

1. The objectives, goals, and anticipated outcomes of the proposed research effort;

2. The method or methods that will be used;

3. The source of the human surrogates to be used;

4. The number, quality, and anticipated ages at death of the human surrogates the applicant expects to use for this research effort along with documentation that provides evidence that the applicant has access to the proposed quantity, quality, and projected ages of the experimental material (because NHTSA has interest in obtaining knowledge of the impact injury process and its effect on the total automotive-population-at-risk, an experimental human subject pool with ages representative of this population is highly desirable);

5. 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;

6. A description of the general, as well as specialized impact simulation, test facilities and equipment (including sled impact systems, component test systems, and data acquisition systems with high channel capabilities) currently available or to be obtained for use in the conduct of the proposed research effort; and

7. A description of the applicant's previous experience or on-going research program that is related to this proposed research effort.

Review Process and Criteria

Initially, all applications will be reviewed to confirm that the applicant is an eligible recipient and to assure that the applicant 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 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 effort. Specific attention shall be placed upon the applicant's stated means for obtaining the quantity of experimental material necessary to conduct the proposed research effort.

2. The potential of the proposed research effort accomplishments to make an innovative and/or significant contribution to the base of

biomechanical knowledge as it may be applied to saving lives and reducing injuries resulting from motor vehicle crashes.

3. The technical merit of the proposed research effort, including the feasibility of the approach, planned methodology, and anticipated results.

4. The adequacy of test facilities and equipment identified to accomplish the proposed research effort, including impact simulation.

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.

Award Selection Factors

The award selection may not be based solely on the evaluation results. Award preference may be given to an innovative or creative approach that offers a potentially significant contribution to achieve the specific objectives of this cooperative research effort. Award preference may be given to a proposal with a larger percentage of cost sharing.

Terms and Conditions of the Award

1. The protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects and the ethical use of human surrogates in NHTSA-sponsored research is governed by NHTSA Orders 700-1 through 700-

4. Any recipient must satisfy the requirements and guidelines of these NHTSA Orders prior to award of the cooperative agreement. A copy of NHTSA Orders 700-1 through 700-4 may be obtained from the programmatic information contact designated in this notice.

2. Prior to award, each recipient must comply with the certification requirements of 49 CFR Part 29—Department of Transportation Government-wide Department and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants), as well as 49 CFR Part 20—Department of Transportation New Restrictions on Lobbying.

3. During the effective period of the cooperative agreement(s) awarded as a result of this notice, each agreement shall be subject to the general administrative requirements of the requirements of 49 CFR Parts 190, 20 and 29, the cost principles of OMB Circular A-21, A-122, or FAR 31.2 as applicable to the recipient, and the NHTSA General Provisions for Assistance Agreements.

Issued: July 27, 1998.

Raymond P. Owings,

Associate Administrator for Research Development.

[FR Doc. 98-21274 Filed 8-7-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-98-4103]

Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 1994-1997 Mercedes-Benz S420 Passenger Cars Are Eligible for Importation

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming 1994-1997 Mercedes-Benz S420 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 1994-1997 Mercedes-Benz S420 passenger cars 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 importation into and 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.

DATE: The closing date for comments on the petition is October 9, 1998.

ADDRESS: 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 1994-1997 Mercedes-Benz S420 passenger cars are eligible for importation into the United States. The vehicles which Wallace believes are substantially similar are 1994-1997 Mercedes-Benz S420 that were manufactured for importation into, and sale in, the United States and certified by their manufacturer, Daimler Benz, A.G., as conforming to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

The petitioner claims that it carefully compared non-U.S. certified 1994-1997 Mercedes-Benz S420 passenger cars 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 non-U.S. certified 1994-1997 Mercedes-Benz S420 passenger cars, 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 non-U.S. certified 1994-1997 Mercedes-Benz S420 passenger cars are identical to their U.S. certified counterparts with respect to compliance with Standard Nos. 102 *Transmission Shift Lever Sequence* * * *, 103 *Defrosting and Defogging Systems*, 104 *Windshield Wiping and Washing Systems*, 105 *Hydraulic Brake Systems*, 106 *Brake Hoses*, 109 *New Pneumatic Tires*, 113 *Hood Latch Systems*, 116 *Brake Fluid*, 124 *Accelerator Control Systems*, 201 *Occupant Protection in Interior Impact*,

202 *Head Restraints*, 204 *Steering Control Rearward Displacement*, 205 *Glazing Materials*, 207 *Seating Systems*, 209 *Seat Belt Assemblies*, 210 *Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages*, 212 *Windshield Retention*, 216 *Roof Crush Resistance*, 219 *Windshield Zone Intrusion*, and 302 *Flammability of Interior Materials*.

Additionally, the petitioner states that non-U.S. certified 1994-1997 Mercedes-Benz S420 passenger cars 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. 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) recalibration of the speedometer/odometer from kilometers to miles per hour or its replacement with one already so calibrated.

Standard No. 108 *Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment*: (a) installation of U.S.-model headlight and sidemarker assemblies; (b) installation of U.S.-model taillight and sidemarker assemblies; (c) installation of a high mounted stop lamp.

Standard No. 110 *Tire Selection and Rims*: installation of a tire information placard.

Standard No. 111 *Rearview Mirror*: inscription of the required warning statement on the passenger side rearview mirror.

Standard No. 114 *Theft Protection*: installation of a warning buzzer in the steering lock assembly. The petitioner states that the vehicle is already equipped with a warning buzzer microswitch.

Standard No. 118 *Power Window Systems*: rewiring of the power window system so that the window transport is inoperative when the ignition is switched off.

Standard No. 206 *Door Locks and Door Retention Components*: replacement of the rear door locks and rear door lock buttons with U.S. model components.

Standard No. 208 *Occupant Crash Protection*: (a) installation of a safety belt warning system through replacement of the driver's seat belt latch and the addition of a seat belt warning buzzer system; (b) replacement of the driver's and passenger's side air bags and knee bolsters with U.S.-model components on vehicles that are not already so equipped. The petitioner states that the vehicles are equipped with Type II at both front and rear outboard designated seating positions,

and with a lap belt in the rear center designated seating position.

Standard No. 214 *Side Impact Protection*: installation of reinforcing beams.

Standard No. 301 *Fuel System Integrity*: installation of a rollover valve in the fuel tank vent line between the fuel tank and the evaporative emissions collection canister.

Additionally, the petitioner states that all vehicles will be inspected prior to importation to assure compliance with the Theft Prevention Standard found in 49 CFR Part 541.

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: August 4, 1998.

Marilynne Jacobs,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.
[FR Doc. 98-21286 Filed 8-7-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-98-4104]

Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 1992-1995 Hyundai Elantra Passenger Cars Are Eligible for Importation

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming 1992-1995 Hyundai Elantra passenger cars are eligible for importation.