

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kathleen Scheuerle, Mass Media Bureau, (202) 418-2180.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This is a summary of the Commission's *Notice of Proposed Rule Making*, MM Docket No. 96-39, adopted February 26, 1996, and released March 11, 1996. The full text of this Commission decision is available for inspection and copying during normal business hours in the Commission's Reference Center (Room 239), 1919 M Street, NW., Washington, DC. The complete text of this decision may also be purchased from the Commission's copy contractors, International Transcription Services, Inc., 2100 M Street, NW., Suite 140, Washington, DC 20037, (202) 857-3800.

Provisions of the Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980 do not apply to this proceeding.

Members of the public should note that from the time a Notice of Proposed Rule Making is issued until the matter is no longer subject to Commission consideration or court review, all *ex parte* contacts are prohibited in Commission proceedings, such as this one, which involve channel allotments. See 47 CFR 1.1204(b) for rules governing permissible *ex parte* contact.

For information regarding proper filing procedures for comments, see 47 CFR 1.415 and 1.420.

List of Subjects in 47 CFR Part 73

Television broadcasting.

Federal Communications Commission.

John A. Karousos,

Chief, Allocations Branch, Policy and Rules Division, Mass Media Bureau.

[FR Doc. 96-6307 Filed 3-15-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6712-01-F

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

49 CFR Part 571

[Docket No. 96-020; Notice 1]

Public Meeting—Vehicle Lamps and Reflective Devices

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: This document announces a public meeting at which the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) will seek information from interested persons on the safety performance of vehicle lamps and reflective devices. NHTSA also will

consider suggestions for actions, both regulatory and non-regulatory, that the agency should take to enhance the safety of vehicle lighting systems. This document also invites written comments on the same subject.

DATES: *Public meeting:* The meeting will be held on April 17, 1996, from 8:00 am until 12:00 pm. Those wishing to make an oral presentation at the meeting should contact Michael Pyne at the address, telephone number, or fax number listed below by close of business on April 4, 1996.

Written comments: Written comments are due by close of business on April 26, 1996.

ADDRESSES: *Public meeting:* The public meeting will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 4550 La Jolla Village Drive, San Diego, CA 92122.

Written comments: All written comments should be mailed to the Docket Section, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5109, 400 7th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590. Please refer to the docket and notice number at the top of this notice when submitting written comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Pyne, Office of Crash Avoidance Standards, NHTSA, 400 7th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590. Telephone 202-366-4931; Fax 202-366-4329.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Regulatory Reform

Calling for a new approach to the way Government interacts with the private sector, President Clinton asked the Executive Branch agencies to improve the regulatory process and seek non-regulatory means of working with the public and regulated industries. Specifically, the President requested that agencies: (1) Cut obsolete regulations; (2) reward results; (3) meet with persons affected by and interested in its regulations; and (4) use consensual rulemaking more frequently. This notice responds to the third item by scheduling a meeting with the public with regard to the safety performance of lamps and reflective devices for cars, light trucks, vans, sport utility vehicles, motorcycles, heavy trucks, buses, and trailers.

Issues to be Addressed

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 108, Lamps, Reflective Devices, and Associated Equipment, sets minimum requirements for the performance and location of original motor vehicle equipment and replacement lamps and reflective devices including headlamps, tail

lamps, stop lamps, turn signals, and marker lamps on U.S. motor vehicles and trailers. The purpose of the standard is to assure that vehicle lighting and reflective systems provide adequate roadway illumination and enhance the conspicuity of motor vehicles. NHTSA is holding this meeting to help assess the need for improvements to the standard and to keep abreast of new lighting developments before proceeding with research, regulatory, or other activities for improving the safety performance of lighting and reflective systems. NHTSA hopes to obtain information from the public, including drivers, inventors, lighting manufacturers, motor vehicle and trailer manufacturers, vehicle and traffic safety organizations, consumer groups, and others. This information, coming from the grassroots level, will help NHTSA focus its regulatory and non-regulatory actions. The particular motor vehicle lighting issues on which NHTSA seeks comment include the following:

1. Lighting Harmonization

Domestic vehicle manufacturers and other parties support the concept of harmonized vehicle lighting where a single lighting configuration can be built which meets the safety requirements of the U.S., Europe, Japan, and other locations. NHTSA supports this by seeking windows of harmony when it writes regulations as well as by participating in national and international efforts to identify and implement such windows. Currently, the U.S. lighting standard, FMVSS 108, and standards of other nations have differences in requirements that cause multiple versions of lamps to be manufactured for vehicles produced for the world market. Economies of scale can result from achieving windows of harmony where one version of lamp can comply.

2. Geometric Visibility of Lamps

NHTSA published an NPRM on October 26, 1995 (60 FR 54833), proposing to harmonize the geometric visibility of lamps in response to a petition. NHTSA took that opportunity to propose other harmonizing aspects that could be implemented. Since lamp location and visibility are important for safety, the agency would like comments on this subject. It is a major topic of discussion in the area of lighting harmonization.

3. Headlamp Beam Patterns

NHTSA may consider whether to amend the performance requirements of headlamp beam patterns. There are a

number of factors at issue including the potential for better illumination, the need to reduce headlamp glare or the effect of headlamp glare on other drivers, and the desire for harmonization of U.S. headlamp requirements with those of other countries

4. Headlamp and Auxiliary Driving Lamp Glare

NHTSA receives many telephone calls and letters inquiring why headlamps are so glaring and why they have to be so high off the ground. Many of these complaints are about headlamps mounted on heavy and light duty trucks. Light duty trucks are about fifty percent of the new vehicle market share. Drivers in passenger cars, thus, are being affected by more and more glare from higher mounted lamps. Some of the complaints turn out to be about auxiliary lamps, and why it is necessary for drivers to have four "headlamps" on all the time. Another aspect of headlamp glare may be mis-aimed headlamps. Consequently, NHTSA seeks comment on the problem of glare from those vehicle lamps that are intended to illuminate the roadway, e.g.: headlamps, fog lamps, driving lamps, and similar lamps.

5. Mandatory vs. Optional Signal Lighting

NHTSA seeks comment on whether certain types of signal lighting not now regulated should be mandatory, e.g., stopped vehicle signals, deceleration warning signals, front stop lamps, etc., whether they should be accommodated by the standard (wherein their use by manufacturers would be optional but regulated), whether they should be ignored by the standard as at present, or whether they should be prohibited.

6. Vehicle-Based Lighting Standard

NHTSA recently terminated action on developing a vehicle-based roadway illumination performance standard (60 FR 58038 published November 24, 1995). The goal of the development was to achieve a more performance-oriented, less design-restrictive regulatory solution for assuring safe roadway environment illumination. Because the outcome of this action had the potential to be so different from any known means of specifying head lighting performance, commenters to the proposal were skeptical that any solution would be usable and that even if it were, the perceived regulatory burdens of it would not be commensurate with the uncertain potential benefits to public safety. Yet many commenters saw that such a

standard could offer significant freedom for vehicle design. As a result, NHTSA attempted to further develop a tool to address the commenters concerns, but was unable to do so. Consequently, NHTSA terminated the project. NHTSA desires comment on whether there is any public interest in such a vehicle-based system, and/or whether there is the potential in the future that such a system might be a desirable alternative to current hardware-based performance requirements.

7. New Lighting Technology

Two years ago, NHTSA published a notice asking for comment on how the lighting standard might adversely affect the introduction of new technologies, e.g., neon and long arc light sources, high intensity discharge and short arc light sources, light emitting diode light sources, and centrally located, distributive light sources, into vehicle lighting (59 FR 16788 published April 8, 1994). It was met with interest, but comments generally were without substance as to how the standard might need to be amended to accommodate the new technologies. One rulemaking action was begun to make high intensity discharge light sources acceptable as replaceable headlamp bulbs; this is about to be completed. NHTSA is interested in any updated comments on this topic, as well as any thoughts on the acceptance or desire of these and any other new technologies by the public.

Other topics may include daytime running lights and the issue of updating references to SAE standards in FMVSS 108. In addition, NHTSA welcomes views and comments from groups that have special lighting-related needs such as the elderly, and on issues including international considerations, driver education, and other aspects of vehicle lighting safety. NHTSA also will entertain suggestions for activities, either regulatory or non-regulatory, and research that the agency should undertake. Suggestions for agency action should be accompanied by rationale for the action and the expected benefits and other consequences. Recommendations should include, where available, information on safety effects, consumer costs, regulated party costs, overall cost-effectiveness, small business effects, availability of voluntary industry standards, effects on international harmonization, and whether the action reflects a "common sense" approach to solving the problem.

Procedural Matters

The public meeting will begin at 8:00 am on April 17, 1996, and is scheduled

to conclude at 12:00 pm. It will take place in the morning at the same location as the SAE Lighting Committee's semi-annual conference, which is scheduled to resume in the afternoon. The location will be the Embassy Suites Hotel, 4550 La Jolla Village Drive, San Diego, California, 92122. Persons wishing to speak at the public meeting should contact Michael Pyne by the indicated date, and must include requests for audio-visual aids. Those speaking at the public meeting should limit their presentations to 15 minutes. However, because this meeting will be limited to a single morning session, the speaking time may be revised to 10 minutes per speaker if all speakers cannot be accommodated with a 15 minute speaking time. If a presentation will include slides, motion pictures, or other visual aids, the presenters should bring at least one copy to the meeting for submission to NHTSA, so that NHTSA can readily include the material in the public record.

At the meeting, NHTSA staff may ask questions of any speaker, and any participant may submit written questions for the NHTSA staff. NHTSA may, at its discretion, address the latter to other meeting participants. There will be no opportunity for participants directly to question each other. If time permits, persons who have not requested time, but would like to make a statement, will be afforded an opportunity to do so.

A schedule of participants making oral presentations will be available at the designated meeting room. A copy of any written statements provided to NHTSA at the meeting will be placed in the docket relating to this notice. A verbatim transcript of the meeting will be prepared and placed in the NHTSA docket as soon as possible after the meeting.

Participation in the meeting is not a prerequisite for the submission of written comments. NHTSA invites written comments from all interested parties. It is requested but not required that 10 copies be submitted.

NHTSA will continue to file relevant information in the docket as it becomes available after the closing date. It is therefore recommended that interested persons continue to examine the docket for new material.

Issued: March 12, 1996.

Barry Felrice,

Associate Administrator for Safety Performance Standards.

[FR Doc. 96-6425 Filed 3-15-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-59-P