

published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477–78).

How to Read Comments submitted to the Docket: You may read the comments received by Docket Management at the address and times given above. You may also view the documents from the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Follow the online instructions for accessing the dockets. The docket ID number and title of this notice are shown at the heading of this document notice. Please note that even after the comment closing date, we will continue to file relevant information in the Docket as it becomes available. Further, some people may submit late comments. Accordingly, we recommend that you periodically search the Docket for new material.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Coleman Sachs, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance, NHTSA (202–366–3151).

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 FMVSS 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 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 FMVSS.

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**.

Wallace Environmental Testing Laboratories, Inc. (WETL) of Houston, TX (Registered Importer 90–005) has petitioned NHTSA to decide whether non-U.S. certified 2008 Harley Davidson FX, FL, XL and VR series motorcycles are eligible for importation into the United States. The vehicles that WETL believes are substantially similar are 2008 Harley Davidson FX, FL, XL and VR series motorcycles that were manufactured for sale in the United

States and certified by their manufacturer as conforming to all applicable FMVSS.

The petitioner claims that it carefully compared non-U.S. certified 2008 Harley Davidson FX, FL, XL and VR series motorcycles to their U.S. certified counterparts, and found the vehicles to be substantially similar with respect to compliance with most FMVSS.

WETL submitted information with its petition intended to demonstrate that non-U.S. certified 2008 Harley Davidson FX, FL, XL and VR series motorcycles, as originally manufactured, conform to many FMVSS 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 2008 Harley Davidson FX, FL, XL and VR series motorcycles are identical to their U.S. certified counterparts with respect to compliance with Standard Nos. 106 *Brake Hoses*, 111 *Rearview Mirrors*, 116 *Brake Fluid*, 119 *New Pneumatic Tires for Vehicles other than Passenger Cars*, and 122 *Motorcycle Brake Systems*.

The petitioner further contends that the vehicles are capable of being readily altered to meet the following standards, in the manner indicated below:

Standard No. 108 *Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment:* Installation of the following U.S.-certified components on vehicles not already so equipped: (a) Headlamp; (b) front and rear side-mounted reflex reflectors; (c) rear-mounted reflex reflector; (d) rear turn signal lamps; (e) stoplamp; (f) taillamp; and (g) license plate lamp.

Standard No. 120 *Tire Selection and Rims for Vehicles Other Than Passenger Cars:* Installation of a tire information placard.

Standard No. 123 *Motorcycle Controls and Displays:* Installation of a U.S.-model speedometer/odometer unit to meet the requirements of this standard.

Standard No. 205 *Glazing Materials:* Inspection of all vehicles, and removal of noncompliant glazing or replacement of the glazing with U.S.-certified components on vehicles that are not already so equipped.

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 addresses 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 14, 2009.

Claude H. Harris,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.

[FR Doc. E9–8953 Filed 4–17–09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Petition for Exemption From the Federal Motor Vehicle Motor Theft Prevention Standard; Porsche

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

ACTION: Grant of petition for exemption.

SUMMARY: This document grants in full the petition of Porsche Cars North America, Inc. (Porsche) for an exemption in accordance with § 543.9(c)(2) of 49 CFR Part 543, *Exemption from the Theft Prevention Standard*, for the Porsche Panamera vehicle line beginning with model year (MY) 2010. This petition is granted because the agency has determined that the antitheft device to be placed on the line as standard equipment is likely to be as effective in reducing and deterring motor vehicle theft as compliance with the parts-marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard.

DATES: The exemption granted by this notice is effective beginning with model year (MY) 2010.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Deborah Mazyck, Office of International Policy, Fuel Economy and Consumer Standards, NHTSA, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590. Ms. Mazyck's phone number is (202) 366–0846. Her fax number is (202) 493–2290.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In a petition dated February 17, 2009, Porsche requested an exemption from the parts-marking requirements of the theft prevention standard (49 CFR Part 541) for the Porsche Panamera vehicle line beginning with MY 2010. The petition requested an exemption from parts-marking pursuant to 49 CFR 543, *Exemption from Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard*, based on the installation of an antitheft device as standard equipment for the entire vehicle line.

Under § 543.5(a), a manufacturer may petition NHTSA to grant an exemption

for one vehicle line per model year. In its petition, Porsche provided a detailed description and diagram of the identity, design, and location of the components of the antitheft device for its new Porsche Panamera vehicle line. Porsche stated that all Porsche Panamera vehicles will be equipped with a passive antitheft device as standard equipment beginning with MY 2010. Key components of the antitheft device will include a microprocessor-based immobilizer system, electronic ignition switch, transponder key, remote control unit, alarm/central locking control unit, optional keyless entry system and electronic parking brake. The device will also be equipped with an audible and visible alarm. Additionally, Porsche stated that the central locking system works in conjunction with the audible and visible alarm. Locking the doors with the ignition key, the remote control or a door switch (with the keyless entry option) will activate the audible and visible alarm. An ultrasonic sensor in the alarm system will monitor the doors, rear luggage compartment, front deck lid, fuel filler door, and interior movement. The horn will sound and the lights will flash if there is any detection of unauthorized use. Porsche's submission is considered a complete petition as required by 49 CFR 543.7 in that it meets the general requirements contained in 543.5 and the specific content requirements of 543.6.

Porsche stated that its immobilizer prevents the engine management system and steering system from functioning when the system is engaged. The immobilizer is automatically activated when the key is removed from the ignition switch assembly, or the optional special keyless entry keycard exits the vehicle with the driver. The immobilizer then returns to its normal "off" state, where engine starting, operation, and steering are not allowed. Starting the engine and operation of the vehicle will be allowed only when the correct code is sent to the control unit by using the correct key in the ignition switch, or by having the correct keyless entry keycard within the occupant compartment of the car. The ignition key contains a radio signal transponder, which signals the control unit to allow steering and the engine to be started. With the keyless entry system, operation of the vehicle is allowed when the ignition key is substituted with the special keycard that contains a radio signal transmitter similar to the transponder in the standard ignition key.

The central locking system works in conjunction with the audible and visible alarm. Locking the doors with the

ignition key, the remote control or a door switch (with the keyless entry option) will activate the audible and visible alarm.

Porsche will also equip the Panamera vehicle line with an electronically activated parking brake which it states is integrated into the vehicle's antitheft device. If the control unit does not receive the correct code from the ignition key or keycard, the parking brake will remain activated and the vehicle cannot be towed away.

Since the Porsche Panamera is a new vehicle line, there is currently no available theft rate data published by the agency for the vehicle line. However, Porsche provided data on the effectiveness of other similar antitheft devices installed on its 911 and Boxster vehicle lines in support of its belief that its device will be at least as effective as those comparable devices previously granted exemptions by the agency. Porsche's data showed that the theft rate for the two vehicle lines remained consistently low over a 3-year period. The average theft rate using three MY's data for the Porsche 911 and Boxster are 0.8261 and 0.8784 respectively. Based on the experience of these vehicle lines, Porsche has concluded that the antitheft device proposed for its Porsche Panamera vehicle line is no less effective than those devices in the lines for which NHTSA has already granted full exemption from the parts-marking requirements. The agency agrees that the device is substantially similar to devices in these and other vehicle lines for which the agency has already granted exemptions.

In addressing the specific content requirements of 543.6, Porsche provided information on the reliability and durability of its proposed device. To ensure reliability and durability of the device, Porsche conducted tests based on its own specified standards. Porsche provided a detailed list of the tests conducted (*i.e.*, extreme temperature tests, voltage spike tests, reverse polarity tests, electromagnetic interference tests, vibration tests and endurance tests) and believes that the device is reliable and durable since the device complied with its specific requirements for each test. Additionally, Porsche stated that the antitheft device also features a built-in self-diagnostic that constantly checks for system failures. If a failure is detected, an alarm indicator signals the driver.

Porsche further states that disablement of the immobilizer is virtually impossible. Disconnecting power to the antitheft device does not affect the operation of the device. Once the antitheft device is activated, the

device stays activated until the correct key or optional keycard is used to instruct the engine management system through code to begin functioning again. Porsche also stated that the immobilizer cannot be disabled by manipulation of the door locks or central-locking system because the locks/locking system are incapable of sending the code needed to disable the device.

In further support of the reliability of its antitheft device, Porsche informed the agency that it has developed a new "off-board" antitheft strategy to reduce the marketability of stolen electronic components. Specifically, Porsche stated that during the production of its vehicle, the initialization and registration of various antitheft electronic components are recorded in a central database. If the components have to be repaired or replaced, authorized access to the database must be obtained to receive authorization for the components. If authorized access to the central database is unavailable or the database indicates that the components are not authorized, further operation and use of the vehicle will be restricted or impossible to obtain.

Based on the evidence submitted by Porsche, the agency believes that the antitheft device for the Panamera vehicle line is likely to be as effective in reducing and deterring motor vehicle theft as compliance with the parts-marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard (49 CFR 541).

Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 33106 and 49 CFR 543.7(b), the agency grants a petition for exemption from the parts-marking requirements of Part 541, either in whole or in part, if it determines that, based upon substantial evidence, the standard equipment antitheft device is likely to be as effective in reducing and deterring motor vehicle theft as compliance with the parts-marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard (49 CFR Part 541). This conclusion is based on the information Porsche provided about its device.

The agency concludes that the device will provide the five types of performance listed in § 543.6(a)(3): Promoting activation; attracting attention to the efforts of unauthorized persons to enter or operate a vehicle by means other than a key; preventing defeat or circumvention of the device by unauthorized persons; preventing

operation of the vehicle by unauthorized entrants; and ensuring the reliability and durability of the device.

For the foregoing reasons, the agency hereby grants in full Porsche's petition for exemption for the Porsche Panamera vehicle line from the parts-marking requirements of 49 CFR Part 541. The agency notes that 49 CFR Part 541, Appendix A-1, identifies those lines that are exempted from the Theft Prevention Standard for a given model year. 49 CFR Part 543.7(f) contains publication requirements incident to the disposition of all Part 543 petitions. Advanced listing, including the release of future product nameplates, the beginning model year for which the petition is granted and a general description of the antitheft device is necessary in order to notify law enforcement agencies of new vehicle lines exempted from the parts marking requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard.

If Porsche decides not to use the exemption for this line, it should formally notify the agency. If such a decision is made, the line must be fully marked according to the requirements under 49 CFR Parts 541.5 and 541.6 (marking of major component parts and replacement parts).

NHTSA notes that if Porsche wishes in the future to modify the device on which this exemption is based, the company may have to submit a petition to modify the exemption. Part 543.7(d) states that a Part 543 exemption applies only to vehicles that belong to a line exempted under this part and equipped with the antitheft device on which the line's exemption is based. Further, Part 543.9(c)(2) provides for the submission of petitions "to modify an exemption to permit the use of an antitheft device similar to but differing from the one specified in that exemption."

The agency wishes to minimize the administrative burden that Part 543.9(c)(2) could place on exempted vehicle manufacturers and itself. The agency did not intend in drafting Part 543 to require the submission of a modification petition for every change to the components or design of an antitheft device. The significance of many such changes could be *de minimis*. Therefore, NHTSA suggests that if the manufacturer contemplates making any changes, the effects of which might be characterized as *de minimis*, it should consult the agency before preparing and submitting a petition to modify.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 33106; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50.

Issued on April 14, 2009.

Stephen R. Kratzke,

Associate Administrator for Rulemaking.

[FR Doc. E9-8951 Filed 4-17-09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Advisory Committee on Disability Compensation; Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under Public Law 92-463 (Federal Advisory Committee Act) that the Advisory Committee on Disability Compensation will meet on May 7-8, 2009, in the Carlton Room, at the St. Regis Washington, DC, 923 16th and K Streets, NW., from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. The meeting is open to the public.

The purpose of the Committee is to advise the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on the maintenance and periodic readjustment of the VA Schedule for Rating Disabilities. The Committee is to assemble and review relevant information relating to the nature and character of disabilities arising from service in the Armed Forces, provide an ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of the rating schedule and give advice on the most appropriate means of responding to the needs of veterans relating to disability compensation.

On May 7, the Committee will receive briefings about studies on compensation for Veterans with service-connected disabilities and other Veteran benefits programs. On the afternoon of May 7 and the morning of May 8, the Committee will break into subcommittees to prepare recommendations. In the afternoon of May 8, time will be allocated for receiving public comments. Public comments will be limited to three minutes each. Individuals wishing to make oral statements before the Committee will be accommodated on a first-come, first-served basis. Individuals who speak are invited to submit 1-2 page summaries of their comments at the time of the meeting for inclusion in the official meeting record.

The public may submit written statements for the Committee's review to Ms. Ersie Farber, Designated Federal Officer, Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Benefits Administration (211A), 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420. Any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting or seeking additional information should contact Ms. Farber at (202) 461-9728 or Ersie.farber@va.gov.

Dated: April 10, 2009.

By Direction of the Secretary.

E. Philip Riggins,

Committee Management Officer.

[FR Doc. E9-8869 Filed 4-17-09; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans; Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under Public Law 92-463 (Federal Advisory Committee Act) that the Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans will meet on May 6-7, 2009, at the Residence Inn by Marriott, 1199 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. The meeting is open to the public.

The purpose of the Committee is to provide advice and recommendations to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on issues that are unique to Veterans who served in the Southwest Asia theater of operations during the 1990-1991 period of the Gulf War.

On May 6, the Committee will hear from a panel of outreach professionals from various VA staff offices. The Committee will also receive briefings from the Executive Director of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America and other subject matter experts on Gulf War Illness research.

On May 7, the Committee will receive a briefing from the National Director of the Post Deployment Integrated Care Initiative Model about VA's strategic plan to implement the Model. In the afternoon of May 6 and 7, the Committee will discuss recommendations for its final report.

Public comments will be received on May 6, from 3:15 p.m. until 3:45 p.m. Individuals wishing to speak must register not later than May 4, 2009, by contacting Ms. Lelia Jackson at (202) 461-5758 and by submitting 1-2 page summaries of their comments for inclusion in the official record. A sign-in sheet will be available each day. Members of the public may also submit written statements for the Committee's review to the Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420.

Interested parties may also listen in by teleconferencing into the meeting. The toll-free teleconference line will be open daily from 8:30 a.m. until 5 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time). To register for the teleconference, contact Ms. Lelia Jackson at (202) 461-5758 or via e-mail at lelia.jackson@va.gov.