Name of Committee: National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences Special Emphasis Panel K08 Grant Reviews.

Date: March 30, 2000.

Time: 3 pm to 4 pm.

Agenda: To review and evaluate grant applications.

Place: NIEHS–East Campus, Building 4401, Conference Room 122, 79 Alexander Drive, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709, (Telephone Conference Call).

Contact Person: Linda K. Bass, PhD, Scientific Review Administrator, NIEHS, PO Box 12233 EC–30, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709, (919) 541–1307.

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

(Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 93.113, Biological Response to Environmental Health Hazards; 93.114, Applied Toxicological Research and Testing; 93.115, Biometry and Risk Estimation—Health Risks from Environmental Exposures; 93.142, NIEHS Hazardous Waste Worker Health and Safety Training; 93.143, NIEHS Superfund Hazardous Substances—Basic Research and Education; 93.894, Resources and Manpower Development in the Environmental Health Sciences, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: March 6, 2000.

LaVerne Y. Stringfield,

Director, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.

[FR Doc. 00–6019 Filed 3–10–00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

Application for Approval of Discontinuance or Modification of a Railroad Signal System or Relief From the Requirements of Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 236

Pursuant to Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 235 and 49 U.S.C. 20502(a), the following railroads have petitioned the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) seeking approval for the discontinuance or modification of the signal system or relief from the requirements of 49 CFR Part 236 as detailed below.

Docket No. FRA–2000–6812.

Applicant: Union Pacific Railroad Company, Mr. Phil Abaray, Chief Engineer—Signals, 1416 Dodge Street, Room 1000, Omaha, Nebraska 68179–1000.

The Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) seeks relief from the requirements of the Rules, Standard and Instructions, 49 CFR, Part 236, § 236.110, to the extent that each test record, need not be signed by the person making the test, in lieu of implementing an electronic record system (''STARS'') to record and maintain signal records of tests. The ''STARS'' electronic record system will provide integrity and several levels of security to uniquely identify a person as the author of a specific record, and once the test record is entered, verified, and saved it cannot be modified. Initially, ''STARS'' will not be inclusive of all Part 236 records of tests, and future development may result in the addition of subsequent test records. This petition is associated with UP's request to utilize the ''STARS'' electronic record system for recording and maintaining applicable inspection and test records as defined in 49 CFR, Part 234, subject to approval by the Associate Administrator for Safety, as required by Section 234.273.

Applicant's justification for relief: To provide more flexibility for Federal and State Inspectors who are required to check and inspect records of tests over the UP system.

Any interested party desiring to protest the granting of an application shall set forth specifically the grounds upon which the protest is made, and contain a concise statement of the interest of the Protestant in the proceeding. Additionally, one copy of the protest shall be furnished to the applicant at the address listed above.

All communications concerning this proceeding should be identified by the docket number and must be submitted to the Docket Clerk, DOT Central Docket Management Facility, Room PI–401, Washington, D.C. 20590–0001. Communications received within 45 days of the date of this notice will be considered by the FRA before final action is taken. Comments received after that date will be considered as far as practicable. All written communications concerning these proceedings are available for examination during regular business hours (9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.) at DOT Central Docket Management Facility, Room PI–401 (Plaza Level), 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590–0001. All documents in the public docket are also available for inspection and copying on the internet at the docket facility's Web site at *http://dms.dot.gov.*

FRA expects to be able to determine these matters without an oral hearing. However, if a specific request for an oral hearing is accompanied by a showing that the party is unable to adequately present his or her position by written statements, an application may be set for public hearing.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on March 8, 2000.

Grady C. Cothen, Jr.,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety Standards and Program Development.

[FR Doc. 00–6075 Filed 3–10–00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–06–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Reports, Forms and Record Keeping Requirements—Agency Information Collection Activity Under OMB Review

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this notice announces that the Information Collection Request (ICR) abstracted below has been forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The ICR describes the nature of the information collections and their expected burden. The **Federal Register** Notice with a 60-day comment period was published on October 27, 1999 [64 FR 57924–57925].

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before April 12, 2000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sharon Vaughn at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Office of Chief Counsel (NCC–30), 202–366–1834, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Room 5219, Washington, DC 20590.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Title: Designation of Agent.

OMB Number: 2127–0040.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: This collection of information applies to motor vehicle and motor vehicle equipment manufacturers located outside of the United States (foreign manufacturers). Every manufacturer offering a motor vehicle or item of motor vehicle equipment for importation into the United States is statutorily required to designate in writing an agent upon whom service of all administrative and judicial processes, notices, orders, decisions and requirements may be made for and on behalf of the manufacturer.

Affected Public: Foreign manufacturers of motor vehicles and motor vehicle equipment located

outside of the United States, which are importing these items into the United States.

Estimated Total Annual Burden: 70.

Address: Send comments, within 30 days, to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, 725–17th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20503, Attention: NHTSA Desk Officer.

Comments are invited on: Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Department, including whether the information will have practical utility; the accuracy of the Departments estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection; ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; and ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

A comment to OMB is most effective if OMB receives it within 30 days of publication.

Issued in Washington, D.C., on March 3, 2000.

Herman L. Simms,

Associate Administrator for Administration.

[FR Doc. 00–6060 Filed 3–10–00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA–2000–6992; Notice 1]

Blue Bird Body Company; Receipt of Application for Decision of Inconsequential Noncompliance

Blue Bird Body Company (Blue Bird), 402 N. Camellia Blvd., P.O. Box 937, Fort Valley, Georgia 31030, has determined that 25,839 model TC/2000 Conventional and MiniBird school buses do not meet the 60 percent tensile strength requirements of 49 CFR 571.221, Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 221, ''School bus Body Joint Strength,'' and has filed an appropriate report pursuant to 49 CFR part 573, ''Defect and Noncompliance Reports.'' Blue Bird has also applied to be exempted from the notification and remedy requirements of 49 U.S.C. Chapter 301—''Motor Vehicle Safety'' on the basis that the noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety.

This notice of receipt of an application is published under 49 U.S.C. 30118 and 30120 and does not represent any agency decision or other exercise of judgement concerning the merits of the application.

FMVSS No. 221, S5 requires that when tested in accordance with the test procedures of S6., each body panel joint shall be capable of holding the body panel to the member to which it is joined when subjected to a force of 60 percent of the tensile strength of the weakest joined body panel determined pursuant to S6.2.

Blue Bird has notified the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that the subject school buses were manufactured at their Mount Pleasant, Iowa, plant between November 1, 1993 through December 6, 1999. The noncompliance involves a failure to meet the 60 percent joint strength requirements on certain 8 inch segments of the exterior roof joints. Agency compliance tests, performed by General Testing Laboratories (GTL), determined that the tensile strength of the roof joint tested was 54.9 percent of the required load. Blue Bird stated that a variance in rivet spacing in the vicinity of the roof stringers occurred as some assembly workers at this plant without authorization, departed from manufacturing procedures of using the pre-punched holes in the roof bows as drill guides to control fastener spacing and, as a result, there are fewer than the six (6) rivets required by Blue Bird in certain eight (8) inch segments of the roof joints in the affected buses.

Blue Bird supported its application for inconsequential noncompliance with the following:

I. Overall Joint and Body Strength

The stated purpose of the School Bus Body Joint Strength Standard No. 221 is ''* * * to reduce deaths and injuries resulting from the structural collapse of school bus bodies during crashes.'' In Docket No. 7334: Notice 1, **Federal Register**, Vol. 39, No. 15—Tuesday, January 22, 1974, the agency observed that FMVSS 221 ''derives from section 5.6 of the Vehicle Equipment Safety Commission's Regulation VESC–6 * * * '' Docket No. 73–34 went on to state that,

> ''In order to bring the basic VESC—6 requirement into a form that satisfied the legal and operational requirements of the motor vehicle safety standards, the agency has included a test procedure to make possible an objective determination of a joint's strength.''

The selected test procedure established the use of a twelve (12) inch wide test specimen necked down to eight (8) inches at the center, such that the strength of the joint is evaluated by tensile testing of a randomly selected eight (8) inch long segment of the joint being evaluated. Later in the docket NHTSA outlined its regulatory objective:

> ''The agency therefore anticipates that the procedure will permit the overall strength of a bus's joints to be determined without resorting to an unduly burdensome amount of testing.''

Blue Bird concludes from the above discussion that the strength of the overall joint and consequently the strength of the overall bus body is the safety objective of standard 221 and that the measured performance of an eight (8)-inch long joint segment is merely a procedure chosen to evaluate the overall joint in a practical manner.

During a December 2, 1999 Blue Bird personnel visit to the GTL facility in Leedstown, VA, the 1998 Blue Bird test bus was inspected and photographed. Paper tape was secured at each roof joint and the location of each rivet in each joint was marked on the tape. Blue Bird thereafter analyzed each tape and the length of each joint and the total number of fasteners in each joint were determined. On average, the seven (7) roof joints on the test bus had 6.76 rivets per eight (8) inches of length. Based on the reported test results of 6220 pounds for the roof joint tested that had five (5) rivets, the strength per rivet is 1244 pounds per rivet, and for the average joint with 6.76 rivets, this equates to a strength of 8409 pounds per eight (8) inch length which far exceeds the required strength of 6788 pounds. This 8409 pound strength equates to a 73.3 percent efficiency as compared to the 60 percent required by Standard 221.

Similarly, the worst case roof joint on the test bus had 6.62 rivets per eight (8) inches of length, which equates in a similar manner to 8239 pounds per eight (8) inch length for an efficiency of 72.8 percent. Here again, this comfortably exceeds the 60 percent requirement of Standard 221.

This analysis shows that the overall strengths of the roof joints on the subject test bus not only meet—but comfortably exceed the strength performance requirements of FMVSS 221. Consequently, Blue Bird believes that the noncompliance of several small selected segments of these roof joints is not representative of actual, overall bus body strength performance and is inconsequential as it relates to motor vehicle safety.

II. Occupants Not Exposed to Roof Joints

In reviewing the regulatory history of FMVSS 221, Blue Bird notes that this rulemaking had a complementary purpose to minimize the likelihood of sharp edges of sheet metal being