DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee; Transport Airplane and Engine issues—New Task

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of new task assignment for the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC).

SUMMARY: Notice is given of a new task assigned to and accepted by the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC). This notice informs the public of the activities of ARAC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dorenda Baker, Transport Standards Staff (ANM–110) Federal Aviation Administration, 1601 Lind Avenue, SW., Renton, WA 98055–4056; phone (425) 227–2109; fax (425) 227–1320.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The FAA has established an Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee to provide advice and recommendations to the FAA Administrator, through the Associate Administrator for Regulation and Certification, on the full range of the FAA's rulemaking activities with respect to aviation-related issues. This includes obtaining advice and recommendations on the FAA's commitment to harmonize its Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) and practices with its trading partners in Europe and Canada.

One area ARAC deals with is Transport Airplane and Engine Issues. These issues involve the airworthiness standards for transport category airplanes and engines in 14 CFR parts 25, 33, and 35 and parallel provisions in 14 CFR parts 121 and 135.

The Task

This notice is to inform the public that the FAA has asked ARAC to provide advice and recommendation on the following harmonization task:

Task: Flight Crew Error/Flight Crew Performance Considerations in the Flight Deck Certification Process

Step 1. Review relevant existing material (FAR/JAR 25 regulations, advisory material, policy, and related references) and make recommendations about what regulatory standards and/or advisory material should be updated or developed to consistently address design-related flight crew performance vulnerabilities, and prevention and management (detection, tolerance, and recovery) of flight crew error. This review should be accomplished in the context of both the Type Certification and Supplemental type Certification processes.

Step 2. Based on results of the Step 1 review, recommend new advisory material to address design-related vulnerabilities of flight crew performance and the management of flight crew error.

Step 3. Recommend (or plan for the development of) new regulatory material to address design-related vulnerabilities of flight crew performance and the management of flight crew error. If rulemaking is not recommended, provide reasons and propose non-rulemaking alternatives.

Step 4. Recommend an implementation plan for products of Steps 1–3, and develop Terms of Reference for fulfilling the plan.

Step 5. During accomplishment of these steps, identify implications for qualification and operations for communication to appropriate groups.

The FAA requests that ARAC draft appropriate regulatory documents with supporting economic and other required analyses, and any other related guidance material or collateral documents to support its recommendations. If the resulting recommendation is one or more notices of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) published by the FAA, the FAA may ask ARAC to recommend disposition of any substantive comments the FAA receives.

An interim report responding to the first three steps would be required from the ARAC working group within 18 months. The entire project shall be completed within 36 months of tasking.

ARAC Acceptance of Task

ARAC has accepted the task and has chosen to establish a new Human Factors Harmonization Working Group. The working group will serve as staff to ARAC to assist ARAC in the analysis of the assigned task. Working group recommendations must be reviewed and approved by ARAC. If ARAC accepts the working group's recommendations, it forwards them to the FAA as ARAC recommendations.

Working Group Activity

The Human Factors Harmonization Working Group is expected to comply with the procedures adopted by ARAC. As part of the procedures, the working group is expected to:

1. Recommend a work plan for completion of the task, including the rationale supporting such a plan, for consideration at the meeting of ARAC to consider transport airplane and engine issues held following publication of this notice.

2. Give a detailed conceptual presentation of the proposed recommendations, prior to proceeding with the work stated in item 3 below.

3. Draft appropriate regulatory documents with supporting economic and other required analyses, and/or any other related guidance material or collateral documents the working group determines to be appropriate; or, if new or revised requirements or compliance methods are not recommended, a draft report stating the rationale for not making such recommendations. If the resulting recommendation is one or more notices of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) published by the FAA, the FAA may ask ARAC to recommend disposition of any substantive comments the FAA receives.

4. Provide a status report at each meeting of ARAC held to consider transport airplane and engine issues.

Participation in the Working Group

The Human Factors Harmonization Working Group will be composed of technical experts having an interest in the assigned task. A working group member need not be a representative of a member of the full committee.

An individual who has expertise in the subject matter and wishes to become a member of the working group should write to the person listed under the caption **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** expressing that desire, describing his or her interest in the task, and stating the expertise he or she would bring to the working group. All requests to participate must be received no later than *Sept. 17, 1999.* The requests will be reviewed by the assistant chair and the assistant executive director, and the individuals will be advised whether or not the request can be accommodated.

Individuals chosen for membership on the working group will be expected to represent their aviation community segment and participate actively in the working group (e.g., attend all meetings, provide written comments when requested to do so, etc.). They also will be expected to devote the resources necessary to ensure the ability of the working group to meet any assigned deadline(s). Members are expected to keep their management chain advised of working group activities and decisions to ensure that the agreed technical solutions do not conflict with their sponsoring organization's position when the subject being negotiated is presented to ARAC for a vote.

Once the working group has begun deliberations, members will not be

added or substituted without the approval of the assistant chair, the assistant executive director, and the working group chair.

The Secretary of Transportation has determined that the formation and use of ARAC are necessary and in the public interest in connection with the performance of duties imposed on the FAA by law.

Meetings of ARAC will be open to the public. Meetings of the Human Factors Harmonization Working Group will not be open to the public, except to the extent that individuals with an interest and expertise are selected to participate. No public announcement of working group meetings will be made.

Issued in Washington, DC, on July 14, 1999.

Ida M. Klepper,

Acting Executive Director Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee.

[FR Doc. 99–18718 Filed 7–21–99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

RTCA, Inc.; Government/Industry Free Flight Steering Committee

Pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (P.L. 92–463, 5 U.S.C., Appendix 2), notice is hereby given for an RTCA Government/Industry Free Flight Steering Committee meeting to be held August 12, 1999, starting at 1:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591, in the Bessie Coleman Conference Center, Room 2AB (second floor).

The agenda will include: (1) Welcome and Opening Remarks; (2) Review of Summary of the Previous Meeting; (3) Report from FAA Office of Communications, Navigation, Surveillance on: (a) CPDLC Build I Program Risks and Mitigation Strategies and (b) Safe Flight 21, Ohio Valley Demonstration Update; (4) Report and Recommendations from the Free Flight Select Committee; (5) Other Business; (6) Date and Location of Next Meeting; (7) Closing Remarks.

Attendance is open to the interested public but limited to space availability. With the approval of the co-chairmen, members of the public may present oral statements at the meeting. Persons wishing to present statements or obtain information should contact the RTCA, Inc., at (202) 833–9339 (phone), (202) 833–9434 (facsimile), or dclarke@rtca.org (e-mail).

Members of the public may present a written statement at any time.

Issued in Washington, DC, on July 16, 1999.

Janice L. Peters,

Designated Official.

[FR Doc. 99–18717 Filed 7–21–99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA–99–5930]

RIN 2127–AE95

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Occupant Crash Protection; Review: Passenger Car Back Seat Occupant Protection; 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 208, Occupant Crash Protection, specifically the back seat lap/shoulder belt requirement. The report's title is the Effectiveness of Lap/Shoulder Belts in the Back Outboard Seating Positions. The primary objective of this report is to evaluate the effectiveness of lap/shoulder belts for back seat outboard occupants and whether they are more effective than lap belts for these occupants. Other objectives are to determine whether lap belts are effective, whether lap belts are harmful to back seat belt users in specific crash modes, and whether lap/shoulder belts correct the problems found with lap belts.

DATES: Comments must be received no later than November 19, 1999.

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: Back seat outboard lap/shoulder belts were first required in passenger cars after December 11, 1989 and in convertible passenger cars, light trucks, vans, and sport utility vehicle after September 1, 1991. Before this, passenger vehicles were required to have at least lap belts at all forward-facing rear outboard seating positions, lap/shoulder belts were optional.

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. Most of the analyses in this report are based on Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) data from 1988 through the first six months of 1997. The primary analysis compares the fatality risk for back seat outboard belted occupants (lap or lap/shoulder belted) to the corresponding risk for unbelted occupants, as well as the fatality risk for lap/shoulder belted occupants to the risk for lap belted occupants. Fatality risk is the ratio of fatalities in the back seat to fatalities in the front seat (a control group). This procedure of comparing a subject group to a control group is called ''double pair comparison.''

The principal conclusions are: back seat lap belts are 32 percent effective in reducing fatalities and lap/shoulder belts are 44 percent effective in reducing fatalities when compared to unrestrained back seat occupants in passenger cars. In passenger vans and sport utility vehicles, lap belts are 63 percent effective and lap/shoulder belts are 73 percent effective. The change from lap to lap/shoulder belts has significantly enhanced occupant protection, especially in frontal crashes. In all crashes, lap/shoulder belts are 15 percent more effective than lap belts alone. In frontal crashes, lap/shoulder belts are 25 percent more effective than lap belts alone. Back seat lap belts reduce the risk of head injuries while increasing the risk of abdominal injuries in potentially fatal frontal crashes. Lap/shoulder belts reduce the risk of both head and abdominal injuries in potentially fatal frontal crashes relative to lap belts only: head injuries by 47 percent and abdominal injuries by 52 percent.