Standard No. 214 *Side Impact Protection:* installation of door bars on models that are not so equipped. The petitioner claims that the vehicles have been tested for compliance with the dynamic performance requirements of the standard.

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.

Additionally, the petitioner states that all vehicles will be inspected prior to importation to ensure that they meet the parts marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard at 49 CFR Part 541.

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. 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: April 1, 1998.

Marilynne Jacobs,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.

[FR Doc. 98–8984 Filed 4–6–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA–98–3678]

Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 1995–1997 BMW 3 Series Passenger Cars Are Eligible for Importation

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming 1995–1997 BMW 3 Series 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 1995–1997 BMW 3 Series passenger cars that were not originally manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards are eligible for importation into the United States because (1) they are substantially similar to vehicles that were originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States and that were certified by their manufacturer as complying with the safety standards, and (2) they are capable of being readily altered to conform to the standards.

DATES: The closing date for comments on the petition is May 7, 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 10 am to 5 p.m.]

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**.

J.K. Motors of Kingsville, Maryland (''J.K.'') (Registered Importer 90–006) has petitioned NHTSA to decide whether 1995-1997 BMW 3 Series passenger cars are eligible for importation into the United States. The vehicles which J.K. believes are substantially similar are 1995–1997 BMW 3 Series passenger cars that were manufactured for importation into, and sale in, the United States and certified by their manufacturer, Bayerische Motoren Werk, A.G., as conforming to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

The petitioner claims that it carefully compared non-U.S. certified 1995–1997 BMW 3 Series passenger cars to their U.S. certified counterparts, and found the vehicles to be substantially similar with respect to compliance with most Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

J.K. submitted information with its petition intended to demonstrate that non-U.S. certified 1995–1997 BMW 3 Series passenger cars, as originally manufactured, conform to many Federal motor vehicle safety standards in the same manner as their U.S. certified counterparts, or are capable of being readily altered to conform to those standards.

Specifically, the petitioner claims that non-U.S. certified 1995–1997 BMW 3 Series passenger cars are identical to their U.S. certified counterparts with respect to compliance with Standards 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.*

The petitioner states that non-U.S. certified 1995–1997 BMW 3 Series passenger cars comply with the Bumper Standard found in 49 CFR Part 581.

Petitioner also contends that the vehicles are capable of being readily altered to meet the following standards, in the manner indicated:

Standard No. 101 *Controls and Displays*: Replacement of the single unit modular instrument cluster with a U.S.-model component that incorporates a different speedometer and all required markings.

Standard No. 108 *Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment*: (a) Installation of U.S.-model headlamps and front sidemarker lights; (b) installation of U.S.-model taillamp assemblies which incorporate rear

sidemarker lights; (c) installation of U.S.-model high mounted stop light on all models that are not so equipped.

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 or inscription of the required warning statement on models equipped with equivalent mirrors.

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:* 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 seat belt warning buzzer, wired to the seat belt latch; (b) installation of U.S.-model driver's and passenger's side air bags, knee bolsters, control units, sensors, and seat belts on models that are not so equipped. The petitioner states that the vehicles are equipped with combination lap and shoulder belts at all front and rear outboard seating positions that are self tensioning and released by means of a single red push button.

Standard No. 214 *Side Impact Protection:* Installation of door bars on models that are not so equipped. The petitioner claims that the vehicles have been tested for compliance with the dynamic performance requirements of the standard.

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.

Additionally, the petitioner states that all vehicles will be inspected prior to importation to ensure that they meet the parts marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard at 49 CFR Part 541.

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. 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: April 1, 1998.

Marilynne Jacobs,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.

[FR Doc. 98–8986 Filed 4–6–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA–98–3642]

RIN 2127–AB76

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Lamps, Reflective Devices, and Associated Equipment; Review: Center High Mounted Stop Lamps; Evaluation Report

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

ACTION: Request for comments on technical report.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the publication by NHTSA of a Technical Report concerning Safety Standard 108, Lamps, Reflective Devices, and Associated Equipment. The report's title is The Long-Term Effectiveness of Center High Mounted Stop Lamps in Passenger Cars and Light Trucks. It evaluates the rear-impact crash rates of current passenger cars and light trucks equipped with Center High Mounted Stop Lamps, and compares them to the rear-impact crash rates of similar vehicles without the lamps.

DATES: Comments must be received no later than August 5, 1998.

ADDRESSES:

Report: Interested people may obtain copies of the reports free of charge by sending a self-addressed mailing label to Publications Ordering and Distribution Services (NAD–51), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590.

Comments: All comments should refer to the docket number of this notice and be submitted to: U.S. Department of Transportation Dockets, Room PL–401, Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington DC 20590. [Docket hours, 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.]

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Charles J. Kahane, Chief, Evaluation Division, Plans and Policy, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5208, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590 (202–366–2560).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Safety Standard 108 (49 CFR 571.108) was amended to require Center High Mounted Stop Lamps (CHMSL) on all new passenger cars manufactured on or after September 1, 1985 for sale in the United States (48 FR 48235) and on all new light trucks (pickup trucks, vans and sport utility vehicles) manufactured on or after September 1, 1983 for sale in the United States (56 FR 16015). The purpose of CHMSL is to safeguard a car or light truck from being struck in the rear by another vehicle. When brakes are applied, the CHMSL warns drivers of following vehicles that they must slow down.

Pursuant to the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 and Executive Order 12866 (58 FR 51735), NHTSA reviews existing regulations to determine if they are achieving policy goals. The agency has been evaluating the effectiveness, benefits and costs of the lamps since they became a requirement for new passenger cars. Two interim reports (52 FR 9609; 54 FR 32153) showed that the lamps were effective in 1986 and 1987, but recommended additional analyses to ascertain the long-term effect of CHMSL.

This report tracks the effectiveness of CHMSL, year by year, from 1986 through 1995. The statistical analyses are based on police-reported crash files from eight States. It was found that:

- The lamps were most effective in the early years. In 1987, CHMSL reduced rear impact crashes by 8.5 percent (confidence bounds 6.1 to 10.9 percent).
- Effectiveness declined in 1988 and 1989, but then leveled off. During 1989–95, CHMSL reduced rear impact crashes by 4.3 percent (confidence bounds 2.9 to 5.8 percent). This is the long-term effectiveness of the lamps.
- The effectiveness of CHMSL in light trucks is about the same as in passenger cars.
- At the long-term effectiveness level of 4.3 percent, when all cars and light trucks on the road have CHMSL, the lamps will prevent 92,000–137,000 police-reported crashes, 58,000–70,000 nonfatal injuries, and $655,000,000 (in 1994 dollars) in property damage per year.
- The annual consumer cost of CHMSL in cars and light trucks sold in the United States is close to $206,000,000 (in 1994 dollars).
- Even though the effectiveness of CHMSL has declined from its initial levels, the lamps are and will continue