SUMMARY: This is a final rule revising the NASA FAR Supplement (NFS) clause 1852.216–87, ''Submission of Vouchers for Payment'' in order to administratively clarify the voucher submission procedures.

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 31, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jack Horvath, NASA, Office of Procurement, Analysis Division (Code HC), (202) 358–0456.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

On August 14, 1997, NASA revised NFS 1842.803 to authorize DCAA to permit direct submission of vouchers to NASA paying offices. At that time, the corresponding revision to NFS 1852.216–87, Submission of Vouchers for Payment, was overlooked. This final rule makes the appropriate administrative revisions to this clause to reflect the voucher procedure.

Impact

NASA certifies that this regulation will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small business entities under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*). This final rule does not impose any reporting or recordkeeping requirements subject to the Paper Reduction Act.

List of Subjects in 48 CFR Part 1852

Government procurement.

Tom Luedtke,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Procurement.

Accordingly, 48 CFR Part 1852 is amended as follows:

1. The authority citation for 48 CFR Part 1852 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 2743(c)(1).

PART 1852—SOLICITATION PROVISIONS AND CONTRACT CLAUSES

1852.216–87 [Amended]

2. Section 1852.216–87 is revised to read as follows:

1852.216–87 Submission of vouchers for payment.

As prescribed in 1816.307–70(e), insert the following clause:

Submission for Vouchers for Payment

March 1998

(a) The designated billing office for cost vouchers for purposes of the Prompt Payment clause of this contract is indicated below. Public vouchers for payment of costs shall include a reference to the number of this contract.

(b)(1) If the contractor is authorized to submit interim cost vouchers directly to the NASA paying office, the original voucher should be submitted to: [Insert the mailing address for submission of cost vouchers]

(2) For any period that the Defense Contract Audit Agency has authorized the Contractor to submit interim cost vouchers directly to the Government paying office, interim vouchers are not required to be sent to the Auditor, and are considered to be provisionally approved for payment, subject to final audit.

(3) Copies of vouchers should be submitted as directed by the Contracting Officer. (c) If the contractor is not authorized to submit interim cost vouchers directly to the paying office as described in paragraph (b), the contractor shall prepare and submit vouchers as follows:

(1) One original Standard Form (SF) 1034, SF 1035, or equivalent Contractor's attachment to: [Insert the appropriate NASA or DCAA mailing office address for submission of cost vouchers]

(2) Five copies of SF 1034, SF 1035A, or equivalent Contractor's attachment to the following offices by insertion in the memorandum block of their names and addresses:

(i) Copy 1 NASA Contracting Officer;

(ii) Copy 2 Auditor;

(iii) Copy 3 Contractor;

(iv) Copy 4 Contract administration office; and

(v) Copy 5 Project management office.

(3) The Contracting Officer may designate other recipients as required.

(d) Public vouchers for payment of fee shall be prepared similarly to the procedures in paragraphs (b) or (c) of this clause, whichever is applicable, and be forwarded to: [insert the mailing address for submission of fee vouchers] This is the designated billing office for fee vouchers for purposes of the Prompt Payment clause of this contract.

(e) In the event that amounts are withheld from payment in accordance with provisions of this contract, a separate voucher for the amount withheld will be required before payment for that amount may be made.

(End of clause)

[FR Doc. 98–8249 Filed 3–30–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7510–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

49 CFR Part 195

[Docket No. PS–121; Notice–4]

[RIN 2137–AD 05]

Pressure Testing Older Hazardous Liquid and Carbon Dioxide Pipelines

AGENCY: Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), DOT.

ACTION: Clarification of confirmation of direct final rule.

SUMMARY: A member of the Technical Hazardous Liquid Pipeline Safety Standards Committee (THLPSSC) has expressed concern that the compliance dates for pressure testing are being extended and that the notice confirming the direct final rule on extension did not accurately reflect actions of the committee reviewing the rule. This member requests clarification and the opportunity for public comment on the extension of the compliance deadlines. This document clarifies the actions of the THLPSSC and notes that compliance deadlines may be addressed within a related rulemaking on the risk-based alternative to pressure testing.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mike Israni, (202) 366–4571, e-mail: mike.israni@rspa.dot.gov, regarding the subject matter of this document, or the Dockets Unit (202) 366–4046, for copies of this document or other information in the docket.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A final rule issued in 1994 requires certain older hazardous liquid and carbon dioxide pipelines to be pressure tested. Compliance dates for pressure testing have been extended to allow development of a rule to provide an alternative to pressure testing based on an evaluation of the risks the lines pose to safety and the environment. On October 21, 1997, RSPA published a direct final rule [62 FR 54591] to extend for a second time compliance dates for the pressure testing.

The THLPSSC, the federal advisory committee established by statute to review pipeline safety standards, reviewed the direct final rule at a November 18, 1997 meeting in Houston, Texas. At the meeting, two members expressed concerns over delays in the rulemaking to establish a risk-based alternative to pressure testing. These two members voted not to approve the rule. The majority of the THLPSSC members approved the direct final rule as ''technically feasible, reasonable, and practicable.'' Following the committee meeting, the THLPSSC sent a resolution to RSPA's Administrator urging for prompt adoption of a rule providing for a risk-based alternative to pressure testing. A notice of proposed rulemaking to provide a risk-based alternative was published in the **Federal Register** on February 5, 1998 [63 FR 5918] There were no subsequent comments objecting to the direct final rule, and believing that the issues raised in the THLPSSC meeting had been addressed by the publication of the risk-based alternative, RSPA confirmed the direct final rule on January 26, 1998 [63 FR 3653].

In a letter dated February 24, 1998, the member of the THLPSSC

representing the Environmental Defense Fund, who had cast one of the dissenting votes at the November meeting, expressed concern with the direct final rule extending the compliance dates for pressure testing and the process for its issuance. Extension of the compliance dates for pressure testing delays testing of older pipelines, whose integrity may be questionable and which may be prone to leaks and spills from outdated materials, design, and/or construction practices. The member points to previous extension of the compliance dates because of the development of the risk-based alternative and argues that further extension eliminates pressure on the Office of Pipeline Safety to complete the risk-based alternative rulemaking promptly. This member also contends that written comments objecting to the extension were not submitted because RSPA indicated during the THLPSSC meeting that the negative votes of the committee members would be considered adverse comments.[1]

The THLPSSC member encourages clarification of the advisory committee actions (which is done above) and republication of the extension of compliance dates for pressure testing for comment. RSPA does not believe that extension of compliance dates is inconsistent with prompt action on the risk-based alternative. RSPA believes that, without an extension of compliance dates, an operator may be required unnecessarily to plan for pressure testing lines which would likely qualify for alternative testing. The compliance dates for pressure testing established by the direct final rule are the same as those proposed for pipelines which will be required, under the risk-based alternative, to be pressure tested. Continuation of this consonance assures that pressure testing of higher risk lines will not be delayed by an operator's election of the risk-based alternative.

Given these identical dates for completing pressure testing, comments by THLPSSC members or others on the issues of timing of pressure testing may be submitted on the current proposed rule on the risk-based alternative. That comment period is open until April 6, 1998, and RSPA encourages anyone concerned with the timing of the pressure testing to comment on that proposal.

[1] The direct final rule process is designed to allow for immediate issuance of rules for which comment is not deemed necessary because of the lack of controversy. Thus the receipt of adverse comments requires the agency to republish the rule either as a proposal or as a revised direct final rule.

Issued in Washington, DC on March 20, 1998.

Richard B. Felder,

Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.

[FR Doc. 98–7813 Filed 3–30–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–60–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

49 CFR Part 538

[Docket No. NHTSA–98–3433]

RIN 2127–AG63

Manufacturing Incentives for Alternative Fuel Vehicles

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

ACTION: Denial of petition for reconsideration.

SUMMARY: This document denies a petition for reconsideration of the agency's decision to set a 200 mile minimum driving range for dual fueled passenger automobiles other than electric vehicles.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The following persons at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, S.W, Washington, DC 20590.

For non-legal issues: Ms. Henrietta L. Spinner, Consumer Programs Division, Office of Planning and Consumer Programs, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street SW, Washington, DC 20590, (202) 366–4802.

For legal issues: Otto Matheke, Office of the Chief Counsel, NCC–20, telephone (202) 366–5253, facsimile (202) 366–3820.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Establishment of a Minimum Driving Range for Dual Fueled Passenger Automobiles

On April 2, 1996, NHTSA published a final rule in the **Federal Register** (61 FR 14507) establishing a minimum driving range for dual fueled passenger automobiles other than electric vehicles. The rule also established gallons equivalent measurements for gaseous fuels other than natural gas and eliminated provisions relating to the granting of alternative range requirements for alternative fueled passenger automobiles not powered by electricity.

The agency promulgated this rule in response to amendments in the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (EPACT) (Pub. L. 102–486) that expanded the number of alternative fuels in the corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) law, now recodified as Chapter 329 of title 49, U.S.C. As amended, section 32901(c) requires dual fueled passenger automobiles to meet specified criteria, including meeting a minimum driving range, in order to qualify for special treatment under sections 32905 and 32906 in the calculation of their fuel economy for purposes of the CAFE standards.

One change made by EPACT concerning driving ranges was that, under section 32901(c), the minimum driving range set by NHTSA for dual fueled passenger automobiles other than electric passenger automobiles could not be less than 200 miles. The EPACT amendments also provided that the agency may not, in response to petitions from manufacturers, set an alternative range for a particular model or models that is lower than 200 miles, except for electric passenger automobiles.

The EPACT amendments necessitated amending part 538. In the final rule, the agency established gallons equivalent measurements for the wider range of alternative fuels included in the EPACT amendments and deleted provisions relating to the establishment of alternative minimum driving ranges for non-electric alternative-fueled passenger automobiles. In regard to the minimum driving range, NHTSA concluded that both the text and the legislative history of these amendments indicated that the agency was required to set a minimum driving range of not less than 200 miles for all dual fueled passenger automobiles other than electric passenger automobiles.

II. Petition for Reconsideration of the Minimum Driving Range

On May 24, 1996, the agency received a petition from the National Biodiesel Board (NBB) requesting reconsideration of NHTSA's decision to set a minimum driving range of 200 miles for all dual fueled passenger automobiles other than electric vehicles.

NBB requested that the agency (1) clarify the status of biodiesel as an alternative fuel, (2) adopt a definition of dual fueled vehicles to include vehicles operating on a mixture of alternative fuel and gasoline or diesel fuel, and (3) find that a passenger vehicle operating on a mixture of alternative fuel and gasoline or diesel fuel has satisfied the minimum driving range requirement of 200 miles if the alternative fuel component of the mixture in the vehicle's fuel system would propel the