

the submission; (2) a copy of the submission containing only those portions for which confidentiality is not sought with the confidential portions redacted; and (3) either a second complete copy of the submission or alternatively those portions of the submission that contain the information for which confidentiality is sought. Furthermore, the requestor must submit a completed certification as provided in 49 CFR Part 512, Appendix A. See generally 49 CFR Part 512 (NHTSA Confidential Business Information regulations).

Part 512 ensures that information submitted under a claim of confidentiality is properly evaluated in an efficient manner under prevailing legal standards and, where appropriate, accorded confidential treatment. To facilitate the evaluation process, in their requests for confidential treatment, submitters of information may make reference to certain limited classes of information that are presumptively treated as confidential, such as blueprints and engineering drawings, future specific model plans (under limited conditions), and future vehicle production or sales figures for specific models (under limited conditions). Certain other information that the agency collects pursuant to the Early Warning Reporting rule (49 CFR Part 579) is treated confidentially by rule under 49 CFR Part 512, Appendix C and submitters need not provide a request for confidential treatment these classes of information.

Description of the Need for the Information and Use of the Information—NHTSA receives confidential information for use in its activities, which include investigations, rulemaking actions, program planning and management, and program evaluation. The information is needed to ensure the agency has sufficient relevant information for decision-making in connection with these activities. Some of this information is submitted voluntarily, as in rulemaking, and some is submitted in response to compulsory information requests, as in investigations.

Description of the Likely Respondents, Including Estimated Number and Proposed Frequency of Response to the Collection of Information—This collection of information applies to any entity that submits to the agency information that the entity wishes to have withheld from disclosure under the FOIA. Thus, the collection of information applies to any entity that is subject to laws administered by the agency or agency regulations and is under an obligation to provide

information to the agency. It also includes entities that voluntarily submit information to the agency. Such entities would include manufacturers of motor vehicles and of motor vehicle equipment. Importers are considered to be manufacturers. It may also include other entities that are involved with motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment but are not manufacturers.

Estimate of the Total Annual Reporting and Recordkeeping Burdens Resulting from the Collection of Information—3,600 hours.

The agency receives requests for confidential treatment that vary in size from requests that ask the agency to withhold as little as a portion of one page to multiple boxes of documents. NHTSA estimates that it will take on average approximately eight (8) hours for an entity to prepare a submission requesting confidential treatment. This estimate will vary based on the size of the submission, with smaller and voluntary submissions taking considerably less time to prepare. This estimate of the average amount of time per submission is higher than the four hours estimated for the existing information clearance and reflects the volume of documents in some submissions in complex investigations, the amendments to the agency's rules in 2003 and the improved justifications for confidential treatment that followed.

NHTSA estimates that it will receive approximately 450 requests for confidential treatment annually. This figure is based on the number of requests received in the first six months of 2004 (225) multiplied by two (2). We selected this period because in the last year, we have received more requests than in previous years and believe that the most recent data is the most representative of the number of requests that will be submitted. The agency estimates that the total burden for this information collection will be approximately 3,600 hours, which is based on the number of requests (450) multiplied by the estimated number of hours to prepare each submission (8 hours).

Since nothing in the rule requires those persons who request confidential treatment pursuant to Part 512 to keep copies of any records or requests submitted to us, recordkeeping costs imposed would be zero hours and zero costs.

Authority: 44 U.S.C. § 3506; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50.

Issued on: July 19, 2004.

Jacqueline Glassman,
Chief Counsel.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA 2004-17903; Notice 2]

Kumho Tire Co., Inc., Grant of Petition for Decision of Inconsequential Noncompliance

Kumho Tire Co., Inc. (Kumho) has determined that certain tires it produced in 2003 and 2004 do not comply with S4.3(d) and S4.3(e) of 49 CFR 571.109, Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 109, "New pneumatic tires." Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 30118(d) and 30120(h), Kumho Tire has petitioned for a determination that this noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety and has filed an appropriate report pursuant to 49 CFR part 573, "Defect and Noncompliance Reports." Notice of receipt of the petition was published, with a 30-day comment period, on May 25, 2004, in the **Federal Register** (69 FR 29781). NHTSA received no comments.

A total of approximately 2656 tires are involved. These include 324 size 255/50R17 tires and 2332 size 255/45R17 tires. The tires are marked "Tread: Rayon 2 + Steel 2 + Nylon 2, Sidewall: Rayon 2," when the correct stamping would be "Tread: Polyester 2 + Steel 2 + Nylon 2, Sidewall: Polyester 2." Paragraph S4.3 of FMVSS No. 109 requires "each tire shall have permanently molded into or onto both sidewalls * * * (d) The generic name of each cord material used in the plies * * * of the tire; and (e) Actual number of plies in the sidewall, and the actual number of plies in the tread area if different."

Kumho stated that it uses rayon and polyester body ply construction to meet the preferences of the North American and European markets, and that rayon is popular in the European market while polyester is more popular in the North American market. Kumho explained that for sizes sold in both markets, either material may be used, and the two sizes which are the subject of this petition have North American construction and European stamping.

Kumho stated that the tires meet or exceed all performance requirements of FMVSS No. 109 and will have no impact on the operational performance or safety of vehicles on which these tires

are mounted. Therefore, Kumho believes that the noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety and that no corrective action is warranted.

The Transportation Recall, Enhancement, Accountability, and Documentation (TREAD) Act (Public Law 106-414) required, among other things, that the agency initiate rulemaking to improve tire label information. In response, the agency published an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) in the **Federal Register** on December 1, 2000 (65 FR 75222).

The agency received more than 20 comments on the tire labeling information required by 49 CFR sections 571.109 and 119, part 567, part 574, and part 575. In addition, the agency conducted a series of focus groups, as required by the TREAD Act, to examine consumer perceptions and understanding of tire labeling. Few of the focus group participants had knowledge of tire labeling beyond the tire brand name, tire size, and tire pressure.

Based on the information obtained from comments to the ANPRM and the consumer focus groups, we have concluded that it is likely that few consumers have been influenced by the tire construction information (number of plies and cord material in the sidewall and tread plies) provided on the tire label when deciding to buy a motor vehicle or tire.

Therefore, the agency agrees with Kumho's statement that the incorrect markings in this case do not present a serious safety concern.¹ There is no effect of the noncompliance on the operational safety of vehicles on which these tires are mounted. In the agency's judgment, the incorrect labeling of the tire construction information will have an inconsequential effect on motor vehicle safety because most consumers do not base tire purchases or vehicle operation parameters on the number of plies in the tire. In addition, the tires are certified to meet all the performance requirements of FMVSS No. 109 and all other informational markings as required by FMVSS No. 109 are present. Kumho has corrected the problem.

In consideration of the foregoing, NHTSA has decided that the petitioner has met its burden of persuasion that the noncompliance described is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety. Accordingly, Kumho's petition is

granted and the petitioner is exempted from the obligation of providing notification of, and a remedy for, the noncompliance.

Authority: (49 U.S.C. 30118, 30120; delegations of authority at CFR 1.50 and 501.8).

Issued on: July 15, 2004.

Kenneth N. Weinstein,

Associate Administrator for Enforcement.

[FR Doc. 04-16840 Filed 7-22-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Office of Thrift Supervision

Proposed Agency Information Collection Activities; Comment Request—Operating Subsidiaries

AGENCY: Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS), Treasury.

ACTION: Notice and request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Treasury, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed and continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. 3507. The Office of Thrift Supervision within the Department of the Treasury will submit the proposed information collection requirement described below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act. Today, OTS is soliciting public comments on the proposal.

DATES: Submit written comments on or before September 21, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Send comments, referring to the collection by title of the proposal or by OMB approval number, to Information Collection Comments, Chief Counsel's Office, Office of Thrift Supervision, 1700 G Street, NW., Washington, DC 20552; send a facsimile transmission to (202) 906-6518; or send an e-mail to infocollection.comments@ots.treas.gov. OTS will post comments and the related index on the OTS Internet Site at <http://www.ots.treas.gov>. In addition, interested persons may inspect comments at the Public Reading Room, 1700 G Street, NW., by appointment. To make an appointment, call (202) 906-5922, send an e-mail to publicinfo@ots.treas.gov, or send a facsimile transmission to (202) 906-7755.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: You can request additional information

about this proposed information collection from Nadine Washington, Information Systems, Administration & Finance, (202) 906-6706, Office of Thrift Supervision, 1700 G Street, NW., Washington, DC 20552.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: OTS may not conduct or sponsor an information collection, and respondents are not required to respond to an information collection, unless the information collection displays a currently valid OMB control number. As part of the approval process, we invite comments on the following information collection.

Comments should address one or more of the following points:

a. Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of OTS;

b. The accuracy of OTS's estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection;

c. Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected;

d. Ways to minimize the burden of the information collection on respondents, including through the use of information technology.

We will summarize the comments that we receive and include them in the OTS request for OMB approval. All comments will become a matter of public record. In this notice, OTS is soliciting comments concerning the following information collection.

Title of Proposal: Operating Subsidiaries.

OMB Number: 1550-0077.

Form Number: OTS Form 1579.

Regulation requirement: 12 CFR Part 559.

Description: 12 CFR Part 559 requires a savings association proposing to establish or acquire an operating subsidiary or conduct new activities in an existing operating subsidiary to either notify OTS or obtain the prior approval of OTS. The regulation also requires a savings association to create and maintain certain documents.

Type of Review: Renewal.

Affected Public: Savings Associations.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 68.

Estimated Frequency of Response: Event-generated.

Estimated Burden Hours per Response: 14 hours.

Estimated Total Burden: 952 hours.

Clearance Officer: Marilyn K. Burton, (202) 906-6467, Office of Thrift Supervision, 1700 G Street, NW., Washington, DC 20552.

OMB Reviewer: Mark D. Menchik, (202) 395-3176, Office of Management and Budget, Room 10236, New

¹ This decision is limited to its specific facts. As some commenters on the ANPRM noted, the existence of steel in a tire's sidewall can be relevant to the manner in which it should be repaired or retreaded.