

capable of being readily altered to conform to those standards.

Specifically, the petitioner claims that the 1995–1998 Mercedes-Benz E200 is identical to the 1995–1998 Mercedes-Benz E220 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*, 206 *Door Locks and Door Retention Components*, 207 *Seating Systems*, 209 *Seat Belt Assemblies*, 210 *Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages*, 212 *Windshield Retention*, 216 *Roof Crush Resistance*, 219 *Windshield Zone Intrusion*, 301 *Fuel System Integrity*, and 302 *Flammability of Interior Materials*.

Additionally, the petitioner states that the 1995–1998 Mercedes-Benz E200 complies with the Bumper Standard found in 49 CFR Part 581.

Petitioner also contends that the vehicle is 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) replacement of the speedometer/odometer with one calibrated in miles per hour.

Standard No. 108 *Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment*: (a) Installation of U.S.-model headlamps and front sidemarker lamps; (b) installation of U.S.-model taillamp assemblies and rear sidemarker lights; (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*: Replacement of the passenger side rearview mirror with a U.S.-model component.

Standard No. 114 *Theft Protection*: Installation of a warning buzzer and a warning buzzer microswitch in the steering lock assembly.

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

Standard No. 208 *Occupant Crash Protection*: (a) Installation of a safety belt warning buzzer, wired to the driver's seat belt latch; (b) replacement

of the driver's and passenger's side air bags, control units, sensors, seat belts and knee bolsters with U.S.-model components on vehicles that are not already so equipped. The petitioner states that the vehicles are equipped at the front and rear outboard seating positions with combination lap and shoulder belts that are self tensioning and capable of being released by means of a single red push-button, and with a lap belt in the rear center designated seating position.

Standard No. 214 *Side Impact Protection*: Installation of U.S.-model doorbars in vehicles that are not already so equipped.

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 plate must be affixed to the vehicle near the left windshield post and a reference and certification label must be affixed in the area of the left front door post 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 9 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: October 23, 1998.

Marilynne Jacobs,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.
[FR Doc. 98-28921 Filed 10-28-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-59-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-98-4576]

Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 1998 Mercedes-Benz CL500 Passenger Cars Are Eligible for Importation

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming 1998 Mercedes-Benz CL500 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 the 1998 Mercedes-Benz CL500 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 November 30, 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 9 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**.

Champagne Imports of Lansdale, Pennsylvania ("Champagne") (Registered Importer 90-009) has petitioned NHTSA to decide whether 1998 Mercedes-Benz CL500 passenger cars are eligible for importation into the United States. The vehicle which Champagne believes is substantially similar is the 1998 Mercedes-Benz CL500 that was manufactured for importation into, and sale in, the United States and certified by its manufacturer, Daimler Benz, A.G., as conforming to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

The petitioner claims that it carefully compared the non-U.S. certified 1998 Mercedes-Benz CL500 passenger cars to its U.S. certified counterpart, and found the two vehicles to be substantially similar with respect to compliance with most Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Champagne submitted information with its petition intended to demonstrate that the non-U.S. certified 1998 Mercedes-Benz CL500, as originally manufactured, conforms to many Federal motor vehicle safety standards in the same manner as its U.S. certified counterpart, or is capable of being readily altered to conform to those standards.

Specifically, the petitioner claims that the non-U.S. certified 1998 Mercedes-Benz CL500 is identical to its U.S. certified counterpart 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*, 206 *Door Locks and Door Retention Components*, 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 the non-U.S. certified 1998 Mercedes-Benz CL500 complies with the Bumper Standard found in 49 CFR part 581 and with the Theft Prevention Standard found in 49 CFR part 541.

Petitioner also contends that the vehicle is 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 a noncomplying symbol on the brake failure indicator lamp; (b) installation of a seat belt warning lamp that displays the appropriate symbol; (c) recalibration of the speedometer/odometer from kilometers to miles per hour.

Standard No. 108 *Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment*: (a) Installation of U.S.-model headlamp assemblies that incorporate headlamps with DOT markings; (b) installation of U.S.-model front and rear sidemarker/reflector assemblies; (c) installation of U.S.-model taillamp assemblies.

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

Standard No. 111 *Rearview Mirror*: Replacement of the passenger side rearview mirror with a U.S.-model component.

Standard No. 114 *Theft Protection*: Installation of a warning buzzer microswitch in the steering lock assembly and a warning buzzer.

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. 208 *Occupant Crash Protection*: (a) Installation of a U.S.-model seat belt in the driver's position, or a belt webbing-actuated microswitch inside the driver's seat belt retractor; (b) installation of an ignition switch-actuated seat belt warning lamp and buzzer; (c) replacement of the driver's and passenger's side air bags and knee bolsters with U.S.-model components if the vehicle is not already so equipped. The petitioner states that the vehicle is equipped with combination lap and shoulder restraints that adjust by means of an automatic retractor and release by means of a single push button at both front designated seating positions, with combination lap and shoulder restraints that release by means of a single push button at both rear outboard designated seating positions, and with a lap belt at 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.

The petitioner also states that a vehicle identification number plate must be affixed to the vehicle 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 Section, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5109, 400 Seventh Street, SW, 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 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: October 23, 1998.

Marilynne Jacobs,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 33609]

Norfolk Southern Railway Company; Purchase Exemption; Union Pacific Railroad Company

AGENCY: Surface Transportation Board.

ACTION: Notice of Exemption.

SUMMARY: Under 49 U.S.C. 10502, the Board exempts from the prior approval requirements of 49 U.S.C. 11323-25 the purchase by Norfolk Southern Railway Company from Union Pacific Railroad Company of approximately 15.3 miles of rail line located between milepost 104.8 at Monterey Junction, IL (including the southwest leg of the wye track between mileposts 104.5 and 104.8), and milepost 119.8 at DeCamp, IL, as well as certain yard tracks known as the Wiggins Track, the New Pass Track and