DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY A.M.
July 12, 1972

NHTSA -- 66-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The National Motor Vehicle Advisory Council, U.S. Department of Transportation, announced the establishment of an annual award to an individual for outstanding contributions in the field of automotive safety. The award includes an Excalibur to be retained by the winner. The Excalibur designed by James Houston and created by Steuben Glass is a silver broadsword thrust into a solid rock of cut crystal and the hilt is bound with gold.

Judson B. Branch, Chairman of the National Motor Vehicle Advisory Council, explained that the Excalibur is taken from one of the great Arthurian legends. This legend concerns the proclamation of the young squire, Arthur, as sovereign of the Britons. By decree of the nobles, the new king would be whoever could draw from a miraculous stone, which had appeared before the church door, a sword engraved with the words: "I am hight Excalibore, unto a king fair trescore." The greatest knights tested their strength without success. The sword yielded only to Arthur's hand.

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Mr. Branch stated that the effective solution to automotive safety will be at the hands of individuals with great determination and leadership.

This major annual award in the field of automotive safety will be presented to the first winner at the First International Congress on Automotive Safety on July 17, 1972, at the Hotel St. Francis, San Francisco, California. This Congress is also sponsored by the Council.

The National Motor Vehicle Safety Advisory Council is a 22-member body established by Congress under The National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 for the purpose of advising the Secretary of Transportation (John Volpe) on matters of traffic safety.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 13, 1972

NHTSA--- 67-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation announced today that British Leyland Motors, Inc. has agreed to pay $12,000 in compromise of a civil penalty claim that it produced a number of Triumph GT6 passenger cars which did not comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 208, "Occupant Crash Protection."

Specifically, nineteen of the Triumph cars were sold or offered for sale without installation of Type 2 (shoulder belt) restraints. Officials of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration pointed out that one of the cars involved was a test vehicle, three were discovered by NHTSA in a Washington area dealer survey, seven were found by British Leyland in a survey of unsold vehicles, and eight were vehicles whose owners responded to a defect notification campaign

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It has been the policy of British Leyland to deliver vehicles to their sales zones without restraints required by Standard No. 208. The zones then contracted to have the restraints installed as part of their new vehicle make-ready service. In five zones these services were conducted by subcontractors while in the sixth they were the responsibility of the retail dealers.

As a result of the NHTSA investigation, British Leyland changed the method of seat belt installation and now installs the restraints in England, prior to shipping the cars to their dealers. The manufacturer also instituted a notification and recall campaign in the zones where non-conforming vehicles were discovered.

The Traffic Safety Administration is notifying British Leyland that it is closing its files in this case.

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NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE SATURDAY A.M.
July 22, 1972

NHTSA -- 65 -72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe today announced AMF, Incorporated as winner of the Experimental Safety Vehicle (ESV) prototype competition with Fairchild Industries.

As a result, the New York based company has been awarded a $2.15 million follow-on contract to perform a series of tradeoff studies, analyses, and development tests required to define the performance specifications for an improved family sedan-sized ESV. Administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the contract work will be conducted by AMF's Advanced Systems Laboratory in Santa Barbara, California, and is designed to set the stage for development of complete vehicles to demonstrate the feasibility of safety systems for future production cars.

In announcing the results of the six month testing at Dynamic Science in Phoenix, Arizona, Secretary Volpe lauded the accomplishments of both contractors as "a remarkable job of designing and building, in just 18 months, cars that integrate safety systems to meet the tough specifications established for this program. Their work," he said, "along with similar undertakings by the General Motors Corporation and the Ford Motor Company, has spurred the world-wide automobile industry to cooperatively explore the potential of advanced safety concepts in ESV's of all weight classes."

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The Secretary made particular note of the fine work provided by Fairchild Industries. "In a competition such as this, there can be only one winner," he said. "However, the Fairchild Industries team, under the capable direction of Mr. George Hildebrand must be congratulated for providing the Department with a car featuring many valuable safety concepts that will be included in our continuing ESV program."

########## 77499

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FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY
July 19, 1972

NHTSA -- 69-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation has awarded a $37,200 contract to Beta Industries, of Dayton, Ohio, to evaluate any passive restraint systems that might be adopted as an acceptable alternative to the air cushion system.

Terms of the nine-month contract, administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, call for Beta to survey all existing passive systems, except the air cushion, selecting the ones considered most safe for occupants during frontal crashes, acceptable to the public, and practical for mass production. Analytical findings on these systems will then be used to determine the system to be used for actual testing in a series of sled tests, at a later date.

Present Federal safety standards, administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, permit the use of ignition interlock systems as an interim protective measure before August, 1975 when all new cars must have a passive system requiring no action on the part of the occupants. Interlock systems prevent starting of the car unless the seat belts are first fastened.

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Meanwhile, NHTSA has been conducting extensive testing on several advanced American and foreign passive belt restraint systems at the Naval Development Center in Philadelphia. Sled tests up to 40 mph, utilizing test dummies, are being carried out with five American systems and one each from Japan, Sweden, West Germany, and England.

Superior in all respects to present day "state-of-the-art" belt systems, these units are fully passive, requiring no action on the part of the wearer. Initial test results on some of these systems are considered "excellent" and the most promising of these systems later will undergo testing with human volunteers.

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FOR RELEASE FRIDAY A.M.
July 21, 1972

NHTSA -- 70-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation announced today it has completed its investigation into the handling and stability characteristics of 1960 through 1963 model year General Motors Corvairs and finds that no potential safety-related defect exists.

Douglas Toms, Administrator of the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), said the investigation determined that the "handling and stability performance of these cars is at least as good as the performance of several contemporary domestic and foreign vehicles. The Corvair performance does not result in an abnormal potential for loss of control or rollover."

The Corvair investigation was started in September 1970 with the examination of a great number of General Motors documents and test data of the 1960 thru 1963 Corvair models. NHTSA then undertook a detailed analysis of the available General Motors data, and correlated this information with other technical information regarding Corvair performance.

In the spring of 1971, NHTSA contracted with the Texas Transportation Institute of Texas A&M Research Foundation for a series of exhaustive tests to compare the Corvair handling and stability

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characteristics with the same characteristics of contemporary domestic and foreign vehicles. Vehicles used were a 1962 Falcon, a 1962 Volkswagen, a 1963 Renault, a 1960 Valiant, and 1963 and 1967 Corvairs. Tests were conducted by NHTSA engineers and were concluded in July 1971.

One of the Texas tests simulated the maneuvers required in an emergency situation, bringing the vehicle to a stop on a curve with little or no deviations from its intended path. Other tests simulated regular and modified "J" turns, and steady turns on a rough road.

Upon completion of the Texas testing program, the Highway Safety Administration engaged a panel of three recognized independent professional engineers and charged them with the task of evaluating the NHTSA Corvair investigation and to make recommendations regarding its scope and quality. The panel also gave an independent recommendation to the Administrator concerning the handling and stability characteristics of the Corvair.

The panel concluded that the NHTSA investigation was "adequate in scope and depth, basically sound in design, and professional in its performance." It also concluded that 1960-63 Corvairs quantitatively meet or exceed the standards set by contemporary cars in stability tests, cornering tests and rollover tests. The panel concluded that the Corvair did not have a safety defect and is not more unstable or more likely to roll over than contemporary automobiles.

Based on the careful analysis of the General Motors data, the results of the Texas tests, and the recommendations of the advisory panel, the following conclusions are made:

The 1960 thru 1963 Corvairs perform at least as good as several contemporary domestic and foreign cars. The limited accident data available indicate that the rollover rate of the 1960 thru 1963 Corvairs is comparable to other light domestic cars. Data taken from many of the Texas tests indicate that the Corvair performance fell somewhere between that of the other five test model cars. No Corvairs rolled over in any of the comparative tests conducted by the Government.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | NEWS

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

FOR RELEASE SUNDAY
July 23, 1972

NHTSA -- 68-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

An effective highway safety program in Flint, Michigan, is paying off in the reduction of traffic deaths and injuries and economic dividends to the motorist.

The success story stems from a program called Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP). The basic technique used to combat fatalities, personal injury, and property damage accidents is simple -- increase traffic enforcement at high accident frequency locations in which traffic violations are contributing factors.

The Flint program started in late 1969 with Federal funding assistance from the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). In the four-year period that the Flint STEP will be operational, Federal funding will exceed $1.3 million with the Michigan community contributing matching funds.

The dramatic impact of the Flint program can be seen statistically. In 1969, the city counted 31 lives lost and 1,857 injured in traffic accidents. In 1970, with STEP fully operational, the traffic death toll declined to 13 and the number of injuries to 1,398. Total accidents were reduced by more than 2,000. In 1970, the

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traffic death rate per 100,000 population slipped to 6.7 from the whopping 14.2 recorded in 1969.

The direct dollar benefits reaped from this program are not to be overlooked. Only recently, a major automobile insurance group announced a rate reduction of 14 percent for its Flint customers. In announcing the reduced rates, effective May 1, 1972, the company said: "A major reason for the lowering of the Flint auto accident rate has been the effective law enforcement program conducted by the Traffic Bureau of the Flint Police Department."

In initiating the Flint STEP, 29 enforcement officers were added to the traffic force. The enforcement countermeasures involved the saturation of select locations by 20 one-man cars on stationary and moving patrol during peak periods. Ten cars utilize a time-distance speed measuring device and three are equipped with radar. Warning citations are issued for non-hazardous violations and regular citations are issued for hazardous moving violations.

NHTSA Administrator Douglas Toms said the Flint program "illustrates a payoff not only in lives saved and injuries averted, but also in dollars saved. It is programs such as STEP that will help us meet President Nixon's commitment to reducing the tragic loss of life on our highways."

STEP officials in Flint said the number of fatalities and accidents rose slightly in 1971, when compared to 1970 figures, but attributed the increase on a reduction in the special traffic force from 29 to 24 officers. They said data indicate that when enforcement was stepped-up and issuance of citations increased, the number of accidents declined.

In the 1970-71 period, 22 sites in Michigan where STEP programs are operational reported an overall reduction of 72 deaths compared to the 1969 base year.

Federally-funded demonstration projects to evaluate the full impact of STEP are now underway in five cities, Chattanooga, Tennessee; El Paso, Texas; Sacramento, California, Tacoma, Washington; and Fort Lauderdale, Florida; and portions of two States, North Dakota and West Virginia.

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FOR RELEASE FRIDAY P.M.
July 28, 1972

NHTSA -- 71-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Domestic and foreign automobile manufacturers have recalled more than 14 million cars during the past 12 months. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of the Department of Transportation, in announcing the figures for Fiscal Year 1972 (July 1, 1971 through June 30, 1972), pointed out that this is the largest number of recalls for any given 12 months since enactment of the National Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966.

NHTSA officials said that, during FY 1972, there were a total of 282 recall campaigns involving over 14 million vehicles. Of this total, 76 campaigns, involving almost 12 million vehicles, were influenced by investigations conducted by the Traffic Safety Administration.

The largest individual campaign involved the recall of 6,606,695 General Motors Chevrolet passenger cars and trucks, which had possible engine mount defects. Other large campaigns included the recall of over 4,000,000 1971 and 1972 Ford passenger cars for defective shoulder belt connectors, and more than 770,000 Chevrolet Corvairs with possible exhaust gasses leaking into the heating systems.

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The largest campaigns voluntarily initiated by manufacturers included 526,000 1971 and 1972 Chevrolet Vegas with possible defective rear axle shafts, and over 400,000 Ford Torinos and and Mercury-Montegos, which were found to have potential rear axle problems.

The National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 requires that motor vehicle manufacturers notify owners of any safety related defect discovered in any motor vehicle or item of motor vehicle equipment produced by them. Although not required by law, most notifications also include an offer by the manufacturer to repair the defect at no cost to the owner. More than 30 million vehicles have been recalled since the law became effective in September 1966.

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FOR RELEASE FRIDAY A.M.
July 28, 1972

NHTSA -- 73-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation has signed a joint agreement with the U.S. Air Force to produce and share specialized driver education course materials for use both by the military and by the general public.

Terms of the agreement call for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to provide the Air Force with extensive information about driver performance and driver knowledge tests; recommendations on the technical content of the proposed driver training course; an advisory board, and the design of research required to evaluate the effectiveness of the course in terms of traffic accident reduction.

The Air Force will utilize the NHTSA information to revise and refine its traffic safety course, "Survival in the Traffic Jungle," an automated audio-visual presentation originally created in 1966. The revised course will include ten 50-minute presentations designed for use in training Air Force and Coast Guard recruits as well as in high school driver education courses. The Air Force has agreed to establish a test group and control group of its personnel to measure the traffic accident reduction effectiveness of the course.

NHTSA is considering the possibility of testing the applicability of some of the course material, such as the audio-visual tests, in driver license examinations conducted by the States.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY A.M.
July 31, 1972

NHTSA -- 75-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Federal Government's intensive campaign aimed at drunk drivers shows promise of ultimate success on the basis of early findings in eight areas of the Nation, Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe announced today.

His prediction for success is based upon a recent study, "First Year Evaluation Preview, Alcohol Safety Action Projects," by the Department's Nation Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

"It is a fact that, in 1971, there were 78 fewer Americans who died in highway crashes than in the previous year in areas where there are Federally funded Alcohol Safety Action Projects (ASAPs)," Secretary Volpe said. "We recognize this as minimal, but significant. It is anticipated that this successful trend will continue nationwide.

"President Nixon led the effort for priority attention to be given to the reduction of highway fatalities involving the drinking driver. It has bipartisan support in the Congress. Although this is only a beginning, I believe our comprehensive program is making an impact upon those who abuse the driving privilege by excessive consumption of alcohol."

The eight locations where results were evaluated are 100 per cent Federally funded ASAP sites. They were selected in mid-1970 as pioneer efforts leading to a total $82-million, three and-a-half year program for 35 States. They include:

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The City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County, New Mexico; the metropolitan area of Denver, Colorado; the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, North Carolina; Washtenaw County, Michigan; Nassau County, New York; the cities of Portland and Eugene, and Lane County, Oregon; the City of Seattle and King County, Washington; Marathon and Sheboygan Counties, Wisconsin.

In contrast with the lowered death toll in ASAP areas, Secretary Volpe noted, the aggregate of fatal accidents and fatalities in non-ASAP areas of the same States showed increases.

He said three Project areas -- Denver, Portland and Seattle -- reporting the greatest reduction in fatal accidents, had the largest increase in arrests of drunk drivers.

Total alcohol-related traffic arrests in the eight ASAP areas rose 72 per cent, from 1970 to 1971. This increase is attributed by the report to special patrols and to the program's catalytic effect upon stepped-up activities by regular law enforcement patrols.

One aspect of the report stresses the workability of pre-sentence investigations to aid courts in determining the probability of successful rehabilitation of convicted, problem drinker-drivers. In addition, many defendants identified as social drinkers were assigned to special alcohol traffic schools.

Among summary conclusions of the report is the disclosure that during 1971 fewer single-vehicle fatal crashes occurred at the ASAP sites during early morning hours. There was also a significant drop in the number of fatally injured drivers whose blood alcohol concentration was above .15 per cent.

One of the aims of the Traffic Safety Administration's Alcohol Countermeasures Program is to expand the ASAP concept to State-wide operations. Secretary Volpe said that a comprehensive systems approach to curb drinking drivers has not yet been fully accepted at State and local community levels of government.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE AM's
AUGUST 2, 1972

NHTSA -- 78-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe today announced proposals to revise and update current Highway Safety Program Standards in a move to make them more effective in reducing deaths and injuries on the highways.

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 Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

In announcing publication of the proposals in the Federal Register, Secretary Volpe said:

"Updating the Standards is consistent with the Department of Transportation's on-going program to provide the best in transportation safety guidelines for all America. These proposed Standards do not replace, but rather they modernize the current Standards now administered by the Traffic Safety Administration.

"Most of the current Standards were issued in June 1967. Since then, experience and research have produced new knowledge and insight into traffic crash countermeasures. Experience has also suggested the gains that can be attained by better grouping of related safety functions.

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"A major purpose of the revised Standards is to assist the States in developing and implementing coordinated, comprehensive highway safety programs. We believe this will help eliminate overlapping of activities or shortcomings in performance. We also believe that the Standards, when issued in final form early in 1973, will help us meet President Nixon's commitment to reduce the carnage on our highways."

The proposal incorporates requirements for activities that many States have already learned to be proven countermeasures, and would replace the 14-plus Standards currently administered by NHTSA with eight revised Standards. These are:

1. Program Administration and Evaluation
2. Traffic Laws and Regulations
3. Vehicle Requirements
4. Traffic Safety Education
5. Driver Licensing
6. Police Traffic Services
7. Traffic Courts and Adjudication Systems
8. Emergency Medical Services

The proposed revision does not involve the three current Standards wholly within Federal Highway Administration jurisdiction. These include Identification and Surveillance of Accident Locations; Highway Design, Construction and Maintenance; and Traffic Engineering Services. FHWA also shares responsibilities with NHTSA for the Pedestrian Safety Standard. The NHTSA-administered aspects of pedestrian safety would be assigned to Traffic Safety Education and Police Traffic Services. The FHWA functions would not be affected.

In addition to pedestrian safety the remaining highway program Standards whose functions would be assigned and distributed among the proposed revised 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; traffic records; emergency medical services; police traffic services; debris hazard control and cleanup; pupil transportation; and accident reporting.

The proposed changes, which call for legislative or administrative action by the States, would establish these improved requirements:

- A requirement that the use of seat belts be made mandatory.

- Statutory provision allowing a driver to turn right on a red traffic signal under specified conditions.

- Uniformity of traffic laws and rules throughout a State (Conformance with Chapter 11 of the Uniform Vehicle Code - "Rules of the Road") to eliminate the many non-uniform laws and ordinances that are a source of inconvenience and hazard to motorist and pedestrian alike.

- Provision for addition of administrative adjudication systems to the regular court procedure to make possible the use of qualified nonjudicial personnel to dispose of minor traffic cases.

- Establishment of minimum ages and educational prerequisites before issuance of an initial driver license; the minimum age would be either 16 or 18 depending on the educational program completed. At least a classroom pre-licensing instruction program would be required for all new licensees.

- Requirements for the imposition of severe sanctions on persons who are convicted of violating the provisions of a limited license or driving in violation of a suspension or revocation.

- Provision for a law that would make it illegal for a person to drive a motor vehicle when he has 0.10 percent or more by weight of alcohol in his blood.

- Requirement that every person who operates a motor vehicle submit to a preliminary breath test upon request of an officer who has reason to believe that the person has alcohol in his body.

- Provision for a law permitting officers to arrest, without a warrant, persons who violate traffic laws.

- Prohibition of removal or modification of a vehicle's safety-related equipment.

All of the proposed Standards include detailed specifications for evaluation of a State's highway safety program and call for the submission of an annual summary report to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Federal Highway Administration.

There is a 90-day period for comments on the proposed Standards before final publication early in 1973. Effective date of the Highway Safety Program Standards is scheduled for April 1973.

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FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY A.M.
August 2, 1972

NHTSA -- 77-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation announced today that Klein Tire Sales, of Norma, New Jersey, has agreed to pay $4,000 in compromise of a civil penalty claim for selling non-certified passenger car tires for highway use.

The Klein company sold four non-certified tires, and offered for sale four other non-certified tires. The tires were manufactured in Canada and imported into the United States.

Officials at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) pointed out that the tires involved did not comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 109 "New Pneumatic Tires." The tires did not contain the manufacturer's certification which limits the use of these tires to off-highway traffic. Consumers purchasing such tires were unaware of the potential accident risk they were taking by using the tires for regular highway traffic.

NHTSA officials said that they are continuing a broad scale investigation into other possible violations by dealers who sell non-certified tires for highway use. In addition, the agency plans to amend the standard to prohibit manufacturers from reclassifying and selling passenger car tires for non-highway use.

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FOR RELEASE FRIDAY A.M.
August 4, 1972

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

The Department of Transportation said today it is soliciting industry proposals for the design of improved test dummies for use in motor vehicle safety compliance testing.

The dummies would have to meet certain performance requirements developed by the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The Safety Agency wants to standardize and improve the performance of the commercial test dummies that will be used to evaluate the safety of motor vehicles in crash situations.

The NHTSA said dummies that are selected for use by the Government for compliance test purposes must be as completely defined as possible. This is necessary so that vehicle manufacturers can be sure that the dummies they use for vehicle certification testing will give results that reasonably reflect results to be expected in compliance testing.

Later, the Traffic Safety Administration intends to issue a regulation for test dummies that defines the configuration and important dynamic response characteristics, while leaving sufficient flexibility to allow future improvements.

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This regulation, which has been under development for some time, will first be issued as a proposed rule, with opportunity for public comment, and then will be published as a final regulation.

Further research and development activities at NHTSA are designed to develop a wide data base for improved test dummies that will reflect the extremes of occupant size.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 9, 1972

NHTSA -- 80-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Top engineering students from 80 universities will meet in Detroit, August 9-11 to participate in the final Urban Vehicle Design Competition (UVDC) under a $41,000 grant from the Department of Transportation.

An estimated 2,000 students from these schools have been designing and constructing specialized cars for city driving, with the support of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. As an outgrowth of the Clean Air Car Race in 1971, the student organized and oriented UVDC has adopted many novel engineering techniques in the development of a series of prototype vehicles specifically designed for urban use. The cars, which will undergo testing at the General Motors Proving Grounds, are powered by internal combustion engines, including piston and rotary engine designs, external combustion, electric power, and super flywheel inertia designs.

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe will announce the overall winning design team at a special awards banquet August 11 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He has characterized the work of the youthful competitors as "an outstanding and reassuring indication that the promising engineering talent of today is dedicated to including environmental and safety protection in the cars of tomorrow."

Testing of the vehicles under both test track and city conditions will emphasize exhaust emission control, along with crashworthiness and accident avoidance. Particular attention will be devoted to the relative safety of passengers in high and low speed crashes, noise reduction, fuel efficiency, and the handling and parking abilities of the car.

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To qualify for final competition, each car must be capable of being registered for use on the highway, be compatible with present day traffic, and practical in terms of production costs and benefits offered, if used on a large scale.

Awards will be made to the engineering teams producing the best overall designs; those with the most unique ideas, and those individuals with the best safety and emission control ideas.

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FOR RELEASE SATURDAY
August 12, 1972

NHTSA -- 82-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) today made public the text of a letter it is sending to owners of 1960 through 1963 model year Corvairs.

The letters are being sent to the owners of such cars as soon as possible to inform them of the results of the Safety Agency's comprehensive investigation of the handling and stability characteristics of the 1960-63 model year Corvairs.

Last July 21, the NHTSA announced it had completed its investigation with a finding of no safety-related defect. In its letter to Corvair owners, the Safety Agency said:

"We believe that you have a right, and a need, to know the results of our effort because of the controversy concerning this vehicle and the extensive publicity associated with it. We have concluded that the handling and stability of the 1960-63 Corvair does not result in an abnormal potential for loss of control or rollover and that the handling and stability performance is at least as good as the performance of some other contemporary vehicles both foreign and domestic."

Based upon its analysis of all available data, its own comparative vehicle testing, and the recommendations of its advisory panel, the NHTSA concluded that no safety-related defect exists with respect to the handling and stability characteristics of the 1960-63 Corvair.

(Letter attached)

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Dear Corvair Owner:

This letter is being sent to you by the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to inform you of the results of our comprehensive investigation of the handling and stability characteristics of the 1960-63 model year Corvairs. We believe that you have a right, and a need, to know the results of our effort because of the controversy concerning this vehicle and the extensive publicity associated with it. We have concluded that the handling and stability of the 1960-63 Corvair does not result in an abnormal potential for loss of control or rollover and that the handling and stability performance is at least as good as the performance of some other contemporary vehicles both foreign and domestic.

This investigation began in September 1970. It commenced with the gathering, review and analysis of all documents, films and test data in the possession of General Motors relevant to the handling and stability question. This included the review of certain test films alleged by Mr. Ralph Nader to prove that the Corvair rolled over. Also included in the investigation was our analysis of a Ford Falcon - Corvair comparison test film made by the Ford Motor Company also alleged by Mr. Nader to prove the Corvair defective. In addition, we analyzed available accident data to determine whether the Corvair rolled over more frequently than other comparable vehicles.

After completion of our review and analysis of all available documents, test reports and test data, and statistical information, it was determined that NHTSA would undertake to objectively define the handling and stability characteristics of the Corvair through tests of its own. A concentrated program of Government testing of the Corvair and contemporary vehicles commenced during the Spring and Summer of 1971. The vehicles compared were the 1962 Falcon, 1962 Volkswagen, 1963 Corvair, 1963 Renault, 1960 Valiant, and a 1967 Corvair. The tests were designed to incorporate steering and braking maneuvers under increasingly severe conditions, including those conditions most likely to precipitate a rollover.

To evaluate the objectivity of NHTSA testing and analysis, a three-man advisory panel of recognized and independent professional engineers was retained: Ray W. Caldwell, B.S., M.B.A., President of Autodynamics Corporation; Edwin Resler, Jr., B.S., Ph.D., Director of Graduate School

of Aerospace Engineering, Cornell University; Paul H. Wright, B.S., M.S., Ph.D., Associate Professor of Civil Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology. The panel was requested to review the scope and competence of the NHTSA investigation and specifically to identify any additional vehicle testing believed to be necessary.

From an evaluation of the extensive data obtained from General Motors and from other sources, from an analysis of the NHTSA comparative vehicle testing, and from the recommendations of the advisory panel, the following findings are called to your attention:

1. The available accident data indicates that the rollover rate of the 1960-63 Corvair is comparable to other light domestic cars.

2. The Corvair handling and stability compared favorably with the other contemporary vehicles used in the NHTSA testing programs. Vehicle rollover did not occur in any of the comparative tests for the Corvair, Falcon or Valiant. The Volkswagen and the Renault did rollover in some of the comparative tests.

3. The GM test films which Mr. Nader alleged showed Corvairs being rolled over at speeds from 28 to 30 mph in fact showed that these vehicles were being deliberately rolled over by experienced test drivers for experimental purposes, and that they were developmental tests not representative of the practical driving environment. Such drivers could turn over other cars under similar developmental testing.

4. The Ford Falcon - Corvair comparison test film is not an authentic evaluation of the Corvair's handling and stability characteristics and is repudiated by other Ford evidence as well as the evaluation undertaken by the NHTSA.

5. The 1960-63 Corvair will transition from understeer to oversteer at high levels of lateral acceleration, between 0.4g to 0.5g.

(The term understeer is illustrated by imagining someone driving rapidly around a curve to the right. If speed is increased and it is necessary to turn the steering wheel toward the right in order to stay in the lane, then the vehicle is understeering. If the steering requires no additional input, the vehicle is then in neutral steer. If the steering requires the driver to straighten the steering wheel or turn it toward the left, then the vehicle is oversteering. The 1960-63 Corvair will transition from understeer, through neutral steer, to moderate oversteer. Most drivers will not voluntarily operate their cars so as to encounter this transition because it occurs only during a turning or skidding movement which the normal driver would find very uncomfortable. This condition is technically known as high lateral (side) acceleration, and is expressed in g's, or gravity forces).

6. The advisory panel concluded that the NHTSA investigation was adequate in scope and depth, basically sound in design, and professional in its performance. It also concluded that the 1960-63 Corvairs quantitatively meet or exceed the standards set by contemporary cars in stability tests, cornering tests, and rollover tests. The panel concluded that the Corvair is not more unstable or more likely to rollover than contemporary automobiles. Although the panel agreed with the NHTSA engineers that the characteristic transition from understeer to oversteer occurs at lateral accelerations seldom encountered by average drivers, it was concerned about driver response to the transition in emergency situations of high lateral acceleration. The panel recommended, therefore, that Corvair owners be advised that, in its opinion, in emergency situations of hard cornering, such as when the vehicle is not being operated normally and prudently and is exceeding safe speed limits on a curve or expressway exit ramp, it may exhibit unusual handling characteristics. The panel also recommended that Corvair owners be advised to maintain the tire pressures recommended by the vehicle's manufacturer.

The NHTSA engineers concluded that many vehicles may exhibit unusual handling characteristics in emergency situations. The typical conventional passenger car is basically an understeering vehicle. However, under various load, speed, and tire pressure conditions, some vehicles, both foreign and domestic, also transition from understeer to oversteer. In the extreme emergency situation, the typical driver makes a brake application, resulting in wheel lock up. In this situation both understeering and oversteering vehicles are uncontrollable. The NHTSA engineers also noted that in extreme emergency situations when wheel lock up does not occur, only a MODERATE AMOUNT of steering movement in the 1960-63 Corvair is required. Drivers will normally correct the steering wheel angle to follow driving direction without having any awareness of having made the correction.

Thus, Corvair drivers should realize that hard braking in a turn or skid:

(a) can lock the wheels and eliminate steering, and
(b) aggravates oversteer.

While not enough can be said about being alert and avoiding conditions that can cause skidding movements, if these conditions are encountered Corvair drivers should remember:

(a) that <u>moderate</u> steering motions will normally be sufficient for corrective action, and
(b) that rapid jabbing applications of the foot brake is superior to a hard constant application that will lock the wheels.

Accordingly, drivers are encouraged to avoid the pitfall of wheel lock up and are advised to follow their natural reactions to the steering wheel angle, even in emergency situations. Finally, NHTSA engineers are of the opinion that the transition from understeer to oversteer in the Corvair does not result in an unusual risk of loss of vehicle control.

CONCLUSIONS:

A. The NHTSA concluded that the handling and stability performance of the 1960-63 Corvair does not result in an abnormal potential for the loss of control or rollover, and that its handling and stability performance is at least as good as the performance of some contemporary vehicles both foreign and domestic.

B. Based upon its analysis of all available data, its own comparative vehicle testing, and the recommendations of its advisory panel, the NHTSA concluded that no safety-related defect exists with respect to the handling and stability characteristics of the 1960-63 Corvair.

FUMES:

In addition to the foregoing, we would like to again remind those of you who have 1961-63 Corvairs of another matter. This agency has previously concluded that the Corvair direct air heater system in these models does create an unreasonable risk of accident and injury to persons in that engine fumes are transferred from the engine compartment into the passenger compartment, and such engine fumes do in some cases contain carbon monoxide in sufficient concentrations to harm or endanger the occupants of the vehicle. If you have not already responded to the instructions of General Motors in the two letters previously sent requesting that you have your vehicle exhaust-heater system inspected, we strongly urge you to (a) follow the instructions in those letters (if you suspect fume intrusion problems leave your window open) and (b) have the inspection undertaken as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Douglas Toms

Douglas W. Toms
Administrator

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
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Washington, D.C. 20590

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NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY A.M.
August 17, 1972

NHTSA -- 76-72
Tel. 202-426-0670

The Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issued a Public Advisory today to warn owners of pre-1963 Volkswagens that dangerous engine-fume problems may exist in these vehicles -- especially in connection with the operation of the interior heating system -- and to ask owners who have experienced such engine-fume problems to contact the NHTSA offices.

Douglas W. Toms, NHTSA Administrator, said that his agency's investigation of 1961-1969 model GM Corvairs which have the same type of heating system as that in the pre-1963 Volkswagen models, pointed up the need to evaluate the Volkswagens as well. Problems noted in the American-made heater systems, Toms said, indicate that the same fume problems may exist in the early Volkswagens which use the same basic design.

Mr. Toms further noted that while engine fume problems in pre-1963 Volkswagens could stem from any of several sources, his agency's prime concern is the possible intrusion of exhaust fumes containing carbon monoxide, into the vehicle's passenger compartment -- particularly if this happens as a result of the heater's use.

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Owners of these vehicles are especially advised, in the event of noticeable engine-fume contamination and odors, to seek repairs immediately, and until repairs can be completed, to drive with one of the large side windows opened far enough (at least one inch) to give good ventilation.

As an important contribution to its ongoing investigation, the NHTSA urges owners of 1949-1962 Volkswagens to report the details of any problems with engine fumes. Owners are reminded to include the model and year of their vehicles and to address their reports to :

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Consumer Affairs
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 17, 1972

NHTSA -- 83-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation today announced a new Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard which requires manufacturers of slide-in campers and trucks accommodating such campers to provide information on proper loading and load distribution.

Issued by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the standard, No. 126, will provide information that can be used to reduce overloading and improper load distribution in truck-camper combinations. The new standard should prevent accidents resulting from adverse effects of these conditions on vehicle steering and braking.

Manufacturers of slide-in campers are required to permanently affix a label to the rear surface of each camper that includes the weight of the camper with standard equipment, water, bottled gas, and an ice box or refrigerator. The manufacturer also must provide, in an owner's manual, a picture showing the location of the longitudinal center of gravity of the camper when loaded, and a picture showing the proper match of the slide-in camper on a typical truck. The standard further requires manufacturers of trucks to which a camper could be attached to provide, in an owner's manual, a picture of the manufacturer's recommended longitudinal center of gravity zone for the cargo weight rating, and one depicting the proper match of a truck and a slide-in camper. Additional specific loading instructions for the camper must also be contained in the owner's manual so that proper balance of the vehicle can be maintained at all times.

The standard applies to slide-in campers, and to trucks that can accommodate these campers. The requirements of the standard will become effective on January 1, 1973.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY A.M.
August 18, 1972

NHTSA -- 85-72
Tel. 202-426-0670

The Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued a Consumer Protection Bulletin today to warn owners of 1971 and 1972 General Motors automobiles that some models have been subject to steering lock-up. Named in the Bulletin are all full-sized Pontiacs, Buicks, Oldsmobiles and Chevrolets for the last two model years.

Douglas W. Toms, NHTSA Administrator, said that his agency's ongoing investigation of the problem included owner-reports that gravel or rocks can become lodged between the front lower frames of these vehicles and the steering coupling at the base of the steering column. Loss of steering and control is the result.

The Federal Bulletin advises all owners of these vehicles that General Motors Corporation has already advised its dealers to provide, under regular warranty coverage, an inexpensive "gravel shield" (Part Number 231480) to owners who have had this problem or anticipate it. According to the Bulletin, steering lock-ups of this kind result from driving on gravel roadways and owners should, until they have procured a "shield," use these roads with extreme caution and reduced speeds. The Bulletin also advises frequent vehicle-inspection in order to keep lower frame members free of impacting stones and gravel.

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The Federal Safety Agency asks that all owners experiencing this steering problem, regardless of model or year, contact the NHTSA to provide an account of the incident along with the serial number and make-model data.

This information will help to speed the investigation and enable the NHTSA to reach a prompt determination as to any subsequent action necessary to protect the public.

These owner reports should be sent to:

The Office of Consumer Affairs
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W., Rm. 5232
Washington, D.C. 20590

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SPECIAL
CONSUMER PROTECTION BULLETIN

SUBJECT:

Alerting United States motorists to specific potential failures and suggested corrective actions in connection with certain General Motors Corporation (GMC) vehicles which may be subject to sudden steering lock-up while being driven.

General Motors vehicles potentially involved, according to current findings, are:

| Year | Make | Model |
|---|---|---|
| 1971 and 1972 | Chevrolet<br>Oldsmobile<br>Buick<br>Pontiac | Full Size Passenger Vehicles |

The sudden lock-up of the steering mechanism causes loss of directional control of the vehicle. It occurs when gravel or stones are thrown into the frame area adjacent to the steering coupling and lodge in this area, interfering with steering coupling rotation.

PRIOR ACTION BACKGROUND:

Reports of this type of lock-up have been received from vehicle owners, and there is indication that additional failures may have occurred.

General Motors has issued a Service Technical Bulletin advising all Chevrolet, Buick, Oldsmobile, and Pontiac dealers of an inexpensive device to prevent rocks or gravel from entering the area adjacent to the steering coupling.

The GMC Bulletin details the installation of a Service Shield Package, Part Number 231480, which will fit all four of the car lines affected for model years 1971 and 1972. Dealers are installing this shield under warranty for owners who have had problems or anticipate problems while driving.

## CURRENT CONCLUSIONS

Several cases of steering lock-up have reportedly occurred while, or shortly after, driving upon gravel roads. There are indications that lock-ups occur on smoothly graded as well as on rough gravel roads. The lock-ups may occur at almost any vehicle speed.

Owners of the above listed vehicles who may be required to drive on gravel roads prior to having the kit installed are advised to drive at a reduced rate of speed and with the utmost caution. Immediately after travel on a gravel road, the steering joint area under the hood should be examined and all rocks or gravel removed from the area surrounding the coupling.

## CONSUMER REQUEST

Owners of 1971 and 1972 General Motors vehicles experiencing steering lock-up of the kind described herein are urged to provide the Department of Transportation with a description of the event, along with the make, model, model year, and vehicle identification number. Such information is vital to the ongoing investigation of this matter and to the public safety. Such reports should be sent to:

Office of Consumer Affairs
National Highway Traffic Safety Admin.
400 Seventh Street, S.W., Rm. 5232
Washington, D.C. 20590

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE SATURDAY A.M.
August 19, 1972

NHTSA -- 84-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation announced today that Checker Motors Corporation has recalled some 1,300 passenger cars because of windshield retention problems. Specifically, the vehicles are subject to possible non-compliance with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 212, which requires retention of at least 75 percent of the windshield within the outer mounting frame, in a 30 mph frontal barrier crash.

In a recent test conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, a Checker Marathon 8 cyliner four-door sedan showed a windshield retention of approximately 47 percent. This is considerably below the minimum criteria set forth in Standard No. 212.

Checker Motors will notify owners of the affected cars by registered mail of the possible deficiency. Owners are urged to contact Checker Motors, who will make the necessary modifications without charge.

National Highway Traffic Safety officials said that the investigation is continuing, with a view towards possible civil penalty claims against the manufacturer.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY P.M.
August 22, 1972

NHTSA -- 79-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

On May 13, 1972, a Greyhound bus and a truck trailer collided head-on at Bean Station, a rural community nestled in eastern Tennessee. The fiery crash on U.S. 11W, about 40 miles northeast of Knoxville, shattered the stillness of the early morning hour and left 14 people dead, including the drivers of both vehicles.

But the tragic accident at Bean Station, one of the worst highway mishaps in Tennessee history, dramatically demonstrated the life-saving potential of proper emergency care for accident victims. Fast and effective action by personnel from four area rescue squads made the difference between life and death for most of the 15 survivors, all passengers.

Thirteen ambulance attendants, who utilized emergency procedures at the scene of the accident, were officially credited with saving several lives. They all had recently completed a basic emergency medical technician (EMT) training course developed by the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

"We have had excellent results since this program was initiated almost two years ago," said Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe. "We believe the training these ambulance attendants receive, in combination with other safety programs, will help us meet President Nixon's commitment for a reduction in highway fatalities."

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"If it hadn't been for our EMT training, a lot more people would have died," said Carl Phillips, a member of the Grainger County Rescue Squad. Phillips and all other attendants attributed the success of the rescue mission to their upgraded training and newly-learned techniques.

Phillips, as captain of the Grainger County Rescue Squad, said he supervised every person that was being moved. "I checked thoroughly, myself, before putting the victims on whatever proper cot or stretcher, or backboard they needed. Some of these people had broken backs, some had their necks broken, others had fractured arms or legs. We worked 15 or 20 minutes treating the victims before any patient was loaded in an ambulance.

"We had to stop some of them from bleeding; we had to splint some that had broken arms and legs. If we hadn't had the training, some of these people would have died because none of us would have known what steps to take to handle the patients. We all had received Red Cross first-aid training but that is nothing compared to the EMT training, which is a lot more advanced."

Another rescue squad member described the accident scene this way:

"On May 13, at 6 a.m., the Grainger County Sheriff's Department reported the bus-truck accident and said that the bus had split open with people all over the highway and called for all area ambulances. When we got there, quite a few people were left on the bus, both dead and injured. Some were buried under the seats, luggage and other debris. Pryholes, powerjacks and a wrecker were used in extricating these people from the bus. Shock seemed to be the big problem with the living. We got the ones who were more seriously injured to the hospital first."

The NHTSA Basic Training Course for Emergency Medical Technician -- Ambulance, was developed in 1970 and consists of 81 hours of intense instruction, 10 hours of which are spent in a hospital emergency room. NHTSA provides instruction guidelines for ambulance personnel to assist the States in implementing Highway Safety Program Standard No. 11 -- Emergency Medical Services.

Tennessee is one of some 40 States that has adopted the training course and it is estimated that 80 percent of the 120,000 ambulance drivers and attendants in the United States will have the opportunity to receive the Federally-funded EMT course free of charge during the next 12 months.

Trained to ensure that victims of highway accidents receive prompt and adequate care, Emergency Medical Technicians are taught by physicians to cope with the full range of medical emergencies including respiratory emergencies, cardiac arrest and heart attacks; shock and hemorrhage; fractures and spinal injuries, and emergency childbirth, in addition to less serious emergencies.

Techniques of emergency vehicle driving must also be mastered. The responsibility for adequate emergency care rests with the EMT's from the time they reach the victim through transportation and delivery to an appropriate medical care facility.

The Bean Station accident vividly illustrates the value of Emergency Medical Technician training. The men who participated in the life-saving operation received special commendation from Tennessee Governor Winfield Dunn. He wrote:

"Your efficient and expeditious handling of the tragic bus-truck disaster on May 13 at Bean Station has been brought to my attention. The emergency medical care and skillful transportation you rendered has been credited with saving the lives of many. On behalf of the citizens of Tennessee, I wish to commend you for these emergency actions."

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 28, 1972

NHTSA -- 87-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe has accepted delivery on a special order of 125 air cushion-equipped 1972 Mercury 4-door sedans, to inaugurate the first "real world" testing of the passive restraint systems in five cities across the Nation.

"This is a momentous occasion," the Secretary declared in announcing the order, "for it marks the long anticipated beginning of our testing of these lifesaving devices under actual 'on-the-road' conditions faced by the average motorist. These vehicles are equipped with air cushion systems installed at the factory. More than 700 of these Mercurys also are being used in air cushion field demonstrations by the Ford Motor Company, Allstate Insurance Company, Eaton Corporation, and Allied Chemical Corporation. And although the initial Department of Transportation fleet is relatively small, the program will be expanded as additional vehicles become available."

Under the supervision of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Department cars will be assigned to the General Services Administration for use in Los Angeles, California; Salt Lake City, Utah; Miami, Florida; San Antonio, Texas; and Buffalo, New York. These test sites were selected as being representative of the varying topographical driving conditions, and because of their close proximity to NHTSA-sponsored multidisciplinary accident investigation teams. The teams are scientifically qualified to investigate all types of auto accidents in far greater depth than the ordinary police investigation.

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Each of the vehicles will be equipped with a crash recorder to provide an accurate record of accelerations in the event of an accident. The air cushion passive restraint system is provided for the right front passenger and all seating positions have lap belts. Included as part of the combined air cushion/seat belt restraint system are an indicator to show air bag system readiness, a seat belt/starter interlock, preventing starting of the car before belt fastening, and a seat belt warning light and buzzer.

Present Federal safety standards, administered by the NHTSA, permit the use of ignition interlock systems for 1974 model passenger cars as an interim protective measure before August 15, 1975, when all new cars must have a passive system requiring no action on the part of occupants.

The Safety Agency has research underway to evaluate passive restraint systems other than air cushions, but has focused its greatest attention on air cushions since they are the most developed of the passive restraint concepts and have the highest injury-reducing potential.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY A.M.
August 29, 1972

NHTSA -- 86-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation announced today that, after October 1, 1972, it will be illegal for tire manufacturers to reclassify and sell passenger car tires which do not meet the requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 109, "New Pneumatic Tires." Such tires were originally produced for highway use, but are not certified by the manufacturer as complying with Standard No. 109. These tires must be labeled that they are unsafe for highway use, and are presently allowed to be sold for off-highway purposes.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration officials pointed out that reclassified tires are still being sold by some unscrupulous dealers for on-highway passenger car use. Annual reclassification of tires for non-highway use is in the neighborhood of 200,000.

The amendment to Standard No. 109, which becomes effective on October 1, 1972, prohibits the sale, for any purposes, of any passenger car tire that does not conform with all the requirements of the Standard. Reclassified tires now on dealer's shelves, and

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complying with the labeling requirements of Standard No. 109 for reclassified tires, may continue to be sold until the supply is exhausted. The prohibition would not apply to tires that are altered so that they cannot be used on motor vehicles, and these tires may be sold as scrap material.

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FOR RELEASE FRIDAY P.M.
September 1, 1972

NHTSA -- 89-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation announced today that the Armstrong Rubber Company has agreed to pay $3,500 in compromise of a civil penalty claim against the firm for producing tires in violation of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966.

The Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) said that 4 out of 13 Armstrong PT-107 tires, size 7.75 x 14, failed to meet the strength requirements of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 109, "New Pneumatic Tires."

The company manufactured 2,558 of these tires at its Natchez, Mississippi, plant in July and August 1969. The NHTSA has notified Armstrong that it is closing its files in the case.

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NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 6, 1972

NHTSA -- 91-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation today proposed a new Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard which would protect motor vehicle occupants from contact with vehicle components which may pierce the windshield during crashes.

In announcing the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Douglas Toms, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, said: "There has been a significant increase in the number of accidents in which some part of the automobile, notably the hood, has either penetrated the windshield aperture, or has been pushed close to the windshield surface, thus contributing to occupant injuries. This appears to be due to a recent trend in hood and cowl top design for concealed windshield wipers where the rearmost edge of the hood is flared upwards close to the windshield surface. Thus, an urgent need for more protective vehicle design exists in this area."

The notice proposes that no part of a vehicle outside the vehicle compartment may penetrate the inner surface of any portion of the windshield glazing material during a 30 mph barrier crash test. It also proposes the establishment of a protected zone in front of the windshield opening which no part of the vehicle may contact during the barrier crash test.

The proposed standard would apply to passenger cars, and to multipurpose passenger vehicles, trucks and buses with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less. Proposed effective dates are September 1, 1973 for passenger cars, and September 1, 1974 for all other vehicles.

Interested persons are invited to submit comments on the proposal. Comments should be submitted to Room 5221, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590. Comments should be received on or before November 30, 1972.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 6, 1972

NHTSA--- 90-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation today announced an upgraded Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard which specifies requirements for hydraulic service brakes and associated parking brake systems. While the original standard, No. 105, applied only to passenger cars, the upgraded standard, No. 105a, also applies to multi-purpose passenger vehicles, trucks, and buses equipped with hydraulic service brake systems. The standard is intended to ensure safe braking performance under normal and emergency conditions.

Issued by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the standard covers requirements for stopping distance, linear stability while stopping, fade resistance, and fade recovery. It also covers features in hydraulic braking systems that could warn against malfunctioning, and retain the capability to stop the vehicle should a malfunction appear in the normal service system.

All vehicles with hydraulic brake systems are required to have a split service brake system, with partial failure or "emergency" braking features. Passenger cars must demonstrate the ability to stop in no more than 431 feet from 60 mph under partial failure conditions, and 194 feet under adverse loading conditions. Vehicles, other than passenger cars, with a GVWR of 10,000 pounds or less must demonstrate the ability to stop from 60 mph in 216 feet under adverse loading conditions, and in 484 feet under partial failure conditions. Vehicles with GVWR over 10,000 pounds must demonstrate an ability to stop from 60 mph in 245 feet under adverse loading conditions, and in 553 feet under partial failure conditions. Stops for all vehicles must be made without any part of the vehicle leaving a 12 foot wide lane.

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The parking brake system on vehicles of 10,000 pounds or less must be capable of holding the vehicle stationary for not less than five minutes on a 30 percent grade in both forward and reverse direction. Other vehicles must hold on a 20 percent grade with the parking brake system.

The new standard will become effective on September 1, 1974.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY A.M.
September 8, 1972

NHTSA -- 88-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

The Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration announced a crackdown on illegal tire sales today, as it filed complaints in the U.S. District Courts of Madison, Wisconsin, and Grand Rapids, Michigan, and sought penalties totaling $30,000 against tire dealers in both States.

According to the Federal complaint, tires which have failed to meet Federal safety standards and are marked for "Off Highway Use Only" by their manufacturers, are being distributed in large numbers to small tire dealers throughout the country, and are then being sold at special, reduced prices to the unsuspecting public.

Douglas W. Toms, NHTSA Administrator, said in announcing the Federal court action against the Michigan and Wisconsin dealers, that the tires in question "present a grave danger to the public. This is an operation which lures the buyer into risking his life and his family for a few dollars of extra dealer profit -- usually leaving the buyer unaware of the risk." Toms said this dangerous practice is repugnant to the policies of the Nixon Administration and that his agency is determined to take the strongest possible measures to stamp it out.

In the complaint filed on August 21 in Madison, Wisconsin, the Government asked civil penalties of $14,000 for the offer or sale of 14 tires by the Hendrick's Bar H Ranch. A permanent injunction against future sales of tires, marked for "Off Highway Use Only," was also sought by the Government.

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A similar complaint filed on August 22 against the firm, Tire City, operating in the State of Michigan, alleged 16 illegal tire transactions and asked the maximum $1,000 civil penalty for each. Injunction against further illegal sales was sought in this case as well.

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# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION NEWS

## NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY P.M.
September 14, 1972

NHTSA --92-72
Tel. 202-426-0686

Breath testing of drinking drivers, whose excessive consumption of alcohol is the major contributor to death and injury on the highways, is being intensified under a new program announced today by the Department of Transportation.

Charles F. Livingston, Director, Office of Alcohol Countermeasures, in the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), introduced a new breath screening device described as "a breakthrough in highway safety technology."

He made this disclosure to nearly 1,000 agents at the annual convention of Kemper Insurance in Chicago. Livingston said that the portable instrument developed by the Department's Transportation Systems Center, Cambridge, Massachusetts, measures blood alcohol concentration of drivers at the roadside.

"With the full support of President Nixon, Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe has ordered an increased effort toward eliminating the problem drinker-driver from our highways," Livingston said. "In 1971, half of the 55,000 traffic deaths were alcohol-related. Even one is too many from this cause."

Livingston said that field testing with the Department's alcohol screening device (ASD), to be used with at least two other recently developed commercial devices, will start in areas of nine selected States on January 1, 1973. About 10 police departments will be chosen to perform the research.

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States where communities will be selected to measure the effectiveness of the procedure include North and South Dakota, Vermont, Maine, New York, Indiana, Nebraska, Minnesota, and Virginia.

With the exception of North Dakota, all of the potential test areas have sites for NHTSA's Alcohol Safety Action Projects, 100 percent Federally-funded programs averaging about two and a half million dollars each. The same States also have legislation permitting pre-arrest breath tests.

"Our goal is a low-cost, portable device that will give a law enforcement officer an accurate, instantaneous, on-the-spot reading of alcohol concentration in a driver's breath," Secretary Volpe wrote to the Kemper Group's agents.

Livingston characterized chemical testing of drivers in pre-arrest breath screening as one of the methods for "protection of the innocent." He said that trained law enforcement officers will administer the test which requires breathing into a hand-held unit about the size of a transistor radio, a procedure that will take about one minute.

Demonstrating the Department's ASD were Dr. Robert B. Voas, NHTSA physical scientist, and Walter F. Harriott, physicist for the Transportation Systems Center, where the new device has been under development for 18 months.

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

NHTSA -- 94-72
Tel. 202-426-9550

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe has sent two messages to the U.S. Congress -- one of bright hope and one of grim warning -- with his release of the Annual Reports of the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Required by the Highway Safety Act and the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, the reports must be annually submitted to the Congress and constitute a review of the programs and research undertaken by the Federal Government to reduce death and injuries on U.S. highways.

The Secretary noted that his Department's safety programs, given top priority by President Nixon and funded by the Congress, have brought decreases in the highway death rate and the total death count for the second year in a row. He said that in spite of a steady increase in the number of miles driven by Americans, and steady increase in the national vehicle population, 1971 statistics show a decline in the death rate and 100 fewer lives lost, citing a total loss of 54,700 traffic fatalities in 1971. The NHTSA's Annual Reports traced the unbroken decrease in highway death rate since 1967, starting at 5.5% per 100 million miles driven and decreasing annually to 4.7% in 1971. The Secretary noted that if the 1967 rate had gone unchecked, 1971 would have recorded 65,000 highway fatalities instead of 54,700 -- a clear saving of 10,300 lives since the Federal effort was begun.

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But in warning of the tremendous challenges still ahead, the Secretary said that the United States may suffer its two-millionth highway fatality sometime in the next 12 months. "We are speeding toward this grim milestone at the rate of 1,000 deaths each week," Volpe stated. "The economic cost to the Nation -- in deaths, injuries, and property loss on the highways -- is now estimated at the staggering figure of $46 billion each year." The Secretary pointed out that the societal cost of U.S. automobile accidents amounts to $200 a year for every man, woman, and child in the Nation; or at least $400 a year for every registered motor vehicle.

These and other facts are contained in the three-volume reports released today. The first is a brief, general summary of the statistical gravity of the situation, and of Administration activities under the two Acts in a colorful and readable form. The other two documents, one for each law, are more detailed, technical, and responsive to the reporting requirements in each of the Acts.

Fatality estimates cited in the reports for 1971 are 55,000. However, a recent revision of this figure on the basis of more exact data places the count at 54,700, or 100 deaths less than recorded in 1970. More than 10,000 of the dead were pedestrians, while 1,500 were killed in railroad crossing mishaps. In addition, nearly 4 million people were injured, and many of them were maimed for life. Some of the pressures which collectively tend to aggravate the situation are highlighted in the reports:

- o Alcohol is involved in at least 50 percent of all traffic fatalities, and per capita consumption of hard liquor increased 23 percent between 1965 and 1970.

- o In the five years between 1967 and 1971, all registered motor vehicles increased 16 1/2 percent, while the increase for

trucks was 20 1/2 percent, and for motorcycles, motor-scooters, etc., the jump was nearly 69 percent. The greater the disparity in size and weight between colliding vehicles, the more serious the consequences are apt to be.

- The number of licensed drivers rose more than 11 percent during the same period, and a greater percentage of the drivers are in the under-25 age group which suffers a disproportionate number of traffic fatalities.

- The number of miles driven is going up 5 percent each year, while the average speed on main rural roads increases about a mile an hour.

In spite of these adverse circumstances, there is evidence that the safety devices built into cars since 1968, the highway safety programs to make the roads safer, and better drivers are saving lives. The death rate per 100 million miles driven has been going down steadily since 1967, when it was 5.5, to 4.7 in 1971; a decrease of 14 1/2 percent. Had the former rate remained constant, 65,000 fatalities could have been statistically anticipated in 1971--a clear saving of 10,300 lives.

The reports discuss the analytical processes that have led to the establishment of priority programs--Alcohol Countermeasures, Experimental Safety Vehicles, and Crash Survivability-- and the constant review and evaluation to which these and other safety programs are subjected. They outline the basic research being done in automotive, highway and driver improvement, as well as progress made in each of these fields. International developments in road and vehicular safety through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization are described, as are other special projects, motor vehicle safety defect and recall campaigns, accident investigation, progress in the State and community highway safety programs, and efforts to keep the consumer informed and his complaints heard and acted upon.

The reports are available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. The Summary Report, Volume 1, is $1.50. The other two volumes are priced at $1.25 each.

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