

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-98-4073]

Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 1995-1996 Ford Bronco Multi-Purpose Passenger Vehicles Are Eligible for Importation

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming 1995-1996 Ford Bronco multi-purpose passenger vehicles (MPVs) are eligible for importation.

SUMMARY: This notice announces receipt by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a petition for a decision that 1995-1996 Ford Broncos manufactured for sale in Venezuela that were not originally manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards are eligible for importation into the United States because (1) they are substantially similar to vehicles that were originally manufactured for sale in the United States and that were certified by their manufacturer as complying with the safety standards, and (2) they are capable of being readily altered to conform to the standards.

DATES: The closing date for comments on the petition is August 19, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to the docket number and notice number, and be submitted to: Docket Management, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, DC 20590. [Docket hours are from 10 am to 5 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), 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, 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.

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**.

Wallace Environmental Testing Laboratories, Inc. of Houston, Texas ("Wallace") (Registered Importer 90-005) has petitioned NHTSA to decide whether 1995-1996 Ford Broncos manufactured for sale in Venezuela are eligible for importation into the United States. The vehicles which Wallace believes are substantially similar are 1995-1996 Ford Broncos that were manufactured for sale in the United States and certified by their manufacturer, Ford Motor Company, as conforming to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

The petitioner claims that it carefully compared the non-U.S. certified 1995-1996 Ford Broncos to their U.S. certified counterparts, and found the vehicles to be substantially similar with respect to compliance with most Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Wallace submitted information with its petition intended to demonstrate that the non-U.S. certified 1995-1996 Ford Broncos, as originally manufactured, conform to many Federal motor vehicle safety standards in the same manner as their U.S. certified counterparts, or are capable of being readily altered to conform to those standards.

Specifically, the petitioner claims that the non-U.S. certified 1995-1996 Ford Broncos are identical to their U.S.

certified counterparts with respect to compliance with Standards Nos. 101 *Controls and Displays*, 102 *Transmission Shift Lever Sequence*, * * *, 103 *Defrosting and Defogging Systems*, 104 *Windshield Wiping and Washing Systems*, 105 *Hydraulic Brake Systems*, 106 *Brake Hoses*, 108 *Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment*, 111 *Rearview Mirror*, 113 *Hood Latch Systems*, 114 *Theft Protection*, 116 *Brake Fluid*, 119 *New Pneumatic Tires for Vehicles other than Passenger Cars*, 124 *Accelerator Control Systems*, 201 *Occupant Protection in Interior Impact*, 202 *Head Restraints*, 203 *Impact Protection for the Driver*

from the Steering Control System, 204 *Steering Control Rearward Displacement*, 205 *Glazing Materials*, 206 *Door Locks and Door Retention Components*, 207 *Seating Systems*, 209 *Seat Belt Assemblies*, 210 *Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages*, 212 *Windshield Retention*, 214 *Side Impact Protection*, 216 *Roof Crush Resistance*, 219 *Windshield Zone Intrusion*, 301 *Fuel System Integrity*, and 302 *Flammability of Interior Materials*.

Additionally, the petitioner states that the non-U.S. certified 1995-1996 Ford Broncos comply with the Bumper Standard found in 49 CFR Part 581.

Petitioner also contends that the vehicles are capable of being readily altered to meet the following standards, in the manner indicated:

Standard No. 120 *Tire Selection and Rims for Motor Vehicles other than Passenger Cars*: installation of a tire information placard.

Standard No. 208 *Occupant Crash Protection*: installation of a U.S. model air bag at the driver's seating position. The petitioner states that the vehicles are equipped with Type II seat belts at both front and both rear outboard designated seating positions, and with a Type I seat belt at the rear center designated seating position.

The petitioner also states that a vehicle identification number plate must be affixed to the vehicles to meet the requirements of 49 CFR Part 565.

Interested persons are invited to submit comments on the petition described above. Comments should refer to the docket number and be submitted to: Docket Management, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, DC 20590. [Docket hours are from 10 am to 5 pm]. 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 on the petition will be published in the **Federal Register** pursuant to the authority indicated below.

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

Issued on: July 15, 1998.

Marilynne Jacobs,
Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.
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