DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY A.M.
April 3, 1972

NHTSA -- 23-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation has proposed an amendment to Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 208, Occupant Crash Protection, that would change the method of evaluating the likelihood of head injury in a crash.

Standard No. 208 requires that cars be designed so that car occupants can survive specified crashes without serious injury. The likelihood of injury is determined by placing electronically instrumented dummies that represent humans in the car during crash testing, and comparing dummy response with a set of injury criteria.

The criteria for head injury contained in the standard as issued last year by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, was based on the SAE Severity Index. It consisted of a technique for mathematically processing the acceleration values measured in the head during a crash, for comparison with an upper limit of 1000.

Recent data have suggested, however, that the Severity Index has some shortcomings as a predictor of head injury in motor vehicle crashes. The agency has therefore proposed to substitute a new criterion in its place. Unlike the Severity Index, the new criterion is based on average head accelerations, which should help to make the new criterion a more accurate indicator of head injuries.

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Interested parties are invited to submit comments on the proposed amendment. Comments should be addressed to the Docket Section, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20590. Comments should be received no later than April 17, 1972.

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NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY A.M.
April 5, 1972

NHTSA -- 32-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Driver inexperience, unfamiliarity with the vehicle, and lack of proper emergency training were major causes that led to the runaway crash of a school bus last September 11, near Gunnison, Colorado.

Those are the findings of accident investigators of the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The investigation was conducted at the request of the National Transportation Safety Board.

At the same time, the investigators noted this type of bus chassis had a known history of brake fade and difficulty in gear shifting . . . problems which significantly contributed to the loss of driver control initially, and his inability to regain control of the vehicle.

Eight members of the Gunnison High School junior varsity football team and their assistant coach were killed, and 29 others were injured in the fatal accident on the eastern slope of Monarch Pass in the Rocky Mountains.

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This particular accident, in which all fatally injured occupants were either totally or partially ejected from the bus, underscores the need for a "total restraint design concept" for the construction of school buses, the accident report stated. One example of this concept would be to provide a more rigid superstructure to avoid roof collapse, along with contoured seats that would better confine the passenger in the seat area.

Reconstructing the accident, the investigators said that the bus reached the top of Monarch Pass at about 20 mph. The driver entered a long downgrade and discovered too late, either that his brakes were beginning to fade, or that his driving speed was excessive. He then attempted to down shift, but was unable to do so, and the vehicle continued to gain speed, out of gear. A passenger attempted to help by pulling on the parking brake, which only resulted in stalling the engine. Out of control, the bus careened down the steep grade, eventually overtaking slower moving traffic that occupied both lanes of the two-lane highway. To avoid an impending crash with this traffic, the driver veered the bus into a gas station driveway, traveling at a calculated speed of 70+ mph, where it spun sideways and then rolled over two and a half times before comming to rest.

All supporting side posts failed and the roof collapsed to the level of the seat backs. Two passengers were ejected at the beginning of the second complete rollover, and 37 of the remaining 46 occupants were ejected during the final one-half roll of the bus.

The fatality count might have been far higher, the accident report pointed out, were it not for the use of MAST (Military Assistance to Safety and Traffic) helicopters which flew 15 of the injured to a hospital in Denver.

The 23-year-old driver of the bus had six years driving experience, including 1 1/2 years driving a gasoline truck in the mountainous Gunnison area, the report said. However, he had only been driving school buses two weeks, had no previous formal school bus driver training, and had never driven this particular bus before. It was determined that he apparently was unaware of the fade characteristics of the brakes, and used

them for speed control, rather than using engine compression braking. His attempts to shift to a lower gear were inappropriate for one of two reasons: either the bus already was traveling too fast in gear to complete a downshift, or if the conditions were appropriate for this action, the driver failed to accelerate the engine to permit synchronization between the rear axle and the drive shaft.

Compounding an already serious situation, investigators determined, was the fact that a well-meaning passenger actuated the vehicle's parking brake. This action resulted in stalling the engine, with a resultant loss of vacuum supply to the power brakes and inability to restart the engine.

Previous research indicates that the type of hydraulic brake system used on the bus has a potential for only three successive heavy brake applications before "serious" brake fade is experienced, the investigators stated. There is little doubt that the "inexperienced driver" exceeded the vehicle's design limitations.

"However," they emphasized, "this does not exempt the manufacturer and those responsible for purchase of the vehicles from providing equipment systems with an adequate margin of safety, given their knowledge of the wide range of experience in bus drivers, the type of terrain, and the range of operating conditions imposed."

Maintenance records on the bus also indicated a history of "stiff shifting," and that synchronizer repairs were made one month prior to the accident. The vehicle had 3,656 miles on the odometer, with the last State inspection at 2,127 miles, the report said. Four previous drivers and a foreman had complained of "gear clashing" and stiff shifting on this vehicle. Repairs were made which corrected the gear clashing, but the stiff shifting remained, the investigators said, raising the point that this problem may have placed an additional load on the driver during an "already stressful" situation.

In addition, the report noted, the non-self-synchronizing design of the vehicle's two speed rear axle required a type of accelerator gear shift coordination that is opposite to the natural inclination of the human operator. This would be particularly significant in an emergency situation, they said.

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FACT SHEET
March, 1972
NHTSA

Tel. 202-426-9550

WHAT THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION IS DOING ABOUT SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

Background Summary:

Almost 20 million children are transported each day to and from school in 256,000 school buses involving more than 275,000 drivers. Statistics show that in 1970, there were 75 pupil fatalities and 3,900 injuries. Fifty of those school children killed were approaching or leaving the bus; the 25 others died while aboard a bus involved in a crash. While statistics indicate that pupil transportation by bus is considerably safer than passenger car transportation, (data show that there are as few as .05 fatalities per 100 million passenger miles of school bus travel compared to 2.1 fatalities for passenger cars) parents may have reason for concern. The average school bus has a capacity of 66 pupils, which means the potential for catastrophe cannot go unheeded. The situation varies from school district to school district, but there are school buses on the road today that are ill-equipped and poorly designed. Some are driven by incompetent and untrained drivers, and, in some instances, the buses are overcrowded and unsupervised. The death of even one child in a school bus accident is one too many. The number of fatalities and injuries must be reduced.

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Sincere and dedicated individuals and groups across the country want greater safety for children who are transported by school bus. The Department of Transportation, eager to insure safe pupil transportation, supports this goal. To this end, we are approaching school bus safety on two broad fronts: (1) the construction of the vehicle itself, and (2) regulation of how the vehicle is used.

Motor Vehicle Standards:

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has issued 16 Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards that are applicable to school buses. The standards cover such major areas as:

1. Minimum requirements for brake fluid
2. Minimum requirements for air brake systems
3. Minimum requirements for burn resistant materials used in the occupant compartment
4. Requirements for maintaining bus driver seating systems intact upon vehicle impact as well as requiring seat belts for drivers
5. Requirements for keeping windshields clear
6. Prohibition of hazardous reflecting surfaces

In addition, NHTSA is preparing several standards that apply to new school bus construction. Our goal here is to increase bus safety in the area of occupant crash protection. The most significant standard would relate to improved occupant containment. We will attempt to improve the hostile environment inside present buses, so that, in a crash situation, occupants are retained within the bus and are protected from serious injury. One proposed standard, to be issued shortly, deals with bus passenger seating and crash protection. It would require stronger seats and seat anchorages, elimination of lethal surfaces, substantial padding in the immediate seating area, and increased seat back height. The purpose is to contain passengers between strong, well padded, high-backed seats during a crash situation. Another standard, expected to be issued soon, covers bus window retention and release. This standard will establish minimum escape criteria while improving the integrity of the structure and latching mechanisms on all buses to effectively reduce the number of ejectees during rollover crashes.

Since more school children are killed going to and from the bus than while inside, we have initiated rulemaking action on indirect visibility to allow bus operators to see small children in the space immediately in front of the vehicle. Consideration is also being given to possible additional rulemaking action on bus interiors to reduce potentially lethal surfaces that may become exposed during a crash.

Pupil Transportation Safety:

NHTSA has been actively involved in the issuance of a Highway Safety Program Standard on Pupil Transportation Safety which regulates the use of school buses. Initial work on this proposed standard began more than four years ago. It is designed, among other things, to achieve uniformity in the appearance of vehicles used solely for transporting children to and from school, by requiring special identification in addition to a required sign reading "SCHOOL BUS." This measure will ensure that motorists are aware of the presence of a school vehicle. The proposed standard is also designed to improve State programs for safe pupil transportation in urban and rural areas by setting requirements for proper and safe equipment; maintenance of equipment; and selection, training, and supervision of drivers and maintenance personnel. The standard would improve State programs by setting other requirements, including:

1. A single State agency having primary responsibility for administering pupil transportation with at least one full time professional

2. Instruction in safe riding practices, and participation in emergency evacuation drills, at least twice during each school year for each pupil who is transported in a school vehicle

3. Coordination of bus routing and seating plans to eliminate standees when a school vehicle is in motion

4. Use of lap belts by drivers of school vehicles so equipped whenever the vehicle is in motion

5. Inspection of all school vehicles at least semi-annually

6. Improved selection and training of school bus drivers

7. Record-keeping and reporting

8. Uniformity in bus identification, warning signals and bus stop laws

9. Daily pre-trip inspections by drivers of their vehicles

10. Prompt report of any defects or deficiencies that may affect the safety of the vehicle's operation

On June 1, 1971, the proposed Highway Safety Program Standard No. 17, Pupil Transportation Safety, was officially submitted to Congress in accordance with a requirement of the Highway Safety Act of 1970. The House Public Works Committee, Subcommittee on Roads, subsequently conducted two days of hearings on the proposed standard and recommended that it not be issued pending further study. NHTSA is now exploring methods for expediting issuance.

Bus Related Research:

Studies which could be applicable to school buses are being conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Federal Highway Administration in six areas of research. These areas include school bus seats and restraints; braking; handling; skid resistance on different types of pavements; driver visual requirements; and operator knowledge requirements. It is hoped that the results of this research could lead to a refinement of current standards and, in some instances, new rulemaking.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 12, 1972

NHTSA -- 29-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation today announced a new Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard that establishes requirements to avoid malfunctioning of accelerators in motor vehicles.

Douglas Toms, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in announcing the new regulation, said, "A driver's ability to control the speed of his car depends, to a considerable extent, on the proper functioning of the accelerator control system, particularly with regard to deceleration when the driver removes his foot from the gas pedal. Unexpected speed, even for a few seconds, when the driver intends to slow down, may seriously affect his ability to control the vehicle".

The new standard No. 124, sets requirements to ensure the reliability of accelerator control systems over a wide range of driving conditions. Each system must include two independent sources of energy which shall return the throttle to idle after the driver has removed his foot from the pedal. If breakage or disconnection in the accelerator system occurs, the throttle shall return to idle at the time of breakage, or at the removal of the actuating force.

The rule-making deals with requirements that will avoid possible failure in the accelerator system itself. It does not govern conditions of engine overspeed that may be caused by other failures such as worn or broken engine mounts. The NHTSA is in the process of developing safety performance requirements under other engine failure conditions.

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In a separate action, the Department issued a Notice of Proposed Rule Making which would amend Standard No. 124. The proposal is that the two independent sources of energy would return the throttle to the idle position within one-half second after the removal of the actuating force or a breakage or disconnection in the accelerator control system.

The new standard, which becomes effective on September 1, 1973, is applicable to driver-operated accelerator control systems only, and does not include automatic speed control systems. It applies to passenger cars, multi-purpose passenger vehicles, trucks and buses. It does not apply to motorcycles.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 12, 1972

NHTSA -- 33-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation has issued a new Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard which standardizes controls for handle bar equipped motorcycles.

Douglas Toms, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, said: "Controls and displays link the operator and the machine. If there is confusion as to location, interpretation, or operation of such controls, a dangerous situation may occur. A cyclist, especially the novice or the cyclist who has changed from one make of machine to another, must not hesitate when confronted with an emergency."

The purpose of the new standard is to minimize accidents caused by operator error, by standardizing certain motorcycle controls and displays. The basic operational requirement is that the handle-bar-mounted controls must be operable without the operator removing his hand from the handgrip. All motorcycles must have a supplemental engine stop control, operable from the right handle bar, for use in emergency situations.

Some of the other requirements are: If a motorcycle with automatic clutch is equipped with a supplemental rear brake control, this control must be located on the left handle bar. If a motorcycle is equipped

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with self-proportioning or anti-lock braking devices utilizing a single control for front and rear brakes, the control must be located and operable in the same manner as a rear brake control.

A number of requirements have been established for the various displays. Because of the limited range within which displays can be located on a motorcycle, no special location requirements are necessary. Illumination of the neutral position and of the speedometer is essential; a green lamp must indicate the neutral position, and the speedometer must be illuminated whenever the headlamp is turned on.

Each motorcycle stand must fold rearward and upward if it contacts the ground when the cycle is moving forward. Footrests must be provided for each designated seating position. Each footrest for passengers other than the operator must fold rearward and upward when not in use.

The new standard may require a complete reversal of controls on certain foreign - built motorcycles. For that reason, an effective date of September 1, 1974 has been set for the standard.

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NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY
April 17, 1972

NHTSA -- 38-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe, citing the need for beginning drivers to understand the dangers of alcohol abuse and driving, announced today that 10 driver education workshops will be held throughout the country in the next few weeks.

Beginning Tuesday, April 18, in Tallahassee, Florida, Dr. Leroy W. Dunn, Chief of the Driver Education and Licensing Division, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, will conduct a two-day driver education workshop at Florida State University.

Nine more workshops will be conducted this spring in each of the NHTSA's 10 regional areas. Each region has three or more States, in addition to Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

Workshop objectives are twofold: 1) to present new alcohol and highway safety materials to driver educators; and 2) to review and discuss the present status of alcohol information in current driver education courses.

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The Tallahassee workshop is expected to attract driver educators, alcohol specialists, and traffic safety experts from Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

Dr. Dunn will present at each workshop a new 17-minute color film, titled THE DECISION IS YOURS, designed for deeper understanding of the tragic role alcohol can play in highway fatalities. An instructor's manual also is included.

The alcohol emphasis in driver education is a part of the Traffic Safety Administration's continuing effort to reduce drinking-driving deaths and injuries on America's highways.

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NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY A.M.
April 18, 1972

NHTSA -- 36-72
Tele. 202-426-9550

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe and government and auto industry dignitaries from this country and abroad gathered today in Phoenix, Arizona, to witness the 50 mile per hour test crash of an Experimental Safety Vehicle (ESV).

The ESV, produced by Fairchild Industries, will be crash tested as part of an evaluation program conducted by Dynamic Science under contract to the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

On March 31, an ESV produced by AMF, Inc. was crash tested successfully at 50 mph into a barrier. Preliminary results indicate outstanding structural performance. Performance of the test dummies simulating human occupants is still under evaluation. Occupant survival without serious injury is the primary performance goal the ESV's must meet under the development contract. Contract specifications are designed to provide occupant protection in 50 miles-per-hour head-on crashes, in 70 miles-per-hour roll-overs, and in 30 miles-per-hour side impacts.

After a series of tests and evaluations of the two vehicles, one will be chosen the winner. The winning firm will be awarded a contract by the end of June to build up to 12 more ESV prototypes for further testing.

Secretary Volpe told the observers at today's test that the eyes of the automobile world are focused on the Experimental Safety Vehicle program.

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Said the Secretary, "We are acutely aware that death and injury by auto is reaching epidemic proportions throughout the industrialized world. Here in the United States alone, more than 55,000 persons were killed and an estimated 3.8 million more were injured last year in auto crashes. At the same time, many foreign nations, with increasing numbers of cars and drivers, are reporting rapid increases in highway deaths and injuries. Clearly, this problem is international in scope.

"These ESV prototypes are being designed to help put an end to those macabre statistics. Our concern for safety on the highways is shared with equal intensity by our colleagues in other countries. While we strive to perfect a 4,000 pound family sedan sized ESV, other major auto-producing nations -- West Germany, Great Britain, France, Italy, and Sweden -- are working diligently to develop safer cars in the intermediate weight class. Japan has undertaken the task of meeting ESV requirements in the 1,500 pound range."

Secretary Volpe added, "Through bi-lateral agreements with each of these governments, we have arranged for a world-wide exchange of technical knowledge and data which, for the first time in history, will bring together the engineering know-how of such great industry names as Rolls Royce, General Motors, Daimler-Benz, Ford, Fiat, Chrysler, Volkswagen, Ford of Europe, Opel, Renault, British Leyland, Citroen, Saab, Toyota, BMW, American Motors, Nissan, Volvo, Fairchild Industries, AMF, Inc., Peugeot, and Honda.

"This pulling together of the world's best automotive engineering brains to focus on the problem of safer cars is a significant development, and we have great expectations that the result will be the saving of thousands of lives in future years."

The follow-on cars produced by the winning firm will incorporate the best features of both competitive prototypes. Later on, both General Motors and Ford will deliver prototype vehicles to NHTSA under separate contracts for one dollar. These vehicles will undergo similar rigorous testing.

The ESV prototypes, both in their present form and for some time to come, will be "idea cars", as opposed to production ideals. They are a unique departure from past thinking because they represent an effort to design and build-in safety from the ground up. It is expected that many of their innovations will be adaptable to production line vehicles.

However, the real significance of the ESV performance goals is that they represent a "quantum jump" over the customary auto industry approach of year-by-year, step-by-step evolutionary changes.

"I do not think it is stretching the case to call the ESV concept a revolutionary one rather than an evolutionary one. This concept is based on the recognition that human life is too precious and automotive technology too advanced for us to accept any longer the premise that evolutionary changes are still adequate to our times."

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 26, 1972

NHTSA--- 40-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe said today that efforts at the State and community levels -- together with Federal support -- have slowed the rapid increase of lives lost in traffic accidents. But the Secretary noted that no State has taken all the legislative and administrative actions needed to fully implement highway safety program standards.

He urged the Nation's Governors to step up their State's highway safety activities, particularly in the priority areas of alcohol countermeasures, driver control and Selective Traffic Enforcement Programs (STEP).

"Research indicates that a majority of traffic crashes are attributable to driver behavior and thus driver control must be made more effective and comprehensive," Secretary Volpe said. He stated that advancements in mechanical technology, learning techniques, and data processing provide the opportunity for greatly improved or innovative systems.

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"When we talk of driver control programs," the Secretary said, "we do not mean to imply a punitive program. We mean better screening and examination of people entering the system, better education of drivers, improved rehabilitation, and, of course, increased police efforts to get the hazardous driver into the remediation system."

As advanced by the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, an ideal driver control system would influence driver behavior by upgrading skills, knowledge, and attitudes. Where this is not possible, drivers, or potential drivers, with critical physical and mental impairments would be screened out.

Secretary Volpe said the Department has recently announced a massive, national information-education campaign designed to generate public awareness of the continuing threat of the drunken driver.

"This high priority effort," said the Secretary, "is in response to President Nixon's directive to take all necessary steps to drastically reduce our annual toll of some 55,000 highway fatalities each year, half of which are related to excessive drinking."

The campaign will serve as a backup for the Alcohol Safety Action Programs (ASAPs) now being Federally-funded in 35 States to find ways to control drunk drivers and remove them from the highway. ASAP contracts with the NHTSA represent a total investment of $82 million over a period of three-and-a-half years.

The STEP program is designed to evaluate the strategy and impact of traffic enforcment countermeasures applied at high accident frequency locations. Last year, the Department awarded contracts totaling $1.5 million to three cities to develop traffic enforcement techniques to reduce fatalities, personal injuries and property damage in which traffic violations are contributing factors.

STEP contracts have been signed with Chattanooga, Tennessee; El Paso, Texas; and Sacramento, California. The result of countermeasures used in these cities will be applied to future STEP projects in other cities around the country.

The Secretary said he recently sent letter to the Nation's Governors advising them he has reviewed an evaluation of each State's highway safety program.

Under the Highway Safety Act of 1966, the States are responsible for carrying out highway safety programs to implement uniform National Standards issued by the Secretary of Transportation and administered by the NHTSA and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Along with the letters, the Secretary enclosed a chart which shows a listing of the States grouped alphabetically within the three categories of Above Average, Average, and Below Average. The categories reflect how the States are implementing the national Standards.

The 16 National Highway Safety Program Standards include Periodic Motor Vehicle Inspection; Motor Vehicle Registration; Motorcycle Safety; Driver Education; Driver Licensing; Codes and Laws; Traffic Courts; Alcohol in Relation to Highway Safety; Identification and Surveillance of Accident Locations; Traffic Records; Emergency Medical Services; Highway Design, Construction, and Maintenance; Traffic Lighting and Control Devices; Pedestrian Safety; Police Traffic Services; and Debris Hazard Control and Cleanup.

(List of States Attached)

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SUMMARY REPORT
HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM EVALUATION

ABOVE AVERAGE	CALIFORNIA COLORADO DELAWARE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA MAINE MASSACHUSETTS MICHIGAN NEW HAMPSHIRE NEW YORK PENNSYLVANIA SOUTH DAKOTA UTAH VIRGINIA
AVERAGE	ARIZONA ARKANSAS CONNECTICUT FLORIDA HAWAII IDAHO ILLINOIS KENTUCKY LOUISIANA MARYLAND MINNESOTA MISSOURI MONTANA NEBRASKA NEW JERSEY NEW MEXICO NORTH CAROLINA OHIO OKLAHOMA OREGON RHODE ISLAND SOUTH CAROLINA TENNESSEE TEXAS VERMONT WASHINGTON WISCONSIN
BELOW AVERAGE	ALABAMA ALASKA GEORGIA IOWA INDIANA KANSAS MISSISSIPPI NEVADA NORTH DAKOTA PUERTO RICO WEST VIRGINIA WYOMING

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FOR RELEASE THURSDAY A.M.
April 27, 1972

NHTSA -- 41-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe said today that a preliminary investigation has disclosed that an error in wiring a switch resulted in the failure of the air cushion system to deploy in the 50 mph test crash of an Experimental Safety Vehicle (ESV) conducted on April 18.

The test crash of a vehicle produced by Fairchild Industries was conducted by Dynamic Science near Phoenix, Arizona, under a contract with the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Secretary Volpe explained that the air cushions in the test vehicle are deployed by gas generators whose electrical power is controlled by two pressure switches. The switches are mounted in the hydraulic cylinders of the ESV bumpers, which provide the primary impact protection in the front of the car.

Investigation has determined that two wires connecting the pressure switches and the air cushion system electrical control box had been reversed in original assembly by the manufacturer.

The Secretary added that care was taken after the crash test to maintain the system completely intact until the electrical problem could be positively identified. After the identification was made,

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the system was checked completely and a demonstration test of the air cushion deployment was conducted on April 20. All air cushions deployed properly, verifying the wiring error as the cause of the failure during the crash.

Secretary Volpe expressed his gratification that the cause of the problem was identified so quickly. "As I said at the time of the crash test, which I was pleased to witness, these are experimental vehicles and experimental systems, and in any test situation you have got to expect that something will not go as planned. With prototype research projects, things can and do go wrong, even with the most stringent precautions. In the case of the ESV crash test, I am encouraged to learn that the problem was one of human error, not with any failure of the system itself."

The Secretary emphasized that the air cushion system in the ESV was one designed for 50 mph, high-speed bag deployment; and was not representative of the sensing techniques employed in the 30 mph systems now in production development for 1975 vehicles.

"We often learn as much from failures as from successes," said Mr. Volpe. "And we are already learning a wealth of new information about vehicle safety from the two ESV crash tests conducted to date .... the first with the AMF, Inc. vehicle on March 31, and this latest one on April 18.

"We must not permit this one human error in reversing two wires to distract us from recognizing the very real accomplishments that have been demonstrated in vehicle structure performance. I find it little short of miraculous that these vehicles have been able to withstand a 50 mph crash with such minimal apparent damage. I am proud of this program and of the contributions to vehicle safety it is making."

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 29, 1972

NHTSA--- 44-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

An estimated 300 employees of the Department of Transportation plan to improve their driving techniques next week, particularly in emergency situations, when they attend a Skid Control and Decision Driving School conducted by Liberty Mutual Insurance Company.

Classes are scheduled Monday through Friday, May 1-5 at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C., with a special luncheon for safety officials initiating the week-long program on Monday.

Arrangements for safety demonstrations and the driving school were generated by the cooperative efforts of General Benjamin O. Davis, the Department of Transportation's Assistant Secretary for Safety and Consumer Affairs, and J. J. McCormick, an assistant vice president of Liberty Mutual.

"I think everyone who drives should have more knowledge and experience in the handling of emergency situations," General Davis said. "There are a great many people who are reasonably good drivers, until they encounter their first emergency -- which many times is also their last. Considering that skids are believed to be a major factor in one out of four serious accidents, it's easy to see why professional skid-control training is important to the development of safer driving habits."

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On Monday, May 1, more than 100 Federal, State and local officials responsible for highway safety programs, and automotive industry representatives will watch a demonstration of safety devices including vehicles equipped with non-skid brake systems, and devices designed to prevent tractor-trailers from jackknifing. They will see a demonstration in evasive action and emergency driving techniques, view safety films and sit in on lectures.

Beginning Tuesday, participants in three-hour workshops will receive classroom training before testing their skills under actual driving conditions on a wet skid pan.

Liberty Mutual insurance companies have been conducting their Skid Control and Decision Driving Schools around the country since 1964. The courses are designed to help policyholders and other interested motorists keep abreast of the latest techniques in driving.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY A.M.
May 3, 1972

NHTSA -- 43-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Domestic and foreign automobile manufacturers conducted a total of 235 safety defect recall campaigns in 1971, involving more than 9.4 million vehicles, the Department of Transportation announced today.

Figures compiled by the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration show that domestic manufacturers conducted 182 safety defect campaigns involving almost 8.8 million vehicles. Defect campaigns by foreign manufacturers totalled 53 and affected more than 600,000 vehicles.

In 1970, domestic manufacturers issued 100 defect campaigns involving almost 740,000 vehicles, while foreign manufacturers conducted 54 campaigns involving more than 500,000 vehicles for a total of 1,240,000.

The National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 requires that manufacturers of motor vehicles notify owners of any safety related defect discovered in any motor vehicle or item of motor vehicle equipment. Vehicles recalled by both domestic and foreign manufacturers since the law became effective in September 1966 total almost 25 million through the end of 1971.

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The sharp increase in the number of recalled vehicles during 1971 stems mainly from a General Motors recall campaign involving some 6,682,000 Chevrolet models produced from 1965 through 1969, which were called back to correct possible front engine-mount defects. This represents the largest individual defect campaign since the law became effective in 1966.

In 1971, 26 of the total of 235 safety defect campaigns initiated were influenced by NHTSA investigations. The 26 campaigns accounted for 7.7 million of the total 9.4 million vehicles involved in the 235 campaigns.

The report also listed 19 recall campaigns conducted by equipment manufacturers, most of them tire companies. Almost 175,000 tires were involved.

Agency officials emphasized that not all of the vehicles and equipment recalled were faulty, but the figures represent the extent of production runs requiring inspection for possible presence of the safety defects.

The entire report, entitled "Motor Vehicle Safety Defect Recall Campaigns" may be purchased for 60¢ from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. It contains detailed information on each recall campaign, the models involved, the number of vehicles or equipment involved, a short description of the defect, and the manufacturer's corrective action.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY P.M.
May 5, 1972

NHTSA -- 37-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe today announced a new Highway Safety Program Standard designed to protect almost 20 million children who are bussed to school daily.

Standard No. 17, "Pupil Transportation Safety," was developed by the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in cooperation with the States and their political subdivisions.

Its major purpose is to reduce, to the greatest extent possible, the danger of death or injury to children while they are being transported to and from school.

In announcing the issuance of the standard, Secretary Volpe said:

"We intend to support President Nixon's commitment to highway safety improvement and we believe this standard will help us reach that objective. We also believe that compliance with this standard could have helped avert school bus disasters that occurred last year at Gunnison, Colorado, and only recently at Nyack, New York.

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"Statistics indicate that pupil transportation by bus is considerably safer than passenger car transportation. Still, we cannot overlook the fact that there are school buses in service that are ill-equipped and poorly designed. Some are driven by incompetent and untrained drivers. In some instances, the buses are overcrowded and unsupervised. The death of even one child in a school bus accident is one too many. The number of fatalities and injuries must be reduced."

The standard is intended to improve State programs for transporting pupils safely in urban and rural areas by setting requirements for proper and safe equipment; maintenance of equipment; and selection, training, and supervision of drivers and maintenance personnel.

The new standard, which the States must implement as quickly as possible, also is designed to achieve uniformity in the appearance of school buses by requiring special identification in addition to a required sign reading "SCHOOL BUS." This special identification includes requirements for the words "School Bus" to be printed in letters not less than 8 inches high; for the buses to be painted glossy yellow; and for flashing red warning signals.

The standard requires other improvements that will affect the Nation's estimated 256,000 school buses and 275,000 drivers, including:

- o A single State agency having primary responsiblity for administering pupil transportation, with at least one full time professional.

- o Instruction in safe riding practices, and participation in emergency evacuation drills, at least twice during each school year for each pupil who is transported in a school vehicle.

- o Coordination of bus routing and seating plans to eliminate standees when a school vehicle is in motion.

- o Use of lap belts by drivers of school vehicles so equipped whenever the vehicle is in motion.

- o Inspection of all school vehicles at least semi-anually.

- o Improved selection and training of school bus drivers.
- o Record-keeping and reporting.
- o Daily pre-trip inspections by drivers of their vehicles.
- o Prompt reporting of any defects or deficiencies that may affect the safety of the vehicle's operation.

The State agency administering the pupil transportation program will also have to evaluate the program at least once a year and submit a summary of its evaluation to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The NHTSA also issued a separate notice requesting public comment on that portion of the standard dealing with identification requirements for transit buses operated by common carriers. The Safety Agency said it intends to review economic factors of transit involvement in pupil transportation, as well as alternative methods of identification of transit vehicles used exclusively to carry children to and from school.

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NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, MAY 5, 1972

NHTSA -- 45-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation today announced the award of a $581,625 contract to Giffels Associates, Inc., Detroit, Michigan, for the design, plans, and specifications for a Motor Vehicle Compliance Test Facility, including test equipment and instrumentation.

Upon completion of the design, the $9.6 million test facility will be constructed at East Liberty, Ohio. The site is 45 miles northwest of Columbus, and adjacent to the Ohio Highway Transportation Research Center, which is currently under construction by the State of Ohio.

Transportation Secretary John A. Volpe said today's contract award is an important step in the highway safety program. "The completion of this important test facility in Ohio," he said, "will assist significantly with the Department's response to President Nixon's directive for a continuing and effective program to reduce highway fatalities."

The Compliance Test Facility, to be operated by the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, is scheduled to be operational in mid-1974, with an anticipated employment level of approximately 250 people.

Cornell Aeronautical Laboratories, Buffalo, New York, will be a consultant to Giffels Associates in developing designs and specifications for the test equipment and instrumentation.

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The facility will provide the NHTSA with the capability of testing motor vehicles, tires, and other motor vehicle equipment. Testing is designed to verify manufacturers' compliance with the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and Regulations; to assist in the investigation of consumer reports and other indications of potential safety defects; to evaluate the technical adequacy of corrective actions specified by the manufacturers in their safety defect recall campaigns; and to evaluate test procedures and requirements proposed for new Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards.

The facility will consist of these functional elements:

- Testing laboratory including areas for inspecting motor vehicles and equipment; preparing and instrumenting motor vehicles for testing; and routine and specialized testing of vehicles and equipment including environmental, photometric, static and dynamic load testing, materials testing, and tire testing.

- Crash test facility and outdoor test roadways.

- Technical support facilities and administrative areas.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, May 11, 1972

NHTSA -- 46-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation has issued a new Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard designed to give bus passengers more protection during a crash and to permit easy access to emergency exits when needed.

Written by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the standard sets down minimum requirements for the retention of bus windows, and establishes operating forces, opening dimensions, and markings for emergency exits.

The new regulation requires the retention of bus windows, including those in school buses, under specified test loading conditions. Windows with a minimum surface dimension of less than eight inches are exempt from this requirement.

Emergency exits must be installed on buses with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of more than 10,000 pounds. These exits must be equipped with release mechanisms that permit manual release by passengers. Each exit must have a label marked "Emergency Exit,"

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including precise operating instructions. Bus seats adjacent to an emergency exit that are not located beside a release mechanism must be provided with a label that indicates the location of the nearest mechanism.

Although school buses are not required to have emergency exits by this standard, any push-out windows or other emergency exits installed on school buses must meet the functional requirements of the standard.

When bus configurations preclude provisions for the required rear exits, the installation of an alternative roof exit is permitted, provided this exit meets the requirements for push-out window release, extension, and identification.

The new standard will be effective September 1, 1973.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, May 12, 1972

NHTSA -- 47-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

A new National Highway Safety Program Standard that calls for the States to develop uniform, comprehensive systems for collecting traffic accident data was announced today by the Department of Transportation.

Developed by the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Standard No. 18, "Accident Investigation and Reporting," requires the States to establish a program for gathering information on motor vehicle traffic accidents and related deaths, injuries, and property damage. Information on accidents -- the who, what, when, where, why, and how -- is also required to be entered into a traffic records system for use by the State in planning, evaluating and furthering highway safety program goals.

"When fully implemented," said NHTSA Administrator Douglas Toms, "this standard will aid us significantly in supporting President Nixon's commitment to highway safety improvement. The standard will vastly improve the quality of accident data now being collected and will help us expand our knowledge of the causes of traffic accidents."

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Toms said the usefulness of existing accident data is substantially diminished by the lack of uniform reporting requirements. In many States, accident information is not available because it is not collected.

The Standard, developed in cooperation with the States and their political subdivisions, includes requirements for:

- A State agency responsible for storing and processing accident information, and providing information needed by user agencies.

- Adequate numbers of personnel, properly trained and qualified, to conduct accident investigations and process the resulting information.

- The establishment of procedures by each State requiring the reporting of accidents to the responsible State agency within a reasonable time after occurrence.

- The drivers or owners of vehicles involved in accidents, resulting only in property damage, to submit a written report to the responsible State agency.

- The drivers or owners of motor vehicles involved in accidents that result in fatal or nonfatal personal injury to immediately notify the police.

- The establishment of accident investigation teams for the purpose of determining probable causes of accidents, injuries and deaths.

The State must evaluate its accident investigation and reporting program at least annually and provide a copy of its evaluation report to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY A.M.
May 19, 1972

NHTSA -- 48-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Twelve models of experimental safety vehicles (ESV's), some never shown before publicly, will be on view at a special exhibit being mounted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) under a dome located in the theme area at the Dulles Airport site of TRANSPO '72.

Details of this exhibit were announced by Douglas W. Toms, NHTSA Administrator, who also described other traffic safety highlights of TRANSPO week, May 27 through June 4:

-- An International Vehicle and Highway Safety Conference at the Sheraton-Park Hotel in Washington, D.C. from May 30 through June 1, bringing together safety leaders from industry, the scientific community and government here and abroad.

-- Two 1972 model production cars on display at TRANSPO specially equipped with a unique periscope mirror system to eliminate blind spots now found with many current car rear vision systems.

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-- The Third International Conference on Experimental Safety Vehicles at the Washington Hilton Hotel in Washington, May 30-June 2 to continue the exchange of technical information on ESV developmental work being carried on in seven nations, including the United States.

The NHTSA dome exhibit floor area will feature individual displays assembled by companies and countries involved in ESV work. Representing the Federal Republic of Germany will be the ESV's of Mercedes-Benz and Volkswagen. The United Kingdom will show components for ESVs being developed by the British auto industry and installed in an MG and Triumph. Italy will be represented by the Fiat ESV, and Sweden by the Volvo Experimental Safety Car. From Japan will come the Toyota and Datsun ESV displays. The U. S. will display the AMF, Fairchild-Hiller, Ford and General Motors ESV's. The Japanese, British, Swedish, German, and Italian vehicles are being shown in the U. S. for the first time.

The exhibit area also will include two vehicles built by college students for the Urban Vehicle Design Competition coordinated by a student committee at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The student-run competition seeks to produce an automobile suited to the urban environment and is an outgrowth of the recent MIT/Cal Tech Clean Air Car Race. The contributions are to be judged in 14 areas including emission control, safety, noise and damageability in low speed crashes.

Also housed in the dome area, which is 120 feet in diameter and 49 feet high, will be a new NHTSA exhibit aimed at showing visitors to TRANSPO how they can help from becoming a crash statistic. It features information on drunk driving countermeasures, vehicle safety standards, and driver performance being encouraged by the 50 States under the Highway Safety Act of 1966. This exhibit has been designed by Toshihiko Sakow Associates of Teaneck, New Jersey, who also are coordinating the other displays in the dome.

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Members of the press who are interested in getting an advance look at the exhibits and discussing the projects on display with company and NHTSA officials can attend a preview day at TRANSPO, May 26.

The International Vehicle and Highway Safety Conference, co-sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration, NHTSA, and the National Transportation Safety Board, will include presentations and panel discussions involving industry, scientific and government leaders from around the world on such topics as Management of Highway Safety Programs, Safety Research and Development, the NATO Road Safety Pilot Study, and Safety Priorities of the Future.

Details on the conferences can be obtained by requesting programs or other information from the Office of Consumer and Public Affairs, NHTSA, Room 5232, telephone 426-0686. Those registering in advance with the conference administrator, the Society of Automotive Engineers in New York City, will receive a ten dollar discount off the regular fee.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 19, 1972

NHTSA -- 49-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation is seeking to tighten up defect notification letters sent by motor vehicle and tire manufacturers to consumers in order to facilitate prompt repair of any safety-related defects.

In May of 1971, Douglas Toms, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, wrote to 78 motor vehicle and equipment manufacturers suggesting basic guidelines for manufacturers to follow in their safety defect notification to consumers. Today's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking is a result of an NHTSA study which showed that many manufacturers are not following the guidelines.

The proposed rulemaking reminds manufacturers of the provisions of Section 113(c) of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act, which requires them to notify consumers that a safety defect may exist. This notification must include a clear description of the defect, an evaluation of the risk to traffic safety reasonably related to the defect, and a statement of the measures to be taken to repair the defect.

The letters, which are required by law to be sent by certified mail, are to open with a statement that the notification is being sent pursuant to the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act. They would further state that the manufacturer, or the Administrator of the NHTSA, whichever is appropriate, has determined that a defect exists.

The proposed regulation also spells out other specific information which must be included in the notification letters, including an evaluation of whether or not the defect poses the threat of a crash.

The manufacturer would also be required to provide more detailed information in those cases in which he refuses to pay for the repair or to take responsibility for the repair through his dealers.

Interested parties are invited to submit comments on the proposed rule. Comments should be submitted to: Docket Section, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5221, Department of Transportation, Washington, D.C. 20590.

The proposed effective date for the new regulation is October 15, 1972.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY P.M.
May 24, 1972

NHTSA --50-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation announced today that Five Filer Brothers, of Grove City, Pennsylvania, a manufacturer of automobile child seating systems, has recalled some 4,000 systems that failed to comply with requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 213. This standard applies to child car seating systems generally used by children between the ages of six months and three years.

Tests conducted by independent laboratories for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration showed that the webbing installed in these child seats does not meet the webbing breaking strength requirement of Standard No. 213. In case of an accident, the webbing could fail and allow the child to come in contact with the interior structure of the automobile, thus causing possible serious injury.

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All car seats manufactured by the firm between April 1, 1971 and February 1, 1972 are affected by this recall. Consumers who have bought the faulty system are urged to contact the manufacturer at once so that they may be supplied with new webbing.

NHTSA officials pointed out that this was the fifth case, out of a total of 15 child seating manufacturers, where the seats did not meet specific requirements of the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard. Recalls were initiated for the seating systems of the other four manufacturers at an earlier date.

Safety Agency officials also called attention to their brochure on child restraint systems which informs parents of the urgent need for safe child restraint systems, and guides them in making an intelligent choice in what to buy or not to buy. The booklet, entitled, What to Buy in Child Restraint Systems" is available from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, for 20 cents.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY P.M.
May 24, 1972

NHTSA -- 52-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation announced today that the Mansfield Tire and Rubber Company is recalling approximately 52,000 polyester fiberglass belted tires, sizes F78-15, H78-14, and J78-15.

The recall is a result of tests conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and by the manufacturer, which showed non-compliance with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard #109, dealing with new pneumatic tires for passenger cars. Out of 108 tires tested, 10 failed to meet either the high speed or the endurance requirements of the standard.

The recalled tires were manufactured under the following brand names: Aldens Astro; Buccaneer Premium; Drexel Retco; Harvard Nobel Custom Belted; Inland Poly Plus; Lancer Excalibur; Majestic SR-175; Mansfield SST-78 Bias Belted; M-B Lancer Polybelted; Merit Multiplyer; Pennsylvania Turnpike Top Cat; Pharis Classic; Vista New Horizon.

The serial numbers of the recalled tires have the following prefixes: F Size: AE, AH, AJ, AK, AL, AP, AS, AT; H Size: BA thru BK, BN, BP, BS thru BY and B3; J Size: RNT, ONT, DNT, TNC, SNC, UNC, CNC, AA thru AY, BA thru BY, and A0 thru A8.

The Traffic Safety Administration said that continued use of the tires in question could be hazardous under certain circumstances. The agency also said that it is continuing its investigation into the case with a view toward possible civil penalties.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY P.M.
May 24, 1972

NHTSA -- 53-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation announced today that the Uniroyal Tire Company has agreed to recall approximately 48,000 passenger car tires manufactured during 1969 and the first half of 1970.

The tires being recalled have the brand name Co-op Hi-Level SPD and have a nylon cord glass belted construction. The sizes involved were L 78-15, 9.00-15, J78-15 and J78-14. The serial numbers of the tires contain the following letters: GA, YA, GN, YN, PA, PN, SA, SN, UA, UN, MA, MN, CA, HA, OA, WA, ZA, or XA. The Department urges vehicle owners to check the tires on their cars and, if they are covered by the defect notification, have them replaced.

Tests conducted by independent laboratories for the National Highway Safety Administration showed that 11 out of 26 of these tires failed to pass the high speed requirement of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 109.

Test failures indicated that continued use of the tires could cause tread or ply separation under certain conditions. The Traffic Safety Agency is continuing its investigation in the case with a view towards possibly seeking civil penalities against Uniroyal for manufacturing and selling tires which failed to conform to the Standard.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 20, 1972

NHTSA --54-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation today issued a proposed new Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard which would require manufacturers of safety helmets used by motorcyclists and others to meet specific safety performance levels.

Douglas Toms, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, said: "There has been a dramatic increase in the last five years in both motorcycle registrations and motorcyclist fatalities. Between 1965 and 1970, there was an 82% increase in motorcycle registrations, and a 54% increase in motorcycle fatalities. From 70 to 90 percent of these fatalities resulted from head injuries. Maximum protection of the motorcyclist is extremely important in order to decrease potential deaths and serious injuries resulting from head injuries. This proposed standard should contribute substantially to our program for increasing highway safety which President Nixon has given top priority."

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The proposed standard would establish helmet test requirements for impact attenuation, penetration and retention. It would also establish criteria for peripheral vision, permissible projections, and proper labeling. One important aspect is to insure that helmet purchasers are made aware of the types of cleaning agents, paints or other commonly used chemicals that may safely be applied to the helmet. Some chemicals seriously degrade helmet materials and their safety levels.

Further importance of this proposed standard is pointed out by the fact that 44 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have adopted legislation that makes it mandatory for motorcycle operators and passengers to wear protective headgear. This has been accomplished largely because of a previously issued motorcycle safety standard which urged individual States to enact such legislation. NHTSA officials have discovered that many helmets now being used do not meet the performance requirements of industry specifications, or otherwise exhibit unacceptable characteristics. Thus, there appears to be an urgent need for a Federal Safety Standard in this area.

Industry and other interested parties are invited to submit comments on the proposed regulation. Comments should be submitted to: Docket Section, NHTSA, Room 5221, 400 Seventh Street, Washington, D.C. 20590. Comments should reach the agency no later than August, 1972.

The proposed effective date for the new standard is March 1, 1973, with additional requirements effective September 1, 1974.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY A.M.
May 26, 1972

NHTSA -- 55-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The 12 new members appointed by President Nixon to the National Highway Safety Advisory Committee of the Department of Transportation will attend their first meeting June 8-9 in Washington, D.C.

The Committee, created by the Highway Safety Act of 1966, is composed of 35 members representing various State and local government, public and private interests, and groups actively engaged in highway safety. The role of the group is to advise and consult with the Secretary of Transportation on Federal Standards for State and community highway safety programs.

The 12 new members are:

Mr. John Almeida, Jr., Chairman of the Board and President, Almeida Bus Lines, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Mr. Vincent P. Brevetti, Attorney at Law, Forest Hills, New York.

Mr. Mark Donohue, Penske Racing Enterprises, Newtown Square, Pennsylvania.

Mrs. Mary Emrick, Public Relations Department, Standard Oil of California, and member, National Association of Women Highway Safety Leaders, San Francisco, California.

Mrs. Mildred Gnau, President, National Association of Women Highway Safety Leaders, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

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Mr. Clarence Hoffman, Raymond Motor Transportation, and 1971 Truck Driver of the Year, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Mr. Cooper T. Holt, Executive Director, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Washington, D.C.

Honorable Henry F. McQuade, Chief Justice, Idaho Supreme Court, Boise, Idaho.

Mr. J. W. Stevens, Chairman, Broward County Board of Commissioners, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Mr. Paul J. Sullivan, Staff Assistant to Senator Norris Cotton and member, Youth Order United Toward Highway Safety.

Mr. Thomas M. Thompson, Chairman of the Board, General American Transportation Corporation, Chicago, Illinois.

Mrs. Leota M. Westfall, Highway Traffic Safety Center, Michigan State University, and member, National Association of Women Highway Safety Leaders, East Lansing, Michigan.

Members currently serving on the Advisory Committee include: Dr. James E. Aaron, Carbondale, Illinois; Mr. Michael Baker, Jr., Rochester, Pennsylvania; Mr. Forrest C. Braden, Yuma, Arizona; Mr. J. B. Creal, Washington, D.C; Honorable Sherman G. Finesilver, Denver, Colorado; Dr. Walter W. Gray, Terre Haute, Indiana; Honorable Joel K. Gustafson, Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Mr. Daumants Hazners, Trenton, New Jersey; Honorable Elmer Huntley, Thornton, Washington; Mr. Murray W. Miller, Dallas, Texas; Mr. Thomas C. Morrill, Bloomington, Illinois; Honorable Ruth Peck, Phoenix, Arizona; Mr. Manuel Quevedo, San Bernardino, California; Mr. Wayne E. Rapp, Racine, Wisconsin; Honorable Gordon M. Scherer, Cincinnati, Ohio; Mr. Joe R. Seacrest, Lincoln, Nebraska; Mr. Thomas Skutt, Omaha, Nebraska; Mr. Cordell Smith, Denver, Colorado; Commissioner Harold Sullivan, Sacramento, California; Mr. John K. Tabor, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Mr. Joseph Wilcox, Greenwich, Connecticut; and Dr. Ruth Winkler, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

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NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY
June 12, 1972

NHTSA-- 57-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Chairman of the National Motor Vehicle Safety Advisory Council, Judson Branch, today announced that the Council will sponsor a technical conference on motor vehicle diagnostics in San Francisco, July 17-19.

The Advisory Council, chartered by the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, advises Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe on motor vehicle standards issued by the Department.

The conference will examine the feasibility and practicality of diagnostics standardization. The theme follows a resolution sent by the Council to Secretary Volpe last May, urging Government and industry to develop standardization for plug-in diagnostic equipment to permit 100% interchangeability of equipment under all circumstances.

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The site for the conference will be the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. It will be the first in a series of annual Council-sponsored events under the general title of "International Congress on Automotive Safety." "These conferences," said Mr. Branch, "will provide the cutting edge for discussions on new and emerging problems of vehicle safety."

Diagnostic equipment automatically checks the safety and efficiency of car parts without depending on subjective human opinion. Diagnostic devices on board cars may someday show the status of brakes or new equipment like air cushions and emission controls, just as panel lights on today's cars tell the driver about oil pressure and engine temperature. Diagnostics of the future may also include test equipment off the car, thus avoiding the chance of human error by a garage mechanic or state inspector.

"Automated diagnostic equipment," said Branch, "may become standard equipment someday, giving needed maintenance information to drivers, helping mechanics, and providing instantaneous evaluation for state inspection. So it is important that we get a jump on the field by holding this conference. If we do our homework now, we will avoid needless proliferation of equipment and regulations later on."

Branch is also chairman of the Executive Committee, Allstate Insurance Company, Northbrook, Illinois. Conference Chairman will be Trevor Jones, Director, Electronic Control Systems, General Motors Engineering Staff. Jones, who is also Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Council, said that 20 authors from 6 nations will present current information on the subject. Authors will represent car manufacturers, aerospace companies, the electronics industry, and automotive test equipment suppliers.

The conference will be divided into four discussion areas: Systems Concepts; Candidate Automotive Systems for Diagnosis; Economics of Diagnostic Techniques; and Standardization of Automotive Diagnostic Systems.

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A featured speaker will be Douglas W. Toms, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in the Department of Transportation. Toms said, "Diagnostics is almost a brand new subject. We need to know much more about it if the public is really to get a better shake in inspection and auto repairs that people are clamoring for. I am delighted that the Council is leading the way as a body that is broadly representative of the public and industry."

For further information on the conference program or attendance, call Joe Rice, General Motors, Area Code 313, 575-1320 or Frances Clark, NHTSA, Area Code 202, 426-2872.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 12, 1972

NHTSA -- 59-72
Tel. 202-426-0670

The Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued a Consumer Protection Bulletin today to warn that windshield wiper failures can occur without warning on certain Volkswagen vehicles, produced over a twenty-two year period.

The Bulletin lists all sedans, trucks, convertibles, and station wagon models - including the Karmann-Ghia models - produced by Volkswagen from 1947 through 1969 and says that the windshield wipers on these vehicles are subject to failure when the set-screws which hold wiper arms to the wiper shafts, become loosened during normal operation.

Douglas W. Toms, NHTSA Administrator, said his agency had received over seventy complaints from VW owners whose experience indicated repeated wiper failures, often at freeway speeds and during weather conditions which made the failures extremely hazardous. Toms noted that on the strength of the NHTSA's investigations to date, the VW wiper mechanism appears to fail due to design weakness which did not take into account loads placed on the wiper arm when lifted repeatedly by service station attendants.

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The Federal Bulletin advises VW owners to be alert to the possibility of windshield wiper failures by checking these set-screws frequently and by asking competent service personnel to inspect the screws for the proper tightness. Noting that Volkswagen owner's manuals do not list the proper tightness, or torque, for windshield wiper set-screws, the Bulletin said this setting should be at least 3 foot-pounds for all models except deluxe sedans, Karmann-Ghias and convertibles. For this group the proper torque is at least 2.5 foot-pounds.

Owners of all Volkswagen vehicles who have experienced windshield wiper failures are urged, according to the Bulletin's request, to provide the NHTSA with a description of the failure including the model, model-year, and serial number of the vehicle. The information is vital to the continuing investigation of these failures and to public safety, and should be sent to:

Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 7th Street, S.W., Room 5330
Washington, D.C. 20590

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SPECIAL
CONSUMER PROTECTION BULLETIN

SUBJECT:

Alerting United States motorists to specific use-risks in connection with the highway operation of certain Volkswagen vehicles which may be subjected to windshield wiper failure, and inviting reports from motorists who experienced such failures.

Volkswagen vehicles potentially involved, according to current findings, are:

Model/Year	Make	Model
1947 through 1969	Volkswagen	Sedans (all) Trucks (all) Convertibles (all) Karmann-Ghia Station Wagon

Windshield wipers fail to function due to the wiper arm securing screw loosening up on the wiper shaft, under normal operation. The results are partial or total loss of driver visibility.

PRIOR ACTION BACKGROUND:

Reports of windshield wiper failure, many of which have involved loss of forward visibility while driving in rain at freeway speeds, have been received from more than 70 vehicle owners.

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CURRENT CONCLUSIONS:

This Bulletin warns owners of the Volkswagen vehicles listed of the hazard which can result from windshield wiper failure. The failures noted occur when the windshield wiper arm securing screw loosens, allowing the windshield wiper shaft to operate without movement of the arm and blade. Such failures can cause loss of forward visibility through the windshield while driving in rain or snow conditions. This failure can endanger the safety of persons riding in the vehicle, the safety of persons riding in adjacent vehicles, and the safety of pedestrians, when the failure occurs with the vehicle in motion.

CONSUMER ACTION ADVISED:

Owners of the Volkswagen vehicles listed should be alert to the possibility of windshield wiper failure. Inspection by competent service personnel will determine the condition of the securing screw and wiper arm shaft. Maintenance of a properly tightened securing screw is necessary to insure safe, dependable service. This tightness (torque) should be at least 3 foot pounds for all models except deluxe sedans, Karmann-Ghias and convertibles. For these the torque should be at least 2.5 foot pounds.

CONSUMER REQUEST:

Owners of all Volkswagen vehicles which have experienced windshield wiper failures, are urged to provide the Department of Transportation with a description of the failure and the model, model year and serial number of the vehicle involved. This information is vital to the ongoing investigation of this matter and to the public safety. Such reports should be sent to: Department of Transportation, Headquarters Building, Room 5330, Washington, D.C. 20590.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 14, 1972

NHSTA -- 61-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe presided today at swearing-in ceremonies for new members of a youth advisory committee involved in highway safety.

The committee, known as YOUTHS, an acronym for Youth Order United Toward Highway Safety, was formed in November 1970 to advise the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) on ways to generate support from young people in the battle against highway deaths and injuries.

Last October, YOUTHS sponsored and conducted a national conference -- "Survival '71" -- involving a cross-section of young delegates between the ages of 15 and 24 from all 50 States The delegates who attended that conference are now members of the YOUTHS Order, a confederation of youth groups and concerned young people with a strong interest in highway safety. The Order is represented at the national level by the 15-member YOUTHS Highway Safety Advisory Committee.

"These young people," Secretary Volpe said, "are bringing us new ideas and represent an effective and creative force in combating the slaughter on our highways. With their help, we hope to meet President Nixon's commitment for improved highway safety programs."

In addition to meeting with Secretary Volpe, the new members of YOUTHS will discuss safety issues and problems with officials of the Department of Transportation and the Traffic Safety Administration.

Those sworn in today include:

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Mrs. Marjorie O'Connell Amey, 23; Webster, Massachusetts; Georgetown Law School; graduate of Catholic University; former Congressional intern.

Mr. Angus Anson, 18; Wessington, South Dakota; South Dakota State University; active 4-H Member holding various offices.

* Miss Denise Barbieri, 19; New Castle, Delaware; University of Delaware; Catholic Youth Organization--has held state and national offices.

Mr. Tom R. Camp, 17; Kearney, Nebraska; University of Nebraska at Lincoln; National Elks Youth Leadership First Place Award, Second Place Most Valuable Student Award; Past President, Nebraska Youth Safety Council.

Mr. Charles Bradley Cates, 22; Albuquerque, New Mexico; University of Arkansas Law School; New Mexico State University graduate; former Congressional Intern; New Mexico Governor's Student Advisory Committee.

Mr. Frank P. DiBerardino III, 21, Rome, New York; State University of New York at Albany; former Senate Intern and delegate to White House Conference on Youth.

Miss Jane T. Foster, 18; Carmichael, California; University of California at Santa Barbara; Vice President of Youth Affairs, Sacramento Safety Council.

Miss Geri G. Gonzales, 17; Las Vegas, Nevada; Arizona State University; former American Field Service Student; Nevada Safety Council; Governor's Youth Advisory Council.

Miss Christine Handel, 20; Ballston Spa, New York; Vassar; active in state and national youth conferences.

* Miss Susan Huskisson, 22; Knoxville, Tennessee; University of Tennessee; runner-up Miss Teen-Age America, 1967; active in youth safety programs; former National Safety Spokeswoman.

Mr. Martin D. Kelly, 23; Miami, Florida; graduate of University of Miami; previous experience in supervising underprivileged youth programs.

* Miss Anne Meiselman, 22; Alexandria, Virginia; George Mason College, University of Virginia; former member of "Up With People" Cast; Senate receptionist; pre-med student.

Miss Julia A. Molander, 20; Homewood, Illinois; Northwestern; formerly employed by Northwestern Traffic Institute; guest safety speaker.

Mr. Steven F. Wakefield, 19; Harvey, Illinois; University of Illinois; active in university musical groups; volunteer in youth programs.

* Members reappointed to a second term on the YOUTHS Advisory Committee.

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FOR RELEASE FRIDAY P.M.
June 16, 1972

NHTSA -- 56-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Federally-funded demonstration projects to evaluate the impact of stepped-up traffic enforcement at high accident frequency locations were announced today by Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe.

Three-year contracts totaling more than $1.8 million have been awarded to the States of North Dakota and West Virginia, for implementation at select locations, and the city of Tacoma Washington. The North Dakota Highway Patrol, the West Virginia State Police, and the Tacoma Police Department will carry out the projects as part of a program called Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP).

In announcing the contracts, Secretary Volpe said:

"STEP programs are designed to develop traffic enforcement countermeasures to reduce fatal, personal injury, and property damage accidents in which traffic violations are contributing factors. We believe these programs will help us meet President Nixon's directive for a continuing and effective effort to reduce highway fatalities."

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Last July, the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration originated STEP by awarding contracts totaling $1.5 million to the cities of Chattanooga, Tennessee; El Paso, Texas; and Sacramento, California.

STEP is one of three NHTSA priority programs aimed at the negligent driver. The others are alcohol countermeasures and driver control.

The North Dakota contract is for $692,752; West Virginia will receive $484,165, and Tacoma $695,000 over the three-year period.

NHTSA wants STEP demonstration projects to become a model for other cities and States in determining the need for manpower, equipment, and enforcement countermeasures necessary to reduce accidents and resulting deaths and injuries.

The projects are expected to provide police and court administrators, as well as city officials, with valid data needed to plan an effective selective traffic enforcement program.

STEP projects in Chattanooga, El Paso, and Sacramento already have generated mini-STEP programs in several States. Another STEP demonstration project is expected to be announced soon.

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NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 20, 1972

NHTSA -- 62-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation announced today that the B. F. Goodrich Company has agreed to pay $17,500 in compromise of a civil penalty claim that it produced and sold tires which did not comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 109, "New Pneumatic Tires."

The tires involved were Goodrich "Space Saver Spare" tires, size 7.35-14, manufactured between January 1 and December 31, 1968. The Space Saver Spare is especially designed to be folded into the trunk compartment in a deflated condition, in order to conserve trunk space. The tires were standard equipment on 76,652 1968 and 1969 Pontiac Firebird vehicles and 12,902 American Motors AMX models of the same years.

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National Highway Traffic Safety Administration officials said that six out of 25 Space Saver Spare tires tested by the B. F. Goodrich Company failed to meet the strength requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 109, and two out of two tires tested by the NHTSA failed the same strength requirements.

Goodrich said that it would notify, by certified mail, all persons who purchased vehicles in which the Space Saver Spare, size 7.35-14 was standard equipment, and warn owners that the tire should be limited to emergency short term use. The notification letter will also include a warning label which should be attached to the tires, reminding owners of the limited purpose for which the tire should be used.

The Traffic Safety Administration has notified Goodrich that it is closing its files in this case.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE THURSDAY
June 22, 1972

NHTSA -- 64-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation today announced the award of a $211,880 research contract to Systems Technology, Inc., Hawthorne, California for an 18-month study of truck and bus handling characteristics.

Supporting the need for such research, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration pointed out that interstate truck operations in 1969 recorded 1,361 highway fatalities and 16,232 injuries, with total property damages exceeding $72.1 million. Intercity bus operations experienced 62 fatalities and 2,396 injuries, with property damages amounting to more than $2.2 million the same year.

Since the training, skill and experience of the majority of drivers of these commercial carriers is considered quite satisfactory, NHTSA stated, it is believed that many of the recorded accidents could have been avoided by improvement of the vehicles' handling characteristics, and an upgrading of maintenance and service factors. Research in this area, followed by new safety performance standards, can be expected to reduce this type of accident.

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Systems Technology will first employ computer simulation of the vehicles' predicted operational behaviors, then verify these findings with full scale tests, utilizing a tanker truck and an intercity bus. Both vehicles will be tested in empty and partial load configurations. Test maneuvers will include directional stability in straight line braking, road holding capability, lane changes, skids, and roll-over tendencies. Particular attention will be paid to the distribution of payloads, and shifting of containerized cargo, such as the sloshing of liquids during various maneuvers.

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FOR RELEASE FRIDAY A.M.
June 23, 1972

NHTSA -- 63-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Auto fatality statistics will be recorded on an unprecedented national scale under a new, computerized program being inaugurated by the Department of Transportation.

More accurate and comprehensive data than are now available will be obtained from a "Fatality Analysis File" administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). This research-oriented effort is designed to support and evaluate the effectiveness of existing highway safety programs, with a particular emphasis upon such high priority problem areas as the drinking driver. In addition, the file represents the first entirely new entry into NHTSA's planned Information and Data System requiring the participation of each State as a means of encouraging improvements in State highway safety operations.

Fifteen States and Puerto Rico already are completing initial preparations for participation in the analysis program, and it is

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expected the file will be fully implemented on a nationwide basis by mid-1973. The States now receiving Federal funds for this purpose include Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and Washington.

Ranging far beyond the usual accident report statistics, the program will provide an accurate and timely record of fatalities, along with detailed answers to such questions as the distribution of blood alcohol levels among the drivers killed; the number of fatally injured occupants who were wearing lap and/or shoulder harnesses; how many of the fatalities were ejected from the vehicle; the type and degree of crash injuries, and the type of vehicles involved, by make, model and year.

States will utilize a uniform and compatible reporting system, as recommended by NHTSA, for the initial gathering of fatality statistics. Trained statistical analysts, employed by the State, will build a detailed case record for each reported fatal accident, using the official police officer's report as a basic data source. To this will be added an examination of current State laws and statistics on driver licensing and history data; highway description and history data, and vehicle registration and title data. In addition, the analyst will correlate all of this information with data from classified death certificates.

The resultant case record will be coded on special forms for monthly transmittal to NHTSA headquarters. There the information will be entered into NHTSA's computer bank of accident statistics, then compared and correlated with all other agency accident files, including the National Accident Summary. A full report of the automated file will then be made available to the State.

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