

Dated: April 7, 2004.

C. Miller Crouch,

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State.

[FR Doc. 04-8468 Filed 4-13-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

[Docket Number MARAD 2004 17520]

Requested Administrative Waiver of the Coastwise Trade Laws

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Invitation for public comments on a requested administrative waiver of the Coastwise Trade Laws for the vessel FAWAN.

SUMMARY: As authorized by Pub. L. 105-383 and Pub. L. 107-295, the Secretary of Transportation, as represented by the Maritime Administration (MARAD), is authorized to grant waivers of the U.S.-build requirement of the coastwise laws under certain circumstances. A request for such a waiver has been received by MARAD. The vessel, and a brief description of the proposed service, is listed below. The complete application is given in DOT docket 2004-17520 at <http://dms.dot.gov>. Interested parties may comment on the effect this action may have on U.S. vessel builders or businesses in the U.S. that use U.S.-flag vessels. If MARAD determines, in accordance with Pub. L. 105-383 and MARAD's regulations at 46 CFR Part 388 (68 FR 23084; April 30, 2003), that the issuance of the waiver will have an unduly adverse effect on a U.S.-vessel builder or a business that uses U.S.-flag vessels in that business, a waiver will not be granted. Comments should refer to the docket number of this notice and the vessel name in order for MARAD to properly consider the comments. Comments should also state the commenter's interest in the waiver application, and address the waiver criteria given in § 388.4 of MARAD's regulations at 46 CFR Part 388.

DATES: Submit comments on or before May 14, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to docket number MARAD-2004 17520. Written comments may be submitted by hand or by mail to the Docket Clerk, U.S. DOT Dockets, Room PL-401, Department of Transportation, 400 7th St., SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. You may also send comments electronically via the Internet at [http://](http://dmses.dot.gov/submit/)

dmses.dot.gov/submit/. All comments will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection and copying at the above address between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. An electronic version of this document and all documents entered into this docket is available on the World Wide Web at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Michael Hokana, U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration, MAR-830 Room 7201, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Telephone 202-366-0760.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As described by the applicant the intended service of the vessel FAWAN is:

Intended Use: "Private charters."

Geographic Region: "US East Coast."

Dated: April 8, 2004.

By order of the Maritime Administrator.

Joel C. Richard,

Secretary, Maritime Administration.

[FR Doc. 04-8410 Filed 4-13-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

[Docket Number: MARAD 2004-17519]

Requested Administrative Waiver of the Coastwise Trade Laws

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, Department of Transportation.

ACTION: Invitation for public comments on a requested administrative waiver of the Coastwise Trade Laws for the vessel L'AQUILA.

SUMMARY: As authorized by Pub. L. 105-383 and Pub. L. 107-295, the Secretary of Transportation, as represented by the Maritime Administration (MARAD), is authorized to grant waivers of the U.S.-build requirement of the coastwise laws under certain circumstances. A request for such a waiver has been received by MARAD. The vessel, and a brief description of the proposed service, is listed below. The complete application is given in DOT docket 2004-17519 at <http://dms.dot.gov>. Interested parties may comment on the effect this action may have on U.S. vessel builders or businesses in the U.S. that use U.S.-flag vessels. If MARAD determines, in accordance with Pub. L. 105-383 and MARAD's regulations at 46 CFR Part 388 (68 FR 23084; April 30, 2003), that the issuance of the waiver will have an unduly adverse effect on a U.S.-vessel builder or a business that uses U.S.-flag vessels in that business, a waiver will

not be granted. Comments should refer to the docket number of this notice and the vessel name in order for MARAD to properly consider the comments. Comments should also state the commenter's interest in the waiver application, and address the waiver criteria given in § 388.4 of MARAD's regulations at 46 CFR Part 388.

DATES: Submit comments on or before May 14, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to docket number MARAD-2004-17519. Written comments may be submitted by hand or by mail to the Docket Clerk, U.S. DOT Dockets, Room PL-401, Department of Transportation, 400 7th St., SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. You may also send comments electronically via the Internet at [http://](http://dmses.dot.gov/submit/) dmses.dot.gov/submit/. All comments will become part of this docket and will be available for inspection and copying at the above address between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. An electronic version of this document and all documents entered into this docket is available on the World Wide Web at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Michael Hokana, U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration, MAR-830 Room 7201, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Telephone 202-366-0760.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As described by the applicant the intended service of the vessel L'AQUILA is:

Intended Use: "Charter and sail training on the Great Lakes."

Geographic Region: "Great Lakes."

Dated: April 8, 2004.

By order of the Maritime Administrator.

Joel C. Richard,

Secretary, Maritime Administration.

[FR Doc. 04-8411 Filed 4-13-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Maritime Administration

Maritime Security Act of 2003, Subtitle D—National Defense Tank Vessel Construction Assistance

AGENCY: Maritime Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Supplemental notice of request for competitive proposals for construction of new product tank vessels.

SUMMARY: The purpose of the supplemental notice is to amend the schedule contained in section I of the Request for Competitive Proposals (RFP)

which is available on the Internet at <http://www.fedbizopps.gov> and <http://www.marad.dot.gov> and the hard copies of the RFP which are available in the Office of the Secretary, Maritime Administration.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Gregory V. Sparkman, Office of Insurance and Shipping Analysis, Maritime Administration, Room 8117, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590; telephone (202) 366-2400; fax (202) 366-7901.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The supplemental notice amends the schedule contained in section I of the current RFP by extending the currently scheduled date for submission of Phase I Proposals by 45 days. This extension necessitates the extension of other deadline dates by 45 days.

Three companies submitted initial comments in response to the notice published in the **Federal Register** on February 20, 2004, on the National Defense Tank Vessel Construction Assistance Program. Two of the commenters requested a 45-day extension be granted with respect to the due date on the Phase I Proposals, which is currently set for May 4, 2004. According to the two companies making the request, the grant of the 45-day extension will ensure that MARAD receives competitive proposals that will present the best value to the government. The third commenter requested that MARAD delay responses to the RFP until funds are specifically appropriated for the National Defense Vessel Construction Program.

MARAD believes that delay of responses to the RFP until funds are specifically appropriated could seriously delay the implementation of the program. On the other hand, the grant of the 45-day extension on the due date of Phase I—Request for Competitive Proposals—should enable the proponents of extension to improve the quality of their submission.

The schedule contained in section I of the RFP shall be modified to reflect the 45-day extension, as follows:

Issue RFP—Friday, February 20, 2004
Phase I Proposals Due—Friday, June 18, 2004 (120 calendar days)

Phase I Evaluation Complete—
Thursday, September 2, 2004 (76 calendar days)

Phase II Offerors Notified—Tuesday, September 7, 2004 (5 calendar days)

Phase II Proposals Due—Saturday, November 20, 2004 (75 calendar days)

Phase II Evaluation Complete—
Thursday, February 3, 2005 (75 calendar days)

The RFP is available on the Internet at <http://www.fedbizopps.gov> and <http://www.marad.dot.gov>. Hard copies of the amended RFP will be available in the Office of the Secretary, Maritime Administration.

Authority: 49 CFR 1.66.

By Order of the Maritime Administrator.

Dated: April 8, 2004.

Joel C. Richard,

Secretary, Maritime Administration.

[FR Doc. 04-8409 Filed 4-13-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA 2002-12366 Notice 2]

General Motors Corporation; Ruling on Petition for Determination of Inconsequential Noncompliance

General Motors Corporation (GM) has determined that the seat belt assemblies in approximately 1,870,000 of the company's model year (MY) 2001-2002 vehicles fail to comply with the requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 209, *Seat Belt Assemblies* (49 CFR 571.209). The identified noncompliance involves the emergency-locking retractors (ELR)¹ in the seat belt assemblies for the vehicles' front outboard seats. Some of the ELRs in these assemblies do not lock before the belt webbing extends 25 mm (1 inch) when they are subjected to an acceleration of 7 m/s² (0.7 g), as required under paragraph S4.3(j)(1) of the standard. Pursuant to 49 CFR Part 573, GM filed a Noncompliance Information Report with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) on April 19, 2002.²

In general, manufacturers of motor vehicles and replacement equipment are required to notify owners of, and provide a remedy for, noncompliances with FMVSSs. 49 U.S.C. 30118-30120. However, 49 U.S.C. 30118(d) and 30120(h) authorize manufacturers to file petitions for an exemption from these notification and remedy requirements

¹ FMVSS No. 209 defines an "emergency-locking retractor" as "a retractor incorporating adjustment hardware by means of a locking mechanism that is activated by vehicle acceleration, webbing movement relative to the vehicle, or other automatic action during an emergency and is capable, when locked, of withstanding restraint forces." 49 CFR 571.209, S.3.

² Although not referred to in GM's Noncompliance Information Report, the failure of the ELRs also constitutes a noncompliance with FMVSS No. 208, *Occupant crash protection*.

on the basis that the noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety.

GM submitted such a petition on May 3, 2002.³ The petition stated that the noncompliance occurs because the vehicle-sensitive ELR mechanism in a small number of seat belt assemblies can be disabled by atypical handling during transit from GM's safety belt supplier, TK Holdings, Inc. (TKH), to the seat suppliers or during installation in vehicle seats.

The ELR in the vehicles in question incorporates two different types of locking mechanisms. The first is a vehicle-sensitive mechanism that was used to certify compliance with FMVSS No. 209, and which, when functioning, meets the requirements of the standard. The second locking mechanism is a voluntarily supplied, webbing-sensitive one that does not meet the requirements of the standard (although webbing-sensitive ELRs can be designed to comply with FMVSS No. 209). GM asserted that the failure of the vehicle-sensitive mechanism was inconsequential to safety because the webbing-sensitive system offers a level of protection nearly equivalent to that provided by a compliant ELR under the conditions that it and TKH evaluated. GM also submitted a calculation, based on a number of assumptions, which it asserts shows that less than one person would be likely to sustain a moderate to severe injury as a result of the noncompliance.

The vehicles covered by the petition are all MY 2001 and most MY 2002 C series and K series (C/K) vehicles (such as the GMC C/K pickups, GMC Yukon, Chevrolet C/K pickups (e.g., the Silverado), Chevrolet Tahoe, Chevrolet Suburban, Chevrolet Avalanche, and Cadillac Escalade), and GM's S series and T series (S/T) vehicles (such as the GMC Envoy, Chevrolet Trailblazer, and Oldsmobile Bravada). As described below, the webbing-sensitive mechanism in the ELRs in the C/K vehicles will lock up the retractor when the webbing is exposed to 2.0 g (the force of gravity), while the webbing-sensitive mechanism in the ELRs in the S/T vehicles does not lock up the retractor until the webbing experiences 3.0 g. The C/K vehicles constitute approximately 80 percent of the vehicles covered by the noncompliance determination.

³ GM submitted a revised petition on July 30, 2002 (Docket No. NHTSA-2002-12366-4), which replaced the May 3, 2002 petition (Docket No. NHTSA-2002-12366-3) in full. However, GM stated that the subsequent petition did not change the substance, rationale, basis, or conclusion of the original petition.