

Based on the evidence submitted by GM, the agency believes that the antitheft device for the Chevrolet Volt vehicle line is likely to be as effective in reducing and deterring motor vehicle theft as compliance with the parts-marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard (49 CFR 541).

GM's proposed device lacks an audible or visible alarm. Therefore, this device cannot perform one of the functions listed in 49 CFR part 543.6(a)(3), that is, to call attention to unauthorized attempts to enter or move the vehicle. The agency concludes that the device will provide the four of the five types of performance listed in § 543.6(a)(3): Promoting activation; preventing defeat or circumvention of the device by unauthorized persons; preventing operation of the vehicle by unauthorized entrants; and ensuring the reliability and durability of the device.

Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 33106 and 49 CFR 543.7(b), the agency grants a petition for exemption from the parts-marking requirements of part 541 either in whole or in part, if it determines that, based upon substantial evidence, the standard equipment antitheft device is likely to be as effective in reducing and deterring motor vehicle theft as compliance with the parts-marking requirements of part 541. The agency finds that GM has provided adequate reasons for its belief that the antitheft device for the Chevrolet Volt vehicle line is likely to be as effective in reducing and deterring motor vehicle theft as compliance with the parts-marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard (49 CFR part 541). This conclusion is based on the information GM provided about its device.

For the foregoing reasons, the agency hereby grants in full GM's petition for exemption for the Chevrolet Volt vehicle line from the parts-marking requirements of 49 CFR part 541 beginning with the 2018 model year. The agency notes that 49 CFR part 541, Appendix A-1, identifies those lines that are exempted from the Theft Prevention Standard for a given model year. 49 CFR part 543.7(f) contains publication requirements incident to the disposition of all part 543 petitions. Advanced listing, including the release of future product nameplates, the beginning model year for which the petition is granted and a general description of the antitheft device is necessary in order to notify law enforcement agencies of new vehicle lines exempted from the parts-marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard.

If GM decides not to use the exemption for this line, it should formally notify the agency. If such a decision is made, the line must be fully marked according to the requirements under 49 CFR parts 541.5 and 541.6 (marking of major component parts and replacement parts).

NHTSA notes that if GM wishes in the future to modify the device on which this exemption is based, the company may have to submit a petition to modify the exemption. Part 543.7(d) states that a part 543 exemption applies only to vehicles that belong to a line exempted under this part and equipped with the antitheft device on which the line's exemption is based. Further, part 543.9(c)(2) provides for the submission of petitions "to modify an exemption to permit the use of an antitheft device similar to but differing from the one specified in that exemption."

The agency wishes to minimize the administrative burden that part 543.9(c)(2) could place on exempted vehicle manufacturers and itself. The agency did not intend in drafting part 543 to require the submission of a modification petition for every change to the components or design of an antitheft device. The significance of many such changes could be *de minimis*. Therefore, NHTSA suggests that if the manufacturer contemplates making any changes, the effects of which might be characterized as *de minimis*, it should consult the agency before preparing and submitting a petition to modify.

Issued in Washington, DC, under authority delegated in 49 CFR 1.95.

Raymond R. Posten,

Associate Administrator for Rulemaking.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-2015-0035; Notice 2]

General Motors, LLC, Grant of Petition for Decision of Inconsequential Noncompliance

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Department of Transportation (DOT)

ACTION: Grant of petition

SUMMARY: General Motors, LLC, (GM) has determined that certain model year (MY) 2012–2015 Chevrolet Sonic passenger cars do not fully comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 108, *Lamps, Reflective*

Devices and Associated Equipment. GM has filed a noncompliance report dated March 2, 2015. GM also petitioned NHTSA on March 24, 2015, for a decision that the subject noncompliance is inconsequential as it relates to motor vehicle safety.

ADDRESSES: For further information on the decision contact Mike Cole, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), telephone (202) 366-5319, facsimile (202) 366-3081.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Overview

General Motors, LLC, (GM) has determined that certain model year (MY) 2012–2015 Chevrolet Sonic passenger cars do not fully comply with paragraph S6.5.3.4.1 of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 108, *Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment*. GM has filed a noncompliance report dated March 2, 2015, pursuant to 49 CFR part 573, *Defect and Noncompliance Responsibility and Reports*. GM also petitioned NHTSA on March 24, 2015, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 30118(d) and 30120(h) (see implementing rule at 49 CFR part 556) for an exemption from the notification and remedy requirements of 49 U.S.C. Chapter 301 on the basis that this noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety.

Notice of receipt of the GM petition was published, with a 30-day public comment period, on May 12, 2015, in the **Federal Register** (80 FR 27229). No comments were received. To view the petition and all supporting documents log onto the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) Web site at: <http://www.regulations.gov/>. Then follow the online search instructions to locate docket number "NHTSA-2015-0035."

II. Vehicles Involved

Affected are approximately 310,243 MY 2012–2015 Chevrolet Sonic passenger cars manufactured between May 5, 2011 and February 4, 2015.

III. Noncompliance:

GM explains that the noncompliance is that the high-beam headlamp lenses on the subject vehicles are not marked with "HB3" (the HB bulb type) as required by paragraph S6.5.3.4.1 of FMVSS No. 108.

IV. Rule Text

Paragraph S6.5.3.4.1 of FMVSS No. 108 requires in pertinent part:

S6.5.3.4.1 The lens of each replaceable bulb headlamp must bear permanent marking

in front of each replaceable light source with which it is equipped that states either: The HB Type, if the light source conforms to S11 of this standard for filament light sources,

V. Summary of GM's Analyses

GM stated its belief that the subject noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety for the following reasons:

(A) The high-beam headlamp lenses in question are clearly marked "9005" (the ANSI designation), which GM believes to be a well-known alternative designation recognized throughout the automotive industry and used by lighting manufacturers interchangeably with HB3, the lamp's HB type. GM also verified that the vehicle owner's manuals identify the high beam replacement bulb as 9005.

(B) That the mismarked high-beam headlamps are the correct headlamps for the subject vehicles and that they conform to all other requirements including photometric as required by FMVSS No. 108.

(C) The risk of customer confusion when selecting a correct replacement bulb is remote. Both the HB3 type and the 9005 ANSI designation are marked on the vehicles' headlamp bulb sockets, and packaging for replacement bulbs is commonly marked with both the HB type and the ANSI designation. GM searched a number of national automotive parts stores (Autozone, O'Reilly, Advanced Auto Parts, and Pep Boys), and found that all HB3 replacement bulbs in these stores were marked with the 9005 ANSI designation. Should a consumer attempt to install an incorrect bulb into the headlamp sockets, the bulb could not be successfully installed because of the unique nature of the socket hardware.

(D) GM also cited several previous petitions that NHTSA has granted dealing with noncompliances that GM believes are similar to the noncompliance that is the subject of its petition. Based on these decisions, GM believes that there is also precedent to support granting its petition.

GM is not aware of any VOQ or field data in which a consumer has complained of not being able to identify the proper replacement headlamp bulb for the affected vehicles, which GM believes to be evidence that this noncompliance is not impacting consumers.

GM has additionally informed NHTSA that it has corrected the noncompliance by adding the HB3 designation bulb type to the high-beam headlamp lens in all vehicles produced on or after February 21, 2015.

In summation, GM believes that the described noncompliance of the subject vehicles is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety, and that its petition, to exempt GM from providing recall notification of noncompliance as required by 49 U.S.C. 30118 and remedying the recall noncompliance as required by 49 U.S.C. 30120 should be granted.

NHTSA's Decision

NHTSA's Analysis: We agree with GM that the ANSI "9005" designation is a well-known alternative designation for the HB3 light source and that replacement light source packaging is commonly marked with both the HB type and ANSI designation. As such, we believe that consumers can properly identify and purchase the correct replacement upper beam light source for the affected vehicles. Further, the unique bulb holder design incorporated into the headlamps would prevent consumers from installing a light source other than an HB3/9005 so there would be no effect on headlamp performance.

NHTSA's Decision: In consideration of the foregoing, NHTSA finds that GM has met its burden of persuasion that the subject FMVSS No. 108 noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety. Accordingly, GM's petition is hereby granted and GM is consequently exempted from the obligation of providing notification of, and a free remedy for, that noncompliance under 49 U.S.C. 30118 and 30120.

NHTSA notes that the statutory provisions (49 U.S.C. 30118(d) and 30120(h)) that permit manufacturers to file petitions for a determination of inconsequentiality allow NHTSA to exempt manufacturers only from the duties found in sections 30118 and 30120, respectively, to notify owners, purchasers, and dealers of a defect or noncompliance and to remedy the defect or noncompliance. Therefore, this decision only applies to the subject vehicles that GM no longer controlled at the time it determined that the noncompliance existed. However, the granting of this petition does not relieve vehicle distributors and dealers of the prohibitions on the sale, offer for sale, or introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of the noncompliant vehicles under their control after GM notified them that the subject noncompliance existed.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30118, 30120; delegations of authority at 49 CFR 1.95 and 501.8.

Jeffrey M. Giuseppe,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of the Secretary

Contracting Initiative

AGENCY: Office of the Secretary (OST), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The DOT is extending the contracting initiative pilot program for a period of 5 years.

DATES: This pilot program became effective on March 6, 2015.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For technical information: Mr. Michael Harkins, Deputy Assistant General Counsel for General Law, Office, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590, 202-366-0590 (telephone), Michael.Harkins@dot.gov (email).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Access

An electronic copy of this document may also be downloaded from the Office of the Federal Register's home page at http://www.archives.gov/federal_register and the Government Printing Office's Web page at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov>.

Background

On March 6, 2015, DOT published a notice in the **Federal Register** (80 FR 12257) establishing a contracting initiative pilot program under which, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recipients and subrecipients could utilize various contracting requirements that generally have been disallowed due to concerns about adverse impacts on competition. The purpose of the pilot program is to determine whether the use of such requirements "unduly limit competition," as provided in an August 23, 2013, opinion from the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel (OLC). DOT established the pilot program for a period of 1 year unless extended. On March 17, 2016, DOT extended this pilot program for a period of 1 additional year, until March 6, 2017 (81 FR14524). To date, DOT has received only limited data from the program. As a result, DOT has decided to extend the pilot program until March