

procedures that could result in air bag designs consistent with these principles.

The agency notes that there are particular challenges in developing test procedures to ensure the proper functioning of smart air bag concepts other than weight sensors. In the case of weight sensors, it appears that a relatively simple, inexpensive static test procedure could be developed. The procedure would check whether the sensor ensured that the air bag was on or off under specified conditions related to the amount of weight on the seat, and perhaps the distribution of that weight.

However, dynamic procedures might be needed to assess the performance of other smart air bag concepts. For example, in order to measure the performance of a system which deactivated the air bag based on occupant position, it might be necessary to check whether the sensor would reliably turn the air bag off in such situations as that of a child who is propelled into the dashboard as a result of pre-crash braking just before a crash. In order to measure the performance of a system which used automatic modulation of the speed and force of air bag deployment, it might be necessary to check whether the forces from the air bag would cause injury to occupants in various conditions, possibly using dummies. NHTSA notes that, given the large number of potential conditions involving out-of-position occupants, a wide array of conditions might need to be tested to ensure adequate performance.

The agency requests comments on whether and how adequate performance can or should be ensured solely by means of dynamic test requirements, and, if not, what other regulatory approaches might be appropriate. NHTSA notes that, in its rulemaking to improve the stability and control of medium and heavy vehicles during braking, it adopted the approach of requiring vehicles to be equipped with antilock brake systems that meet a specific definition, and supplementing that requirement with limited dynamic performance requirements. See 60 FR 13216; March 10, 1995. The agency requests comments on whether an approach along those lines might be appropriate for a proposal for smart air bags, either as an interim measure to get requirements in place quickly or as a longer term approach as well.

NHTSA requests that vehicle manufacturers and air bag suppliers provide written comments describing their recent and anticipated efforts to develop and assess smart air bag technologies. The agency specifically requests that they provide descriptions

of their recent and anticipated component and vehicle testing, market surveys, and any other developmental work. NHTSA recognizes the sensitivity of this information and will protect confidentiality as authorized by law.

B. Procedural Matters

February 11

The first day will be devoted to presentations by public participants concerning technical issues. The time available for individual presentations will be determined by the agency based on the number of persons who submit requests to participate by the January 31 deadline. If necessary, parties with similar points of view will be encouraged to coordinate their presentations to avoid duplication.

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The second day will be devoted to an interactive discussion among interested persons. Procedures for encouraging an exchange of ideas during the interactive phase of the workshop will be discussed at the beginning of the session on that day. Those persons interested in actively participating in this phase of the workshop should contact Mr. Harper not later than January 31. The agency will make available an agenda setting forth the sequence of issues to be discussed during the interactive phase.

To facilitate communication, NHTSA will provide auxiliary aids (e.g., sign-language interpreter, braille materials, large print materials and/or a magnifying device) to participants as necessary, during the workshop. Any person desiring assistance of auxiliary aids should contact Ms. Bernadette Millings, NHTSA Office of Crashworthiness Standards, telephone (202) 366-1740, no later than 10 days before the workshop. For any presentation that will include slides, motion pictures, or other visual aids, the presenters should bring at least one copy to the workshop so that NHTSA can readily include the material in the public record.

NHTSA will place a copy of any written statement in the docket for this notice. In addition, the agency will make a verbatim record of the public workshop and place a copy in the docket.

IV. Written Comments

Participation in the workshop is not a prerequisite for the submission of written comments. NHTSA invites written comments from all interested parties. It is requested but not required that 10 copies be submitted.

If a commenter wishes to submit certain information under a claim of

confidentiality, three copies of the complete submission, including purportedly confidential business information, should be submitted to the Chief Counsel, NHTSA, at the street address given above, and copies from which the purportedly confidential information has been deleted should be submitted to the Docket Section. A request for confidentiality should be accompanied by a cover letter setting forth the information specified in the agency's confidential business information regulation. 49 CFR Part 512.

All comments received before the close of business on the comment closing date indicated above will be considered. To the extent possible, comments filed after the closing date will also be considered. Comments will be available for inspection in the docket.

NHTSA will continue to file relevant information as it becomes available in the docket after the closing date. It is therefore recommended that interested persons continue to examine the docket for new material.

Those desiring to be notified upon receipt of their comments in the docket should enclose a self-addressed, stamped postcard in the envelope with their comments. Upon receiving the comments, the docket supervisor will return the postcard by mail.

List of Subjects in 49 CFR Part 571

Imports, Motor vehicle safety, Motor vehicles.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 322, 30111, 30115, 30117 and 30166; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50.

Issued on: January 14, 1997.

L. Robert Shelton,

Associate Administrator for Safety Performance Standards.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 622

[I.D. 011397D]

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council; Public Hearings

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service, (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Public hearing; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will

hold one public hearing on Draft Amendment 8 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic (FMP) and its associated analyses of regulatory and environmental impacts, including a draft supplemental environmental impact statement (DSEIS).

DATES: Written comments on Amendment 8 will be accepted until January 27, 1997. The public hearing will be held on January 24, 1997, at 6 p.m. and will end when business is completed. Council staff members will be available at the hearing location from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. (1 hour before the hearing) to answer any questions about the amendment.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be sent to Bob Mahood, Executive Director, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407-4699. Copies of the draft amendment and DSEIS are available from Susan Buchanan at 803-571-4366. The draft amendment and DSEIS will also be available to the public at the hearing. The hearing will be held at the Monroe County Regional Service Center, 2798 Overseas Highway (mile marker 47.5 Gulf side), Marathon, FL 33050; telephone: 305-289-2543.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Susan Buchanan, 803-571-4366.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Council is holding a public hearing on Draft Amendment 8 to the FMP and associated analyses of regulatory and environmental impacts, including a DSEIS. A January 10, 1997, hearing at the Banana Bay Resort was previously announced at 61 FR 67294 (December 20, 1996) and 62 FR 384 (January 3, 1997). That hearing was cancelled and this document announces the rescheduled date of January 24, 1997.

Amendment 8 includes the following management measures:

1. Limit permit holders to those who can demonstrate landings of at least 1,000 lb (454 kg) of snapper-grouper species in 2 of the 3 years, 1993, 1994,

and 1995, and have held a valid snapper-grouper permit for those years.

2. Control fishing effort by establishing trip limits for identified sub-unit groups of species within the FMP's management unit.

3. Redefine the FMP's definitions of overfishing and optimum yield for all species in the snapper-grouper management unit.

4. Increase the red porgy minimum size limit from 12 inches (30.5 cm) total length (TL) to 14 inches (36 cm) TL for recreational and commercial fishermen and establish a recreational fishery bag limit of two red porgy.

5. Increase the black sea bass minimum size limit from 8 inches (20.3 cm) TL to 10 inches (25.4 cm) TL for both recreational and commercial fishermen.

6. Designate a black sea bass Special Management Zone.

7. Establish a recreational fishery bag limit of 10 black sea bass.

8. Require escape vents and escape panels with degradable fasteners in black sea bass pots.

9. Establish measures for greater amberjack that would extend the April closure throughout the South Atlantic EEZ and prohibit sale during April, reduce the recreational fishery bag limit to one fish per person per day, implement a commercial quota to reduce landings by 21 percent based on average landings from 1986-1995, implement a 500-1,000 lb (227-454 kg) trip limit, change the start of the fishing year from January 1 to July 1, and prohibit coring.

10. Establish, effective January 1, 1998, an annual commercial quota for vermilion snapper of 600,000 lb (272,155 kg), a recreational fishery bag limit of five fish, and a recreational fishery minimum size limit of 12 inches (30.5 cm).

11. Increase the gag minimum size limit from 20 inches (50.8 cm) TL to 24 inches (61 cm) TL for the commercial and recreational fisheries, and prohibit all harvest January through March.

12. Require logbook reporting by the 10th of the month following the month of fishing activity.

13. Establish a zone in the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone (EEZ) through which vessels carrying fish traps could transit if they have valid Gulf reef fish permits and fish trap endorsements.

14. Restrict vessels with bottom longline gear on board to possessing only snowy grouper, warsaw grouper, yellowedge grouper, misty grouper, golden tilefish, blueline tilefish, and sand tilefish.

15. Allow use of one bait net per boat, up to 50 ft (1,524 cm) long by 10 ft (305 cm) high with a stretched mesh size of 1.5 inches (3.75 cm) or smaller; also, allow possession and use of cast nets for catching bait.

16. Allow species within the snapper grouper fishery management unit (whether whole or fillets) caught in Bahamian waters in accordance with Bahamian law, to be possessed on board a vessel in the EEZ and landed in the United States, provided the vessel is in transit from the Bahamas and valid Bahamian fishing and cruising permits are on board.

17. Establish an aggregate snapper-grouper recreational fishery bag limit of 20-25 fish inclusive of all species in the snapper-grouper fishery management unit.

18. The Council is considering a number of options under this action to reduce fishing mortality, including establishing a closure of the South Atlantic EEZ for species in the snapper-grouper fishery management unit, implementing a trip limit for all temperate, mid-shelf snapper-grouper species, or establishing an aggregate temperate mid-shelf species quota.

This hearing is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office (see **ADDRESSES**).

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: January 14, 1997.

Bruce Morehead,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
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