being readily altered to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards. Where there is no substantially similar U.S.-certified motor vehicle, 49 U.S.C. § 30141(a)(1)(B) (formerly section 108(c)(3)(A)(i)(II) of the Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1397(c)(3)(A)(i)(II)) permits a nonconforming motor vehicle to be admitted into the United States if its safety features comply with, or are capable of being altered to comply with, all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards based on destructive test data or such other evidence as NHTSA decides to be adequate.

Petitions for eligibility decisions may be submitted by either manufacturers or importers who have registered with NHTSA pursuant to 49 CFR Part 592. As specified in 49 CFR 593.7, NHTSA publishes notice in the Federal Register of each petition that it receives, and affords interested persons an opportunity to comment on the petition. At the close of the comment period, NHTSA decides, on the basis of the petition and any comments that it has received, whether the vehicle is eligible for importation. The agency then publishes this decision in the Federal Register.

Europa International, Inc. of Santa Fe, New Mexico (Registered Importer No. R-91-002) has petitioned NHTSA to decide whether 1990 through 1996 Mercedes-Benz Type 463 Short Wheel Base Gelaendewagen MPVs are eligible for importation into the United States. Europa contends that these vehicles are eligible for importation under 49 U.S.C. § 30141(a)(1)(B) because they have safety features that comply with, or are capable of being altered to comply with,

all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Specifically, the petitioner claims that 1990 through 1996 Mercedes-Benz Type 463 Short Wheel Base Gelaendewagen MPVs have safety features that comply with Standard Nos. 102 *Transmission Shift Lever Sequence*, * * * (based on visual inspection and operation), 103 *Defrosting and Defogging Systems* (based on inspection and information in owner's manual describing operation of the system), 104 *Windshield Wiping and Washing Systems* (based on operation), 106 *Brake Hoses* (based on visual inspection of certification markings), 107 *Reflecting Surfaces* (based on visual inspection), 113 *Hood Latch Systems* (based on information in owner's manual describing operation of secondary latch mechanism), 116 *Brake Fluids* (based on vendor certification and information in owner's manual describing fluids installed at factory as "DOT 4 plus"), 119 *New Pneumatic Tires for Vehicles other than Passenger Cars* (based on visual inspection of certification markings), 124 *Accelerator Control Systems* (based on inspection revealing two accelerator return springs), 201 *Occupant Protection in Interior Impact* (based on test data and certification of vehicle to European standard), 202 *Head Restraints* (based on Standard No. 208 test data for 1993 model year vehicle with same head restraint, certification of vehicle to European standard, and head restraint measurements), 204 *Steering Control Rearward Displacement* (based on test film), 205 *Glazing Materials* (based on visual inspection of certification markings), 207 *Seating Systems* (based on test results and certification of vehicle to European standard), 209 *Seat Belt Assemblies* (based on wiring diagram of seat belt warning system and visual inspection of certification markings), 211 *Wheel Nuts, Wheel Discs and Hubcaps* (based on visual inspection), 214 *Side Impact Protection* (based on test results for identically equipped 1995 model year vehicle), 219 *Windshield Zone Intrusion* (based on test results and certification information for identically equipped 1993 model year vehicle), and 302 *Flammability of Interior Materials* (based on composition of upholstery and treatment of fabric with flameproof spray).

The petitioner also contends that 1990 through 1996 Mercedes-Benz Type 463 Short Wheel Base V-8 Gelaendewagen MPVs are capable of being altered to comply with the following standards, in the manner indicated:

Standard No. 101 *Controls and Displays*: (a) substitution of a lens marked "Brake" for a lens with an ECE