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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.

[FR Doc. 96-8794 Filed 4-8-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-59-M

[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

symbol on the brake failure indicator lamp; (b) installation of a speedometer/odometer calibrated in miles per hour.

Standard No. 105 Hydraulic Brake Systems: placement of warning label on brake fluid reservoir cap. The petitioner states that the vehicle's parking brake was tested and met the requirements of the standard.

Standard No. 108 Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment: (a) installation of U.S.-model sealed beam headlamps; (b) installation of U.S.-model side marker lamps and reflectors; (c) installation of a high mounted stop lamp on vehicles manufactured after September 1, 1993. The petitioner asserts that testing performed on the taillamp reveals that it complies with the standard, even though it lacks a DOT certification marking, and that all other lights are DOT certified.

Standard No. 111 Rearview Mirrors: inscription of the required warning statement on the convex surface of the passenger side rearview mirror.

Standard No. 114 Theft Protection: installation of a warning buzzer in the steering lock electrical circuit.

Standard No. 115 Vehicle Identification Number: installation of a VIN plate that can be read from outside the left windshield pillar.

Standard No. 118 Power-Operated Window Systems: rewiring of the power window system so that the window transport is inoperative when the front doors are open.

Standard No. 120 Tire Selection and Rims for Vehicles other than Passenger Cars: installation of a tire information placard. The petitioner asserts that even though the tire rims lack a DOT certification marking, they comply with the standard, based on their manufacturer's certification that they comply with the German TUV regulations, as well as their certification by the British Standards Association and the Rim Association of Australia.

Standard No. 206 Door Locks and Door Retention Components: installation of a push-pull locking mechanism on all door locks.

Standard No. 208 Occupant Crash Protection: installation of a complying driver's side air bag and a seat belt warning system. The petitioner asserts that the vehicle conforms to the standard's injury criteria at the front passenger position based on a test report from the vehicle's manufacturer. The petitioner additionally submitted a letter from an engineering concern stating that no difference in occupant restraint characteristics would be anticipated between the Short Wheel Base Gelaendewagen and the Long Wheel Base models that NHTSA has

previously decided to be eligible for importation. This representation is based on the observation that the only structural differences in the two vehicles are found well behind the frontal crush zone, and that no structural deformation occurs in that area. The letter further states that the Short Wheel Base Gelaendewagen is 297 pounds lighter than the Long Wheel Base model, representing a weight difference of less 5 percent. The letter states that this weight difference would not be expected to cause performance variation in Standard 208 crash tests. The petitioner states that it intends to meet automatic restraint phase-in requirements for vehicles manufactured after September 1, 1995 by importing other vehicles equipped with passenger-side automatic restraints.

Standard No. 210 Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages: insertion of instructions on the installation and use of child restraints in the owner's manual for the vehicle. The petitioner submitted a letter from an engineering concern describing tests performed on a Gelaendewagen to the requirements of this standard. Based on the results of these tests, the petitioner asserts that the vehicle complies with the standard.

Standard No. 212 Windshield Retention: application of cement to the windshield's edges. The petitioner asserts that the vehicle complies with the standard based on test results for a Gelaendewagen that NHTSA previously decided to be eligible for importation.

Standard No. 301 Fuel System Integrity: installation of a rollover valve. The petitioner asserts that the vehicle complies with the standard based on test results for a Gelaendewagen that NHTSA previously decided to be eligible for importation.

Interested persons are invited to submit comments on the petition described above. Comments should refer to the docket number and be submitted to: Docket Section, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5109, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590. It is requested but not required that 10 copies be submitted.

All comments received before the close of business on the closing date indicated above will be considered, and will be available for examination in the docket at the above address both before and after that date. To the extent possible, comments filed after the closing date will also be considered. Notice of final action will be published in the Federal Register pursuant to the authority indicated below.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(B) and (b)(1); 49 CFR 593.8; delegations of authority at 49 CFR 1.50 and 501.8.

Issued on: April 3, 1996.

Marilynne Jacobs,
Director Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.
[FR Doc. 96-8758 Filed 4-8-96; 8:45 am]

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[Docket No. 96-33; Notice 1]

Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 1983 Saab 900 Passenger Cars Are Eligible for Importation

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming 1983 Saab 900 passenger cars are eligible for importation.

SUMMARY: This notice announces receipt by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a petition for a decision that a 1983 Saab 900 that was not originally manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards is eligible for importation into the United States because (1) it is substantially similar to a vehicle that was originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States and that was certified by its manufacturer as complying with the safety standards, and (2) it is capable of being readily altered to conform to the 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.