



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY
January 5, 1977

NHTSA -- 01-77 (DB)
Tel. 202-426-9550

REPAIR SHOP ENROLLMENT IN PARTS RETURN PROGRAM ESTIMATED AT 2,000

Enrollment in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Parts Return Program by independent automobile repair shops has grown from 160 after the first year of the program's operation to more than 2,000.

The program, which gathers data on failed automotive components from independent repair shops across the country, is now in its sixth year.

Administered by NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation (ODI), the program involves the voluntary return of failed automotive components to a NHTSA contractor for analysis.

Under the program, failed safety related components discovered during the normal course of business by a participating repair shop are tagged for identification and returned in postage paid canvas bags.

The program is designed to help identify the existence of safety-related defects in the design, performance, construction, components, or materials of motor vehicles and motor vehicle equipment. Motor vehicle and equipment manufacturers can be required, by law, to conduct defect notification campaigns when it has been determined that a safety defect exists.

- more -

Brake system failures have accounted for 35.1 percent of the over 5,000 failed components received from approximately 600 independent repair shops during the first five years of the program's operation.

Failed suspension system components accounted for 17.3 percent, engine and power train 14.5 percent, and steering 12.0 percent. Electrical, fuel, carburetor and throttle, exhaust and other minor failures make up the balance of components returned.

Since the PRP began in July 1971, components returned and information received have helped support more than 30 NHTSA investigations of alleged safety related defects. NHTSA investigations and analyses that received input from the PRP have recently resulted in the initiation of three recall campaigns: (1) a possible throttle jamming problem from engine mount failure on certain 1965 and 1967 Buicks, and 1970 Cadillacs; (2) failure of the carburetor fuel inlet plug resulting in a possible engine compartment fire on 1965-66 Chevrolet and 1966 Buicks equipped with Rochester Quadrajets carburetors; and (3) potentially defective spoked wheels made by Wheel Specialties Co.

The NHTSA said the voluntary cooperation of participating shops demonstrates their genuine concern for improving automotive safety. This effort is recognized through the NHTSA Parts Return Program News, sent to shops in the program along with a list of current NHTSA defect investigations every month.

John W. Snow, NHTSA Administrator, recently awarded Certificates of Appreciation to 11 shops for participation in last year's PRP effort. It was the third year in which certain participants received the award, an expression of NHTSA's recognition of their cooperation.

Increased participation in the PRP is encouraged. Independent automotive repair shops interested in obtaining information or participating are urged to contact: Bruce Beddow, Program Manager, Kappa Systems, Inc., 1501 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Virginia 22209, (703) 527-4500.

The 23 shops which have received certificates over the last three years are listed below:

- | | |
|---|--|
| A & E Garage
Struthers, Ohio | Hagen Service Center
Gainesville, Ga. |
| Adams Motor Service
St. Charles, Missouri | * Ise Automotive Service (3 yrs.)
Hollywood, California |
| Ade & Bob's Muffler & Brake
Center, St. Paul, Minn. | Jerry Hall Tire Service
Costa Mesa, California |
| * Auto Brake Corp.
Norfolk, Va. | * Kolesnik's Service Station
Rochester, New York |
| * Auto Hospital
Lincoln, Nebraska | Miller Tire & Brake Center
Tampa, Florida |
| * Berea Auto Service
Greenville, S. C. | * Park Auto Repair (2 yrs.)
Chicago, Illinois |
| * Bert's Arco Station
Wilmington, Del. | Roberts Automotive Ctr.
E. Lansing, Mich. |
| Cambridge Brake Service
Cambridge, Mass. | T & G Garage
Fort Worth, Texas |
| * Dick Jordan Standard Serv.
Sta., Clayton, Mo. (2 yrs.) | Taylor's Garage & Service
Station, Akron, Ohio |
| * Doyle Automotive Serv.
Seattle, Wash. | * Tim's Import Sales & Serv.
Hutchinson, Kansas |
| Duane's Tuneup Clinic
Manteca, Calif. (2 yrs.) | Vanowen Brake & Wheel (2 yrs.)
N. Hollywood, Calif. |
| * European Motors, Limited
Washington, D. C. | |

* Recent recipient for the 1975-76 PRP year.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
January 7, 1977

NHTSA -- 2-77 (BMA)
Tel (202) 426-0670

WINTER DRIVING BOOKLET
AVAILABLE FROM NHTSA

CONSUMER ADVISORY

The publication of a new booklet, "Safe Driving in Winter," was announced today by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

This booklet, available without charge to the motoring public, was prepared by the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Also available are two recently published fact sheets, "Passenger Car Brakes," and "Vehicle Exhaust Systems."

John W. Snow, the NHTSA administrator, said "the new publications are part of the safety agency's continuing program to provide motorists with information that will help them to maintain their vehicles properly and operate them safely despite problems caused by weather and hazardous road conditions."

The winter driving booklet provides advice on planning and preparation for driving in wintry weather, provides suggestions on items of cold weather equipment that should be carried in the vehicle, describes the special techniques needed for driving on ice or snow, and provides special preventive maintenance hints to alleviate or eliminate some of the problems caused by cold weather, ice, and snow. The fact sheets dealing with brakes and the exhaust system provide instructions on recognizing failure symptoms and maintaining these vital systems.

The general public may obtain single copies of each of these publications, without charge, by writing to the General Services Division/Distribution, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D.C. 20590.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517



FIRST CLASS



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

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

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
January 21, 1977

NHTSA -- 4-77 (DLB)
Tel. 202-426-9550

FEDERAL FUNDS NOW AVAILABLE TO STATES WITH ORGANIZED CB PROGRAMS

To encourage greater use of Citizens Band (CB) radios for highway emergencies, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has announced a change in policy that will permit states to use their federal highway safety funds to support government-operated safety-related CB projects.

NHTSA is an agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation. The new policy is intended to improve the communications link between the motoring public, volunteer groups and state and local enforcement and emergency service agencies.

In 1970, the NHTSA endorsed the Federal Communications Commission's reservation of channel 9 for motorist-aid and emergency use. Since then, the increase in the number of licensed CB operators has resulted in numerous reports of its beneficial use for highway safety. There are an estimated 15 million CB radios on the air and the numbers are increasing.

During March 1975, DOT approved a report which concluded that sponsored use of CB radios is beneficial to transportation safety. The report's recommendations included development of grant-in-aid assistance criteria under the NHTSA's Community Grant Program (Section 402) of the Highway Safety Act of 1966. Therefore, states are now permitted to use federal safety funds for CB projects. Funding is not available directly to volunteer groups.

In the absence of a highway communications system, the Citizens Radio Service Class D Citizens Band (CB) offers the only existing method convenient to the public by which the motorist can enter the emergency response system from his/her vehicle. For this reason, CB radio capability is being harnessed to add another dimension to the communications need for emergency identification, reporting and response.

A manual that outlines the steps to be followed by states wishing to use federal funds has been published as part of the total planned program of emergency service communications development. The new manual supplements other NHTSA Highway Safety Program Manuals on Police Traffic Services, Emergency Medical Services, Debris Hazard Control and Cleanup, and Pupil Transportation Safety.

The CB Communications Manual was developed to assist states and communities in preparing plans required for participation in the National Emergency Aid Radio (NEAR) Program. This acronym has been selected to identify the NHTSA's involvement and sponsorship of the use of the Citizens Radio Service (CRS) for highway safety. Its extensive use will enhance accident reporting, hazardous location reporting, and the care of emergency victims on the highways.

Existing federal highway safety funds may be used by government agencies for the purchase and installation of radio equipment, development of training programs and materials, public information activities, administrative expenses, and collection of statistical data. However, states must involve volunteer public service groups in the planning and implementation of the program through a state NEAR Advisory Group.

Copies of the Citizens Band Communication Manual are available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, at \$1.35 per copy under order number 050-003-00234-8.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





**DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION**

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
January 28, 1977

NHTSA -- 5-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

**INCENTIVE GRANTS OF \$15 MILLION AWARDED
TO STATES THAT REDUCE HIGHWAY FATALITIES**

The award of \$15 million in incentive grants to 15 states for achieving significant progress in reducing their highway fatalities and highway fatality rates in 1975 was announced today by the U. S. Department of Transportation.

The grants were authorized by Congress to encourage the states to develop and carry out effective measures for reducing deaths on the highway. The incentive grants program is administered by the department's Federal Highway Administration and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

For the first time, states are now eligible for two different grants -- one for reduction in the fatality rate (number of highway deaths per 100 million miles of vehicle travel), and another, a new type grant, for reduction in actual fatalities.

Grants went to eight states for achieving the greatest percentage reduction in their actual number of highway fatalities in 1975, compared with the average number of fatalities during the four preceding years.

Incentive grants amount to a percentage of the federal highway safety funds apportioned to the individual state.

- more -

The states (ranked in order of their performance) and the amount of their awards are:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Mississippi \$444,318 | 5. Minnesota \$780,367 |
| 2. South Dakota \$256,190 | 6. Ohio \$1,631,063 |
| 3. Indiana \$878,440 | 7. Missouri \$876,953 |
| 4. Georgia \$828,854 | 8. New York \$1,803,815 |

Six of these states -- Mississippi, Georgia, South Dakota, Indiana, Minnesota and Missouri -- were also among a group of 13 states receiving awards for achieving the greatest reduction in their highway fatality rate in 1975, compared with the average highway fatality rate for the prior four calendar years. They are (in order of ranking):

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. a-Mississippi \$444,318 | 8. a-Missouri \$876,953 |
| 2. a-Georgia \$828,854 | 9. Idaho \$226,832 |
| 3. a-South Dakota \$256,190 | 10. Arizona \$349,707 |
| 4. Florida \$1,091,330 | 11. Alabama \$646,521 |
| 5. a-Indiana \$878,440 | 12. Tennessee \$695,060 |
| 6. Utah \$245,133 | 13. North Carolina \$180,295 |
| 7. a-Minnesota \$780,367 | |

a-Received both grants (reduction in highway deaths and fatality rate)

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
January 28, 1977

NHTSA -- 6-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY ADAMS
SAYS U. S. HIGHWAYS SAFER IN 1976

U. S. Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams, reporting that traffic fatalities in the United States last year virtually matched the death toll for 1975, said today that highways were safer in 1976 than at any other time in history.

"We are encouraged by the continued trend of safer driving on the nation's highways, even though the number of drivers and vehicles on the road and the number of miles driven last year all showed increases. Such increases normally result in a higher death toll on the highways," the secretary said.

Adams noted that the number of deaths per 100 million miles of travel has continued to decline. In 1976, it was estimated at 3.3, the lowest level on record.

Preliminary figures show an estimated 44,807 traffic fatalities were recorded in 1976, 25 more than the 44,782 who died in 1975.

The totals are based on preliminary figures reported to the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), by the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Later reports and revisions by the states could change the final figures.

The 1976 total was 17 percent below the 1973 figure, which the NHTSA uses as a base year for statistical comparison. In 1973, an estimated 53,981 died in traffic accidents.

"Compared to 1973 and the period prior to enactment of the 55 mile per hour national speed limit law, the gains in lives saved have been dramatic," Adams noted.

Last month (December), the traffic toll rose slightly over the same month in 1975 with an estimated 3,721 deaths, or an increase of 42 over the 3,679 fatalities recorded in December 1975.

It marked only the fifth time in the last 17 months that the traffic fatality count was above the corresponding month of the previous year.

Adams said that a key factor in holding the line on traffic deaths was the lower speed on the nation's highways associated with the 55 mph law. The secretary expressed confidence that this experience will convince motorists "that the lower speed limits result in a big payoff in safety as well as in fuel conservation."

He noted that an improvement in driving habits, such as using available safety belts, and precautions against alcohol abuse, could contribute to an even greater reduction in the traffic toll.

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

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

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY
February 2, 1977

NHTSA -- 7-77 (RC)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT SOLICITS FINANCIAL AID BIDS

The U. S. Department of Transportation today extended its first invitation for financial aid under a new one year demonstration program that will provide assistance to participants in certain National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) administrative proceedings.

Individuals and organizations that wish to participate, but are financially unable, will be considered for reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses in the first eligible proceeding -- establishment of average fuel economy standards for automobiles manufactured in the years 1981 through 1984. The Congress has already imposed a standard of 27.5 miles per gallon for 1985 models, the federal safety agency pointed out.

NHTSA said it is applying the financial aid concept to the fuel economy proceeding because of the far-reaching issues relating to energy conservation, the environment, vehicle safety, and consumer preferences regarding vehicle size, design and performance.

For example, NHTSA emphasized that achievement of the 1985 standard would eventually produce a daily savings of nearly two million barrels of gasoline, as compared to savings possible at the fuel economy level of 1975 model cars.

Changes in the standards requirements, the agency said, could have significant effects on the cost of acquiring, maintaining and operating cars. Reducing the weight of vehicles to improve economy, by means of smaller designs and the use of more aluminum and plastics, raises the questions of what effect these manufacturing changes may have upon vehicle safety, the demand for steel, the solid waste problem of the disposal of plastics, and the increased consumption of natural resources.

Public participation in this rulemaking process is important, NHTSA said, and the offering of financial assistance should encourage the public to participate more fully.

Applications for the federal funds will be evaluated by a panel of departmental officials.

Interested applicants should file their requests by Feb. 11, addressed to the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D. C. 20590. They should be marked for the attention of the Director of the Office of Automotive Fuel Economy.

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

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

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY
February 3, 1977

NHTSA --9-77 (BAB)
Tel. 202-426-9550

NEW RULEMAKING PROCEDURES

CONSUMER ADVISORY

New internal procedures for initiating, writing and issuing automotive safety, fuel economy, and damageability standards were announced today by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The agency issues federal standards under the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 and the Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act of 1972.

The new procedures issued by NHTSA are designed to simplify rule-making activities and improve the quality and effectiveness of final standards. The proposed procedures clarify the responsibilities for various rulemaking steps, including the development of supporting data and impact statements; identify key decision points, and integrate the entire process of rulemaking into the agency's planning process.

The new procedures will be phased-in for both new and pending rule-making activities. Copies of the procedures are available on request from the NHTSA General Services Division, Office of Distribution, 400 7th Street SW, Washington, D.C. 20590.

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TAD-493

NEWS

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

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
February 4, 1977

NHTSA -- 8-77 (DLB)
Tel. 202-426-9550

SURVEYS SHOW STRONG SUPPORT FOR 55 MPH SPEED LIMIT

A recently completed analysis of nine independent surveys indicates a continuation of the 55 mile per hour maximum national speed limit is favored by a majority of American motorists. The results of the surveys were announced by the U. S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The surveys were conducted separately by local, state, and national organizations, including large urban newspapers, state highway patrols, departments of highway safety, and nationally-known independent research firms. Some of the studies employed scientific sampling techniques, while others relied on unstructured polling techniques.

One poll conducted by the New Hampshire Highway Safety Agency, showed that as many as 87 percent of those responding approved of the existing 55 mph law.

Even the least favorable survey, initiated by the Nevada Office of Traffic Safety, showed 58 percent favored the law and only 34 percent were opposed, despite the fact that Nevada had an "open road" speed limit policy prior to the enactment of the national maximum speed limit.

NHTSA's Enforcement and Emergency Services Division, which is responsible for helping state police commissioners enforce the speed limit, monitors public opinion polls. In every instance, the findings indicate a majority of those questioned have expressed support for a continuation of the 55 mph speed limit.

The effects of the 55 miles per hour speed limit have been two-fold. In addition to the fuel saved, estimates are that at least half of the 9,000 lives saved each year since enactment of the law result from lower, more uniform speeds.

Support for the national speed limit was widespread among all age groups, sexes, income levels and geographic locations represented in the surveys. This is significant because surveys exploring the public's attitudes on issues normally show wide disparities in the findings among different groups.

In a survey prepared by the Georgia Office of Highway Safety, 71 percent of the 16-21 year old drivers said they did not exceed 55 mph, compared to 66 percent of the overall respondents.

New Mexico separated its survey respondents by the number of miles driven per year, to give a more accurate summary of motorists' attitudes and behavior. Half of those who drive more than 13,000 miles per year favored stricter enforcement of the law. Two-thirds also felt that an energy "crisis" still exists.

One of the nine studies was federally funded as part of the Department of Transportation's national public service advertising campaign initiated last June to inform and educate the public on the importance of observing the 55 mph speed limit.

In this study, representative public opinion surveys of motorists' attitudes and behavior on the speed limit law were conducted before and after the campaign. The study shows that three-fourths of the respondents observed the speed limit "about the same" as before the campaign, while one-fifth observed it "much more often" or a "little more often."

A variety of reasons were cited for obeying the speed limit, from "fear of arrest," to the public belief that slower speeds "save energy and lives."

A brief summary of the surveys analyzed follows:

<u>State</u>	<u>Conducted By</u>	<u>Percent Favor</u>	<u>Percent Opposed</u>	<u>Percent No Opinion</u>
California	San Francisco Examiner	63	37	
Georgia	State Highway Patrol	75	15	10
Maryland	State Police	80	20	
Nevada	Office of Highway Safety	58	34	8
New Hampshire	Highway Safety Agency	87	10	3
New Mexico	Traffic Safety Commission	71	28	1
New York	Daily News	83	14	3
National	Gallup	73	21	6
National	Advertising Council	72	20	8

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY
February 23, 1977

NHTSA -- 12-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

NEW MOTORCYCLE RIDER TRAINING COURSE AVAILABLE

A broad training program for motorcycle riders, developed by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation, has been presented formally to the U. S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The Motorcycle Rider Course offers the latest in teaching techniques and instructional aids to motorcycle safety educators, and is currently being distributed throughout the nation.

In June 1975, the Foundation and the NHTSA signed a cooperative agreement designed to achieve significant reduction in the number and severity of accidents involving motorcycles. The agreement covers motorcycle safety education, licensing, research and public information programs.

The course package is divided into seven basic units and combines 23 hours of classroom and on-cycle activities to make learning to ride an enjoyable and safe experience. Riders and instructors across the country contributed their experiences to the development of the course materials.

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

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

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY
February 24, 1977

CONSUMER ADVISORY REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

NHTSA -- 10-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT PROPOSES TO IMPROVE
ODOMETER DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The U. S. Department of Transportation has moved to improve a federal regulation that requires a person selling a motor vehicle to disclose certain information about the vehicle's odometer.

The department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issued a notice designed to increase the effectiveness of the federal law against odometer tampering and fraud. The notice proposes to amend the form and content of the odometer disclosure statement.

A section of the Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act, enacted in 1972, makes it unlawful to tamper with an odometer for the purpose of concealing the actual mileage of a vehicle.

As an additional safeguard for purchasers, who generally rely on the odometer as a guide to a vehicle's condition and value, the NHTSA issued odometer disclosure requirements that became effective March 1, 1973.

The current regulation requires each person selling or transferring ownership of a motor vehicle to furnish a written, signed statement containing the odometer reading at the time of transfer; the date of transfer; the address of the seller; the make, model and year of the vehicle, its body type, identification number and last license plate.

In addition, if the seller knows that the odometer reading is different from the actual number of miles the vehicle has traveled, he or she must include a statement that the actual mileage is unknown.

Because some people have made improper use of this statement, particularly those who are guilty of odometer rollbacks, the NHTSA proposes to require sellers to indicate either that the odometer reading is true, the reading is not true and should not be relied upon, or the reading reflects the number of miles in excess of the designed mechanical odometer limit.

The federal safety agency also wants sellers to certify that the odometer was not altered, set back, or disconnected while he or she was the owner of the vehicle. Another requirement would have both buyer and seller sign the disclosure statement, instead of only the seller.

Amendments to the Cost Savings Act provide for civil and criminal penalties for odometer violations. Any violation could result in a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 or a criminal penalty of up to \$50,000, one year imprisonment, or both.

The secretary of transportation now is authorized to conduct any inspections or investigations necessary to protect consumers from odometer rollback or tampering.

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

**CONSUMER ADVISORY
REQUEST FOR
PUBLIC COMMENT**

NHTSA -- 13-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT ANNOUNCES PUBLIC HEARING ON FUEL ECONOMY STANDARDS

A public hearing will be held next month on a government proposal to establish average fuel economy standards for model years 1981 through 1984 passenger automobiles, the U. S. Department of Transportation announced today.

Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams will preside at the start of the hearing, scheduled to begin March 22 and last several days. The hearing will be held in the Departmental Auditorium, located on Constitution Ave. between 12th and 14th Sts., NW, Washington, D. C.

In a notice of proposed rulemaking announcing the hearing, the department said it wants to give the industry and the general public an opportunity to present data, views, and arguments relevant to the issuance of fuel economy standards.

The Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act, as amended, provides that final rules are to be issued no later than July 1, 1977, on average fuel economy standards for passenger automobiles in each of the model years, 1981 through 1984.

The term "passenger automobiles" generally includes four-wheeled vehicles manufactured primarily for on-road use and for transportation of 10 or fewer passengers, such as sedans, coupes and station wagons.

The average fuel economy would represent the average fuel consumption of all passenger automobiles in a manufacturer's fleet in a particular model year.

The Act established an average fuel economy standard of 20.0 miles per gallon (mpg) for Model Year 1980 cars and 27.5 mpg for 1985 automobiles.

The standards set by the government would be for the intervening years (1981-1984) and must be set at a level which is the maximum feasible average fuel economy level, and which would result in steady progress toward meeting the 1985 level of 27.5 mpg.

Last September, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) published an advance notice of proposed rulemaking which solicited certain technical and economic information relevant to the establishment of these standards. On Jan. 27, 1977, eligible parties were invited to apply for financial assistance for participation in the rulemaking proceeding.

The government wants participants at the hearing and those who comment in writing to address such issues as:

The technological feasibility of standards set at various levels; economic practicability of the standards; the effect of other federal motor vehicle standards on fuel economy; the nation's need to conserve energy; the concept of steady progress toward the 1985 fuel economy standard; public acceptance of fuel efficient vehicles and consumer choice; and safety, environment, and consumer concerns.

The hearing will be conducted informally by a panel of Department of Transportation and other federal officials. The panel will question witnesses at the hearing, and members of the public may submit written questions to the panel to be directed at witnesses.

Any person interested in making a statement or submitting material at the hearing should notify the Director, Office of Automotive Fuel Economy (N44-01), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 4102, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D. C. 20590. Requests to participate and texts of oral or written statements must be submitted no later than March 17.

The closing date for written comments is April 7. They should be addressed to the Docket Section, Room 5108, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D. C. 20590.

#####

The first... standards... 1977...

The standards... 1977... level...

Last September... published... information...

The... participation... at the hearing...

The... standards... economic... effects...

The hearing... will be... organized...

... information... regarding...

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
February 25, 1977

DOT CITES OPEL KADETT
FUEL SYSTEM DEFECTS

CONSUMER ADVISORY

NHTSA --14-77 (RC)
Tel. 202-426-9550

The U. S. Department of Transportation today announced that safety defects which could cause fires have been discovered in the fuel systems of many Opel Kadetts manufactured by the General Motors Corp.

Involved are an estimated 315,000 Kadetts, ranging from model year 1964 through 1970, and still on the nation's highways, according to the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Specifically, the federal safety agency pointed out that 1968-1970 Kadetts have a tail light mounting bolt that can penetrate the fuel tank in right rear-end impacts at closing speeds below 10 miles per hour. This problem has been corrected on the 1971 and subsequent models by the installation of protective plastic caps on the tail lamp bolts.

NHTSA said its investigation also disclosed that fuel line separation occurs on the 1964 through 1970 Kadetts at almost twice the rate of comparable type vehicles. The manufacturer has since installed special clamps on the fuel line connections of all later model Kadetts.

General Motors has been notified of the of the initial safety defect determination, and will be given an opportunity to presents its views on the matter at a public meeting scheduled for 10.a.m. on March 30. The meeting will be held in Room 5332 of the Department of Transportation headquarters building, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D. C. Interested parties are also invited to submit their views at the public meeting, or by mail to the Office of Defects Investigation, NHTSA, DOT, Washington, D. C. 20590.

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY
February 28, 1977

NHTSA -- 15-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

NATION'S TRAFFIC FATALITIES DECLINE 12% IN JANUARY

The nation's traffic fatalities dipped dramatically in January declining 12 percent below the level of January 1976, the U. S. Department of Transportation said today.

The number of persons killed in traffic accidents last month (January) is estimated at 2,683, or 365 fewer than the 3,048 fatalities reported in January 1976.

The totals are based on preliminary figures reported to the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) by the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

It marked the 13th time in the last 18 months that the traffic fatality count was below the corresponding period of the previous year. The government attributed a key factor in the decline to adverse weather conditions, particularly in the eastern half of the nation.

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY
February 28, 1977

NHTSA -- 16-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT PROPOSES CHANGE IN BUMPER STANDARD DATE

A U. S. Department of Transportation proposal would delay for one year the effective date of the more stringent second phase requirements of a new bumper standard, but automotive manufacturers would still be required to meet first phase requirements by Sept. 1, 1978.

The primary goal of the standard is to reduce the cost to the consumer of low-speed collisions. Issued in March 1976, the standard limits damage to passenger car bumpers and prohibits damage to vehicle surfaces in low-speed crashes, beginning with cars manufactured in the 1979 model year.

Under the proposal, issued by the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the second and more stringent phase of requirements, which were to have become effective Sept. 1, 1979, would be delayed one year, until Sept. 1, 1980.

The government is proposing the delay in response to petitions for reconsideration of the final rule by General Motors and Ford Motor Co. Other petitions for reconsideration of the rule have not yet been answered by the agency, but will be addressed by separate Federal Register notice in the near future.

In addition to specifying limitations on damage to non-safety related components and vehicle surface areas, the standard also incorporates the safety requirements currently contained in Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 215, Exterior Protection.

Standard No. 215 requires passenger cars to withstand crashes of 5 miles per hour, both front and rear, without damage to lighting, fuel, exhaust, cooling and latching systems.

Effective Sept. 1, 1978, the new standard requires that all new passenger cars be equipped with front and rear bumpers capable of sustaining barrier and pendulum crash tests at 5 m.p.h. and corner impacts at 3 m.p.h. No damage will be permitted to any part of the vehicle except to the bumper itself and the brackets, fasteners, etc., that attach the bumpers to the chassis frame. The pendulum test insures greater uniformity in bumper height to help eliminate damage caused by mismatching bumpers.

The requirements that were to have taken effect Sept. 1, 1979, are more stringent, limiting damage to the bumper face bar to 3/8-inch dents and limiting overall bumper set to 3/4-inch. Bumper set is the overall flattening of the bumper face bar.

General Motors objected to the prescribed escalation of the bumper requirements for Sept. 1, 1979, only one year after the standard's initial effective date, on grounds that compliance with two sets of bumper requirements within such a short period of time would be too costly.

Ford argued for a delay so that necessary design changes could be made concurrently with ones scheduled to be made in order to comply with fuel economy standards contained in the Energy Policy and Conservation Act.

Interested persons are invited to submit comments on the proposed delay to the Docket Section, Room 5219, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D.C. 20590. Comments must be received on or before April 11, 1977.

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



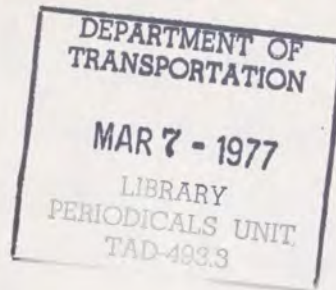


DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590



FOR RELEASE THURSDAY
March 3, 1977

NHTSA -- 19-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT TO ALLOW PRODUCTION
OF TEMPORARY USE SPARE TIRE

The U. S. Department of Transportation said-today it will permit production of a new "temporary use" spare tire which will be manufactured by the Firestone Tire and Rubber Co.

The department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) said the new spare tire is designed to produce more trunk space in passenger cars, while reducing the vehicle's total weight.

The tire has a higher inflation pressure, 60 pounds per square inch (PSI), different dimensions, and a shorter treadwear life than conventional tires. In some cases, its diameter may differ slightly from that of the conventional tire it is designed to replace.

The federal safety agency said, however, that when used with three conventional tires, the manufacturer's data indicate that there is no significant effect upon the vehicle's handling performance.

The new spare tire design was issued as an amendment to Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 109, "New Pneumatic Tires - Passenger Cars," effective immediately. The NHTSA said the "temporary use" spare will be required to meet the same performance levels as conventional tires.

#####

NEWS

DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
MAR 2 - 1977

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

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

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
March 4, 1977

NHTSA - 11-77 (RC)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT ISSUES NEW METRIC TIRE SPECIFICATIONS

Kilopascals and kilograms will soon become familiar terms to American motorists, under new metric tire size designations issued by the U. S. Department of Transportation.

The department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) said issuance of the new metric tire specifications is consistent with a worldwide effort at standardization of tire designations.

The tires will be required to meet the same level of safety performance as existing tires, with maximum load ratings expressed in kilograms (in place of pounds), and maximum permissible inflation pressures in kilopascals (kPa), in place of pounds per square inch, (PSI).

Sidewall labeling on these tires will have the metric unit figures supplemented by English system equivalents for the indicated loads and inflations.

The metric system change was issued as an amendment to Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 109 "New Pneumatic Tires - Passenger Cars," effective immediately.

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
March 4, 1977

NHTSA -- 17-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT TO PUBLISH LIST
OF FUTURE RULEMAKING ACTIONS

CONSUMER ADVISORY

A list of all significant motor vehicle rulemaking actions, contemplated for future models, will be published annually beginning this fall, the U. S. Department of Transportation announced today.

The list, to be developed by the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), will be published in the Federal Register each October, and address the 5-year period that begins 1 year following the date of publication.

The NHTSA noted that publication of its plans to develop new or additional requirements in a particular area, such as automotive safety, fuel economy, and consumer savings, will encourage direct and effective public participation and comments from the beginning of the rulemaking process.

The list will include major rulemaking actions expected to be taken, with a brief description, the anticipated date of publication of the action, and the name and address of a person within the agency who may be contacted for further information.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





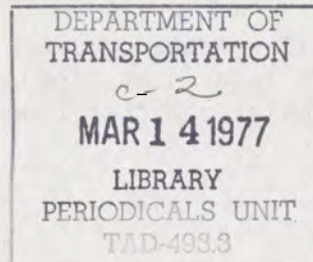
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY
March 10, 1977



NHTSA -- 18-77 (RC)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT SETS FUEL ECONOMY
FOR LIGHT TRUCKS

The U. S. Department of Transportation today announced new fuel economy requirements for model year 1979 light trucks and similar vehicles rated at not more than 6,000 pounds gross vehicle weight.

Expressed in terms of combined highway-city mileage, the standards were written by the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) under the Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act, as amended, and are regarded as an important energy saving measure.

New light pickup trucks and vans, will be required to meet an average fuel economy standard of 17.2 miles per gallon. Four wheel drive, general utility, jeep-type vehicles must achieve an average fuel economy of 15.8 miles per gallon, NHTSA said.

Originally, the federal safety agency had proposed a single fuel economy standard of 18.7 m.p.g. for all of these light vehicles, but decided to lower the requirements to reflect the effect on fuel economy measurement that would result from a change in the 1979 fuel economy testing procedures utilized by the Environmental Protection Agency. The new testing procedures more accurately reflect real, on-the-road, fuel economy which is not affected by this lowering of the requirements.

- more -

In addition, NHTSA said, a separate standard is justified for jeep-type vehicles to more properly reflect their lower operational fuel economy because of such characteristics as four wheel drive, combined with high drive ratios.

Failure to comply with these standards will subject the manufacturer, under the Act, to a civil penalty of \$5 for each one-tenth of a mile per gallon that the average falls below the standard, multiplied by the total number of the manufacturer's vehicles to which the standard applies.

NHTSA added that it will propose fuel economy standards for models manufactured after 1979 at a later date, and is considering future standards for trucks and similar vehicles rated up to 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight.

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY
March 14, 1977

NHTSA -- 21-77 (BMA)
Tel. (202) 426-0670

DEFECT INVESTIGATORY CASES REPORT

A report listing all defect investigations, surveys and recall campaign audits in progress as of Dec. 31, 1976, was issued today by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The federal safety agency report lists 55 active investigations, including six in which an initial or final determination has been made. Of the latter, NHTSA findings have been disputed by manufacturers in three cases and are currently in litigation.

The report also lists 36 surveys and recall campaign audits in progress, and the termination of 13 investigations during the months of November and December.

NHTSA's regular report series is issued to provide motorists, as well as the motor vehicle industry, with a complete account of federal defect investigation activity, while at the same time providing defect-related information in the interest of highway safety.

Interested persons with information bearing on current investigations are invited to write to: The Office of Consumer Services, U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D.C. 20590.

Reports should indicate the make, model, year and serial number (VIN) of the vehicle, and all pertinent facts relating to the failure. Persons wishing to review summaries of the NHTSA's findings in terminated cases, or in the public file for suspended cases, may do so in technical reference room 5108 of the NHTSA at the above address.

PLEASE NOTE:

These reports are furnished to the Consumer Product Information Center, Pueblo, Colorado for distribution in single copies free upon written request. Since the information Center lacks means to maintain individual monthly "subscription listing" for automatic mail-out, persons wishing to receive copies must request them each month from the above address.

TOLL FREE "HOTLINE" REMINDER:

Persons wishing to report automobile safety-related defects, request vehicle information or obtain information on activities of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration may use the NHTSA Auto Safety Hotline, direct to the Washington headquarters office.

This number is (800) 424-9393
Washington, D.C. residents may call 426-0123

SAFETY RELATED DEFECT INVESTIGATORY CASES
TERMINATED DURING NOVEMBER, 1976

Case Number: 098
Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company
Make: Ford
Model: Fairlane and Mustang
Year(s): 1966-1970

Possible Problems: Failure of the drop-in fuel tank due to exposure of certain vents to rupture by shifting luggage.

Conclusions: Investigation has disclosed the following:

1. Drop-in fuel tank systems present no fire hazard which does not also exist in strap-on or other similarly located motor vehicle fuel tank systems.
2. The fuel tank vent system for the subject Ford vehicles was not shown to fail in significant numbers.
3. In those instances where failure reportedly occurred it was not possible to verify the failure or that property damage or injury accident resulted specifically from the drop-in fuel tank/vent system.
4. There is no reason to believe that the drop-in fuel tank/vent system will present any greater hazard to motor vehicle safety in the future than it has in the past.

Case Number: 132
Manufacturer: General Motors Corporation
Make: GM
Models: All
Year(s): 1965-1969

Possible Problems: Failure of quadrajet carburetor due to fuel leakage at plug resulting in fire potential.

Conclusions: By letter dated October 6, 1976, General Motors Corp. advised the NHTSA of its intention to conduct an owner notification campaign and to install, free of charge, a special bracket designed to prevent loss of the carburetor inlet plug, pursuant to court order, Civil Action Nos. 75-0047 and 75-0049 dated July 23, 1976, entered by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Recall Campaign #76-0160, received 10-6-76.

Case Number: 266
Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company
Make: Ford
Model: Lincoln-Mercury Passenger Cars & Light Duty Trucks 1968-1969

Possible Problems: Alleged failure of ignition switch due to poor connection between harness plug and switch.

Conclusions: Investigation has established that switch wiring connector failures do occur but with adequate warning to the operator. Failure is generally progressive in nature. No injuries have been reported in connection with this problem. The information regarding the reported problem and its consequences indicates that they are not likely to represent a greater threat to motor vehicle safety in the future than in the past.

Case Number: C2-25
Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company, General Motors Corp., International Harvester & Chrysler Corporation
Make: School Bus
Model: School Bus
Year(s): Pre-1969

Possible Problems: Alleged school bus hydraulic brake steel tubing failures due to corrosion.

Conclusions: Investigation disclosed that "state of the art" brake tubing was used on all pre-1969 U.S. manufactured motor vehicles. Whatever safety implications may be involved in use of steel hydraulic brake tubing do not appear feasibly remediable through manufacturer's notification campaigns to owners, particularly in snow belt areas where road salts and abrasives are used for snow and ice control. A news release has been issued to make owners of older vehicles aware of the possible leakage with particular emphasis on increased inspection of school buses.

Case Number: C4-27
Manufacturer: Champion Home Builders
Make: Motorhome
Model: Concord 28-Foot
Year(s): 1973

Possible Problems: Alleged failure of gas tank. Location and installation of gas tank may cause overloading.

Conclusions: In view of the fact that investigation has disclosed no reports of suspension component failure and has established that subject motorhomes have calculated cargo carrying capacities sufficient to carry eight people plus some 626 pounds of additional personal cargo, further investigation appears unwarranted.

Case Number: C4-51
Manufacturer: Globe Fabricated
Make: Auto Jack Stands
Model: JS-100 and JS-200
Year(s): Various

Possible Problems: Failure to meet load rating.

Conclusions: A recall campaign by the manufacturer does not appear feasible, since the company has no assets. Action to protect the consumer has already been taken in the form of a Consumer Protection Bulletin. Further expenditure of agency resources does not appear to be justified in this case.

Case Number: C4-58
Manufacturer: Volvo
Make: Volvo
Model: Volvo
Year(s): 1970-1973

Possible Problems: Alleged electronic fuel injector leakage.

Conclusions: This investigation has disclosed a zero level of fire frequency occurring from leaking Bosch electronic fuel injectors on Volvo automobiles. The information developed also indicates that because of the high replacement rate of the subject fuel injectors with improved units, the probability of a leakage problem occurring in the future is minimal.

Case Number: C5-02
Manufacturer: Cabana Coach Corp.
Make: Motorhome
Model: 25-Foot
Year(s): 1970

Possible Problems: Alleged suspension failure.

Conclusions: In view of the fact that Cabana Coach Corp. has undergone bankruptcy proceedings, has no assets, and is therefore unable to carry out provisions of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Act of 1966, further investigation appears unwarranted.

Case Number: C7-01
Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company
Make: Mustang, Pinto & Bobcat
Model: Those with 2.3 Liter Engines
Year(s): 1976

Possible Problems: Alleged failure of the fuel line/filter connector resulting in engine compartment fires.

Conclusions: Preliminary analysis by the Engineering Analysis Division disclosed that engine compartment fires on the subject vehicles are caused by fuel leakage where the short, flexible fuel hose joins the fuel line from the fuel pump to the carburetor fuel filter.

Subsequent to the opening of a formal investigation, but prior to the initiation of any investigative activity, Ford advised the NHTSA by letter dated October 22, 1976, of its finding of the existence of a safety-related defect in the rubber fuel line-carburetor fuel filter connection. Ford also advised of its intention to initiate a recall action (Recall Campaign 76-0170). The announced plan for recall action by the manufacturer renders moot the need for investigation in this matter.

SAFETY RELATED DEFECT INVESTIGATORY CASES
TERMINATED DURING DECEMBER, 1976

Case Number: 258.5
Manufacturer: General Motors Corporation
Make: General Motors
Model: Cadillac, Pontiac, Oldsmobile & Buick
Year(s): 1965-1969

Possible Problems: Secondary effects from shearing of engine mounts.

Conclusions: By letters dated July 28, 1976, GM advised the NHTSA of its intention to conduct an owner notification campaign and to install engine restraint cables free of charge pursuant to consent order in Civil Action No. 75-0048 dated July 1, 1976, entered by the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. In addition, GM has agreed to "Submit and maintain all of the material and information required for defect notification campaigns by 49 CFR Part 573." Recall Campaign #76-0120 received August 2, 1976.

Case Number: C3-18
Manufacturer: General Motors Corporation
Make: Chevrolet
Model: Impala
Year(s): 1968-1970

Possible Problems: Alleged breakage at hub of steering wheel.

Conclusions: This investigation has not established that steering wheel failures on 1969-1970 passenger vehicles manufactured by GM has resulted or is likely to result in or create a trend of accidents or injuries in the subject vehicles.

Case Number: C3-28
Manufacturer: International Harvester Corporation
Make: Scout
Model: 800A & 800B
Year(s): 1970-1973

Possible Problems: Alleged clutch cable breakage due to bending fatigue.

Conclusions: Analysis of the available data indicate that there was a design problem in the original clutch cable and that the first two field fixes provided by IHC were inadequate. A significant number of individuals suffered repeated breakage of clutch cables. However, no trend in injury or property damage accidents has been demonstrated in the past as a result of clutch cable breakage; there is no basis to believe that such a trend did, in fact, exist or that one will develop in the future.

Case Number: C4-22
Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company
Make: Pinto
Model: Station Wagon
Year(s): 1972-1973

Possible Problems: Alleged failure of assembly aid tab on rear wheel well. Tab may contact and cut tire.

Conclusions: Investigation, including testing, failed to disclose that the buck preclamp tabs on 1972-1973 Pinto station wagons cause a tire failure trend in the subject group of vehicles. No information was developed which would indicate that such a trend will occur in the future.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: December 31, 1976

I. INVESTIGATIONS

Those cases listed hereon are the subjects of current safety-related investigations being conducted in accordance with NHTSA responsibilities under provisions of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966. When an investigation is begun, it should not be assumed that a defect exists; only that a safety-related problem has been reported with sufficient indication of its existence to justify a formal investigation. The aim of the formal investigation is to establish whether a vehicle defect is causing the problem, and, if so, how it happens, and how it may be remedied. The NHTSA will make public its conclusions upon completion of each investigation. In line with the foregoing, the NHTSA solicits from the public pertinent information relating to the cases listed. By submitting such information, you make your contribution to highway safety.

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
128	Ford	F-250	1968-1969	16 x 5.5 Two Piece Wheel	Lock Ring Gutter Failure
190	All Manufacturers	Travel Trailers	1965-1970	Axles, Wheels and Tires	Overloading of Suspension
282	Ford	Ford Mercury	1965-1974	15 x 5-inch Single Piece Wheel	Alleged Wheel Rim Failure
C2-32	General Motors	GMC 1/2-Ton Pickups	1960-1970	15 x 5.5-inch Single Piece Wheel	Alleged Wheel Rim Failure
C2-53	Ford	All	1967 and later	Dual Brake Master Cylinders	Failure of Cylinder Due to Corrosion
C2-60	Volkswagen	All	Pre-1963	Heater	Engine Fume Intrusion into Passenger Compartment

-10-

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: December 31, 1976

I. INVESTIGATIONS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
C2-61	Ford	Ford, Mercury	1969-1971	15 x 6.5 Single Piece Wheel	Disc Failure
C3-02	Honda	CB 750, CB 500 and CB 450 (K3 & K4)	All	Gas Tank Filler Cap	Becomes Dislodged Allowing Gas to be Ignited
C3-03	Chrysler	All "C" Body	1969-1973	Bulkhead Electrical Connector	Becomes Disconnected
C3-27	General Motors	Chevrolet Vega	1971-1973	Steering Relay Rod	Alleged Lockup of the Steering Relay Rod by Foreign Objects
C3-34	General Motors	Light Duty Trucks	1966-1971	Rear Axle Control Arm	Alleged Rear Axle Control Arm Failures
C3-35	International Harvester	Travelall 1110, 4x4	1972-1973	Steering Arm Ball	Alleged Steering Instability Upon Hard or Panic Brake Use
C3-43	General Motors	Cadillac Eldorado & Oldsmobile Toronado	1967-1973	Front Wheel Mounting Bolts	Alleged Failure of Front Wheel Mounting Bolts
C4-07	Ford	Ford & Mercury	1970-1971	Hood Latch	Failure of Latch Mechanism
C4-08	International Harvester	1600, 1700 and 1800 Series Loadstar Chassis	1972-1973	Rear Axle U-Bolts/Nuts	Alleged Low Torque of Rear Axle U-Bolts/Nuts

-11-

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: December 31, 1976

I. INVESTIGATIONS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
C4-09	Chrysler	Dodge Darts and Plymouth Valiants	1967-1972	Brake Proportioning Valve	Rear Wheel Lockup
C4-10	Winnebago	D24 Motorhome	1970-1971	Front End Suspension	Alleged Front End Suspension Overload
C4-11	Action Industries Inc.	24 and 25-Foot Motorhome	1971	Front End Suspension	Alleged Unsatisfactory Performance of the Front End Suspension Components
C4-12	Champion Home Builders	24-Foot Motorhome	1971	Front End Suspension	Alleged Inadequate Front End Suspension System
C4-13	Boise Cascade	Lifetime Premier 23-Foot Motorhome	1969-1971	Front End Suspension	Alleged Inadequate Front End Suspension System
C4-14	PRF Industries	Travco 220 Motorhome	1970	Front End Suspension	Alleged Inadequate Front End Suspension System
C4-15	General Motors	Cadillac	1969-1970	Air Conditioner Blower Relay	Failure May Cause Overloading of Electrical Harness
C4-17	General Motors	Chevrolet Series C, P, G-10 Trucks and GMC Series C, P & G-1500 Trucks	1971-1972	Steering Tie Rod	Separation of Ball From Socket

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: December 31, 1976

I. INVESTIGATIONS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
C4-18	Ford	Fairlane and Ranchero, Mercury Montego, Ford Falcon, Mercury Comet	1965-1969 1965-1969 1965-1970 1965-1970	Engine Mounts	Secondary Effects from Shearing of Engine Mounts
C4-20	Toyota	Corona and Corolla	1971	Hood Latch	Alleged Unsatisfactory Per- formance of the Hood Latch System
C4-23	General Motors	Buick Opel	1964-1971	Fuel Tank and System	Fuel System Integrity
C4-26	General Motors	All Passenger Cars	1967-1973	Power Steering Gear	Alleged Power Steering Lockup and Self-Steering Problems
C4-28	Ford	All Pintos	1971-1972	Rack and Pinion Steering	Alleged Steering Difficulty or Loss of Steering Control
C4-29	Ford	All with 4-Barrel Carburetors	1968-1974	Non-Metallic Fast Idle Cam	Breakage Causes Jamming of Throttle in Open Position
C4-30	Ford	School Bus B-700	1966-1974	Brake Drum	Alleged Front Brake Drum Failure
C4-34	Nissan	Datsun 510 Datsun 1200	1969-1971 1971	Filler Hose and Three-Way Conn- ector	Alleged Filler Hose and Three-Way Connector Leaks

-13-

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: December 31, 1976

I. INVESTIGATIONS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
C4-35	Nissan	Datsun 510	1968-1971	Transverse Link	Alleged Transverse Link Failure
C4-44	General Motors	All With Rochester Carburetors	1965-1972	Carburetor Float	Alleged Carburetor Flooding Due to Float Saturation
C4-46	Western Auto	Wizard A-5030	Various	Auto Jack Stand	Failure to Meet Load Rating
C4-52	International Harvester	Scout II Travelall and Pickup	1970-1973	Brake Lining	Alleged Erratic Service Brake Operation or Performance
C4-53	General Motors	Chevelle	1965-1969	Engine Mounts	Alleged Engine Mount Failure
C4-59	Volkswagen	VW Type 3 prior to August 1971; Porsche 914, 1.8, 1.7 and 2.0 Liter Engine; VW Type 4, 1.7 Liter Engine	1970-1972	Bosch Fuel Injector	Alleged Electronic Fuel Injector Leakage
C5-01	General Motors	Chevrolet Corvettes	1964-1974	Rear Wheel Bearing	Failure of Rear Wheel Bearings
C5-03	International Harvester	Travelalls and Pickups	1974	Battery Cable	Alleged Shorting of the Positive Battery Cable

-14-

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: December 31, 1976

I. INVESTIGATIONS

-15-

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
C5-04	Ceat S. p.A.	Mercurio 10.00 x 20/22,14-ply (Load Range G) Steel Belted Radial	Various	Tire	Failure in Bead Area
C5-07	General Motors	Pontiacs with V-8 Engines	1966-1972	Timing Gear and Chain	Failure of Timing Gear and Chain
C5-08	Toyota Motor Sales	Corolla and Carina Vehicles equipped with 1600cc engines	1971-1973	Throttle	Alleged Throttle Sticking
C5-09	Kar-Rite	Jack Stand Model 1052, Rated at 4,000 Pounds	All	Jack stand	Alleged Unsatisfactory Performance
C5-25	Volvo	Volvo	1973	Front Bumper Bracket	Failure of Front Bumper Support Bracket
C5-26	Ford	Mercury Capri	1971-1973	Seat Failures	Failure in Reclining Mechanism Allowing Seat to Rotate Rearwards which Could Result in Loss of Control
C5-32	Fruhling Products Incorporated	Fruhling SAF-T-RELEASE Motorcycle Helmet Chin Strap	All	Helmet Strap Fastner	Motorcycle Helmet Strap May be Prone to Opening While in Use

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

II. INVESTIGATIONS IN LITIGATION, INITIAL DETERMINATION AND/OR SUSPENSION

Report for
Month Ending: December 31, 1976

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
140	Ford (FINAL DEFECT DETERMINATION MADE 8-12-75, IN LITIGATION)	Mustang and Cougar	1968-1969	Seat Back Pivot Arm	Inboard Pivot Failures
161	GM, CHRYSLER, AMC and FORD (INITIAL DEFECT DETERMINATION MADE 5-16-75)	All	1965-1971	Power Brake Vacuum	No Power Assist With Failure
190.009	Monitor Coach (INITIAL DEFECT DETERMINATION MADE 12-1-76)	All Travel Trailers	1965-1970	Suspension System	Overloading of Suspension
287	Ford (INITIAL DEFECT DETERMINATION MADE 12-17-76).	Galaxie	1968-1970	Front Wheel Spindle	Fatigue Crack in Heel Area
C3-11	General Motors (IN LITIGATION 2-13-74)	Cadillac	1959-1960	Steering Pitman Arm	Fatigue Failure Causing Loss of Vehicle Control
C3-29	Ford (FINAL DEFECT DETERMINATION MADE 12-30-75 IN LITIGATION)	Mercury Capri	1971-1973	Windshield Wiper Arm Shaft and Motor	Arm Detaches from Drive Shaft Motor Failure Due to Underpower

-16-

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: December 31, 1976

III. SURVEYS AND AUDITS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
181.S	All Manufacturers	Various	Various	Parts Return Program	Review of Various Related Parts that May Contribute to a Safety Defect
S2-16	All Manufacturers	Recreational Vehicles	Various	Axles, Springs, Wheels & Tires	Loading of Suspension May Exceed Component Ratings
S4-45	Various Manufacturers	Various	Various	Auto Jack Stands and Auto Ramps	Failure to Meet Load Rating
S4-54	All Manufacturers	School Bus	All	Total Vehicle	Review of Records to Determine Possibility of Safety Defects
S4-55	All Manufacturers	Recreational Vehicles	Various	Wheels, Springs, Tires & Axles	Loading of Suspension May Exceed Component Rating in Late Model Vehicles
S6-09	Harley Davidson Company	Harley Davidson Motorcycle	1973-1974	Front Disc Brake Caliper Leakage	Alleged Leakage of Front Disc Brake Caliper
A3-04	Toyota	1200 and 1600cc	1970-1971	Fuel System	Recall #72-0014
A4-21	Ford	Torino and Ranchero	1972	Rear Axle Assembly	Recall #72-0095
A4-63	General Motors	Chevrolet, Pontiac, Buick and Oldsmobile	1974	Seat Belt Retractor	Recall #74-0016

-17-

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: December 31, 1976

III. SURVEYS AND AUDITS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
A5-06	Mack Trucks	CF, MB, R, RD and TU	1974	Front Axle	Recall #74-0001
A5-15	Ford	Torino, T-Bird, Montego, Cougar, Rancho and Continental Mark IV	1974	Speed Control	Recall #74-0011
A6-03	International Harvester	Transtar II	1974	Incorrect Routing of Air Lines	Recall #74-0220
A6-04	General Motors	Cadillac (all except Eldorado)	1973-1974	Steering Idler Arm Assembly	Recall #74-0202
A6-05	Bluebird Body	School Bus, Ford	1974	Tubing and Fittings to Rear Brake Chamber	Recall #74-0209
A6-11	International Harvester	Loadstar and Cargostar	1975	Routing of Air Supply Lines/Valves to Avoid Frame Contact and Subsequent Damage	Recall #75-0191
A6-12	Nissan Motors	Datsun FL-510	1971-1975	Alleged Gasoline Leak	Recall #75-0181

-18-

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: December 31, 1976

III. SURVEYS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
A6-13	American Motors	Matador	1975	Alleged Failure of Carburetor Secondary Throttle Lock-out Lever	Recall #75-0057
A6-15	Sebring Vanguard Incorporated	Citicars	April thru Dec. 1974	Alleged Failure of Master Cylinder Check Valve	Recall #75-0034
A6-17	Freightliner, Inc.	All	1967-1975	Alleged Brake Pedal Failure	Recall #75-0119
A6-18	General Motors	Chevrolet, Buick and Oldsmobile	1975	Alleged Failure of Spare Tire Hold Down Hook	Recall #75-0129
A6-20	General Motors	Cadillac Seville	1976	Flexible Coupling Steering Gear	Recall #75-0180
A6-21	Flexible Transit	Bus	1974-1975	Front Axle Radius Rod Bracket	Recall #75-0177
A6-23	British Leyland	Austin Marina	1974-1975	Deterioration of Front Brake Hoses	Recall #75-0174
A6-24	Norton Triumph Corporation	Triumph T160 Trident Motor-cycle	1975	Alleged Failure of Rear Foot Brake Lever	Recall #75-0157

-19-

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: December 31, 1976

III. SURVEYS AND AUDITS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
A6-25	Ford	Certain Econolines and Light Duty Trucks	1975	Failure of Front Brake Caliper	Recall #75-0134
A6-26	Chrysler Corp.	Various Plymouths and Dodges	1975	Disengagement of the Lower Control Arm Strut	Recall #75-0126
A6-27	Yamaha International Corp.	LB80-11AC and LB80-11HC Motorcycles	1976	Potential Oil Delivery Pipe Problem	Recall #75-0125
A6-28	Ford	Capri I Capri II	1974 1976	Potential Front Brake Hose Leakage	Recall #75-0093
A6-29	Chrysler	Plymouth, Dodge and Chrysler	1974-1975	Potential Tandem Power Brake Booster Diaphragm Failure	Recall #75-0086
A6-30	Ford	1974 F Series Trucks and 1974-1975 B Series	1974-1975	Front Spring Rear Hangar Bracket	Recall #76-0035
A6-32	General Motors	Chevette	1976	Front Brake Hose Gets Hung Up On Lower Control Arm	Recall #76-0022
A6-33	American Honda	360 Series Motorcycle	1974-1975	Drive Chain Cam Tensioner	Recall #75-0066

-20-

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
 Month Ending: December 31, 1976

III. SURVEYS AND AUDITS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
A6-34	Mercedes Benz	All Models	1976	Cruise Control Cable Sticking	Recall #76-0027
A6-35	Chrysler Corp.	Cordoba and Dodge Charger	1975	Cruise Control Lost Motion Link Going Over Center and Jamming	Recall #76-0008
A7-02	White Motor Corp.	Autocar	10-1-73 thru 3-30-76	Steering Arm Failure	Recall #76-0073
A7-03	Fiat Motor Co.	Lancia Beta Coupe and Sedan	1975-1976	Brake Line Assembly	Recall #76-0071

-21-

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: December 31, 1976

I. INVESTIGATIONS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
C6-19	Alsport, Inc.	Tri-Sport, SL Series	1974	Chassis, Drive Train and Brake	Alleged Failure of Chassis Drive Train and Brake
C6-22	American Motors Corporation	Pacer	1975	Power Steering Gear	Alleged Leakage of Rack and Pinion Seal Resulting in Possible Loss of Steering Control
C6-31	Ford	F-250 and F-350 Series Trucks	1972-1974	Budd Duo-Rim & "C" Section Side Ring	Alleged Explosive Separation of "C" Section Side Ring From Budd Duo-Rim Wheels



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590



FOR RELEASE THURSDAY
March 17, 1977

NHTSA -- 20-77 (RC)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT ESTIMATES ANNUAL TRAFFIC
TOLL COST AT \$38 BILLION

Motor vehicle accidents cost American society nearly \$38 billion annually, in terms of deaths, injuries, lost income and property damage, according to a study released today by the U. S. Department of Transportation.

"Societal Costs of Motor Vehicle Accidents, 1975," compiled by the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), provides a detailed breakdown of this total bill.

The statistics are based on societal losses resulting from fatalities, non-fatal injuries, and property damage only accidents, and do not represent the total value placed upon human life. Production losses (present and future), medical, funeral, legal, insurance, vehicle damage, accident investigation, and traffic delay costs are major areas discussed in the report. Future production losses, in particular, accounted for a very large share of the total cost for fatalities and the most severe injuries.

The 46,800 motor vehicle fatalities listed by the report for 1975 produced losses to society of \$13.44 billion. The cost for non-fatal injuries was \$12.75 billion, and property damage only accidents \$11.40 billion, the federal safety agency said.

Based on the factors considered, a fatality accounts for \$287,175 in societal costs; recognizing that this figure does not represent the total value of a lost life.

Non-fatal injuries, in five categories ranging from those where survival was uncertain to minor injuries, had an average cost of \$3,200. The most severe injuries had a cost of \$192,240 per injury, as compared to the lowest injuries at an average cost of \$2,190. An estimated 85 percent of the total non-fatal injuries were in the lowest injury category and accounted for 58 percent of the \$12.75 billion total for non-fatal injury costs.

The vehicles in fatal and near fatal crashes were usually "totalled" with an average cost of \$3,990. Total vehicle damage costs in 1975 for all accidents were calculated at \$13.8 billion.

A free copy of the report is available from the NHTSA, General Services Division, Room 4423, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D. C. 20590.

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
March 25, 1977

NHTSA -- 24-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

TRAFFIC DEATHS DECLINE IN FEBRUARY

The nation's traffic fatalities showed a 4.5 percent decline in February below the level of February 1976, the U. S. Department of Transportation announced today.

The number of persons killed in traffic accidents last month (February) is estimated at 2,827, or 134 fewer than the 2,961 fatalities reported in February 1976.

The totals are based on preliminary figures reported to the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) by the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

It marked the 14th time in the last 19 months that the traffic fatality count was below the corresponding period of the previous year. Fatalities for the first two months of 1977 are running 9 percent below the same period of a year ago.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY
March 29, 1977

NHTSA -- 23-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT PROMOTES PUBLIC PARTICIPATION WITH OFFER OF FINANCIAL AID

Individuals and organizations interested in participating in regulatory proceedings on a federal motor vehicle safety standard dealing with occupant crash protection have been invited to apply for financial aid from the U. S. Department of Transportation.

The money is being made available under a new one year demonstration program designed to promote public participation in certain regulatory activities conducted by the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Applications for the federal funds, which are evaluated by a panel of departmental officials, must be submitted no later than April 4. The money is made available for out-of-pocket expenses.

On March 21, Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams said he will review the department's 1976 agreement with four manufacturers to voluntarily make available for sale more than 500,000 vehicles equipped with passive restraints, such as air bags, over a two-year period beginning with the 1980 model year.

Adams also announced a public hearing for April 27 to discuss possible standards for the installation of passive restraint systems effective with 1981 model year passenger cars.

Persons interested in applying for assistance should contact Mr. Hugh Oates, Office of Chief Counsel, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Washington, D. C. 20590. Phone 202-426-9511, for information on application procedures. Applications should be filed with Mr. Oates by 4:15 p.m., EST, on April 4.

Earlier this month, the agency granted its first financial awards under the program to five groups interested in participating in regulatory proceedings to set average fuel economy standards for automobiles manufactured in model years 1981 through 1984.

More than \$48,000 went to these organizations:

- Citizens for Clean Air, New York City, \$8,500.
- Center for Auto Safety, Washington, D. C. \$11,150.
- Environmental Defense Fund, Washington, D. C., \$15,000.
- Public Interest Campaign, Washington, D. C., \$4,100.
- Public Interest Economics Foundation, Washington, D. C. \$9,300.

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



TAD-493
NEWS

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

FOR 2 PM RELEASE FRIDAY
April 8, 1977

NHTSA 24-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

CLAYBROOK SWORN IN AS DOT SAFETY CHIEF

Joan Claybrook, former executive director of Congress Watch, an organization active in developing public interest legislation, was sworn in today as the administrator of the Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) by Transportation Secretary Brock Adams.

The oath of office was administered by the Secretary in an afternoon ceremony in the department's headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Ms. Claybrook, 39, began her federal career in 1959 as a research analyst in the legislative office of the Social Security Administration.

From September, 1966 to June, 1970, she worked as a special assistant at NHTSA to then administrator William Haddon, and to his successor, acting director Robert Brenner.

For more than two years after she left the federal government in 1970, Ms. Claybrook was a consumer advocate in the fields of health and safety, first as a researcher and organizer for Ralph Nader's Public Interest Research Group, and subsequently, director of Congress Watch.

She received a BA degree in history from Goucher College (Baltimore) in 1959, and a JD degree in 1973 from the Georgetown Law Center in Washington, D.C.

A native of Baltimore, Ms. Claybrook is a resident of Washington, D.C.

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

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

FOR RELEASE MONDAY
April 11, 1977

NHTSA -- 28-77 (RC)
Tel. 202-426-9550

NHTSA TO REQUIRE REPORTS ON FUEL ECONOMY PROGRESS

Automobile manufacturers will be required to submit detailed semiannual reports of their progress in attaining improved fuel economy under a new proposal announced today by the U. S. Department of Transportation.

The action responds to requirements of the Motor Vehicle Information and Cost Savings Act, as amended, and administered by the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The Act established an average fuel economy standard for passenger automobiles of 18 miles per gallon (mpg), 19 mpg, 20 mpg, and 27.5 mpg for model years 1978, 1979, 1980 and 1985, respectively. Standards for model years 1981-84 will be set by NHTSA. The NHTSA also establishes fuel economy standards for automobiles other than passenger cars, such as vans and pickup trucks.

Emphasizing the importance of achieving better automotive fuel economy, the federal safety agency noted that fuel consumed for transportation accounts for 53 percent of all petroleum consumed in this country, and that by 1990, imports could account for 50 percent of our annual petroleum needs, unless corrective measures are taken.

Domestic production of petroleum peaked in 1970 and has since been in a steady decline, while domestic consumption continues to increase at high rates, NHTSA said.

The proposal requires that the manufacturers submit the following information:

- o The fuel economy of the automobiles for current and future years.
- o Efforts that have been or will be made to improve their fuel economy.

- o Research, development, and testing activities that relate to fuel economy.
- o The impact of federal safety, emissions, damage susceptibility, and noise standards on fuel economy, and vice-versa.
- o The capital expenditure requirements for improving fuel economy.
- o The effects of the fuel economy improvement efforts on automobile prices and life cycle operating and maintenance costs.
- o The competitive effects of the fuel economy standards.

Each automobile manufacturer will be required to file two reports every model year, beginning with the 1978 model year. The first report, called a "pre-model year report," must be filed no later than one day prior to the start of the model year. This report will contain information concerning the average fuel economy of the automobiles to be produced by the manufacturer during the current model year and automobiles that will be produced by the manufacturer in future model years. The second report, called a "mid-model year report," will update the information provided in the pre-model year report on automobiles produced during the current model year.

This continuing information is needed, the federal safety agency said, to comply with statutory requirements for semiannual manufacturer compliance reports and for annual NHTSA reviews of the future fuel economy standards.

Failure to file a report would subject the manufacturer to a civil penalty of \$10,000 for each single day of violation, NHTSA added.

The closing day for written comments on the proposal is May 11. They should be addressed to the Docket Section, Room 5108, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D. C. 20590.

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY
April 19, 1977

NHTSA -- 26-77 (BMA)
Tel. (202) 426-0670

DEFECT INVESTIGATORY CASES REPORT

A report listing all defect investigations, surveys and recall campaign audits in progress as of Jan. 31, 1977, was issued today by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The federal safety agency report lists 54 active investigations, including six in which an initial or final defect determination has been made. Of the latter, NHTSA findings have been disputed by manufacturers in three cases and these are currently in litigation.

The report also lists 40 surveys and recall campaign audits in progress, including six audits newly opened during January, 1977.

NHTSA's regular report series is issued to provide motorists, as well as the motor vehicle industry, with a complete account of federal defect investigation activity, while at the same time providing defect-related information in the interest of highway safety.

Interested persons with information bearing on current investigations are invited to write to: The Office of Consumer Services, U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D.C. 20590.

Reports should indicate the make, model, year and serial number (VIN) of the vehicle, and all pertinent facts relating to the failure. Persons wishing to review summaries of the NHTSA's findings in terminated cases, or in the public file for suspended cases, may do so in technical reference room 5108 of the NHTSA at the above address.

PLEASE NOTE:

These reports are furnished to the Consumer Product Information Center, Pueblo, Colorado for distribution in single copies free upon written request. Since the Information Center lacks means to maintain individual monthly "subscription listing" for automatic mail-out, persons wishing to receive copies must request them each month from the above address.

TOLL FREE "HOTLINE" REMINDER:

Persons wishing to report automobile safety-related defects, request vehicle information or obtain information on activities of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration may use the NHTSA Auto Safety Hotline, direct to the Washington headquarters office.

This number is (800) 424-9393
Washington, D.C. residents may call 426-0123

Reporting Period: January 31, 1977

SAFETY RELATED DEFECT INVESTIGATORY CASES
TERMINATED THIS REPORTING PERIOD

Case Number: 190
Manufacturer: All Manufacturers
Make: All
Model: Travel Trailers
Year(s): 1965-1970

Possible Problems: Failure of Axles, Wheels and Tires, due to the overloading of the suspension system.

Conclusions:

1. All investigatory action for the 20 subcases comprising Case No. 190 is complete.
2. With the exception of subcase 190.009, all subcases have been closed and can be found in the NHTSA public files under their respective 190. numbers.
3. An initial determination of defect related to motor vehicle safety has been made for subcase No. 190.009 involving certain Monitor travel trailer models manufactured by the Wickes Corporation. Further action in this subcase will continue as Case No. 190.009.

Case Number: 190.016
Manufacturer: Redman Mobile Homes, Incorporated
Make: Kenskill Travel Trailers
Model: All
Year(s): 1965-1974

Possible Problems: Failure of Axles, Wheels and Tires, due to the overloading of the suspension system.

Conclusions: Because of the cargo capacity of these travel trailers and because of the paucity of suspension system failure reports, the agency has decided to close this case. Before doing so, however, DOT issued a news release reminding owners of the cargo capacity of these trailers and the hazards of overloading them.

Reporting Period: January 31, 1977

RECALL CAMPAIGN AUDITS
OPENED THIS REPORTING PERIOD

Case Number: A7-04
Manufacturer: International Harvester
Make: IHC
Model: C.O. and Conventional Transtar & Glider Kits
Year(s): 1976

Possible Problems: Steering Clamp Bolt failure due to insufficient torque. Recall Campaign Number 76-0143.

Case Number: A7-05
Manufacturer: Coachmen Industries
Make: Coachmen
Model: Certain Presidential, Statesman & VIP Model
Class A Motorhomes.
Year(s): September 1, 1974 thru August 28, 1976

Possible Problems: Failure of Gasoline Tank Support System.
Recall Campaign Number 76-0146.

Case Number: A7-06
Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company
Make: Econoline
Model: E-100, E-150, E-250 & E-350
Year(s): 1976

Possible Problems: Steering Gear Attachment Failure. Recall Campaign Number 76-0165.

Case Number: A7-07
Manufacturer: Argosy Manufacturing Company
Make: Argosy Trailers
Model: Serial Numbers 22D6V1757 thru 26T6V2540
Year(s): 1976

Possible Problems: Failure of Furnace Exhaust Vent Adaptor.
Recall Campaign Number 76-0167.

Case Number: A7-08
Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company
Make: Ford
Model: Pinto, Bobcat & Mustang II
Year(s): 1976

Possible Problems: Failure of Fuel Hose. Recall Campaign Number
76-0170.

Case Number: A7-09
Manufacturer: AM General Corporation
Make: Transit Coach
Model: All Models
Year(s): 1973-1976

Possible Problems: Steering Prop Shaft Yoke Pinch Bolt Failure.
Recall Campaign Number 76-0188.

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

I. INVESTIGATIONS

Those cases listed hereon are the subjects of current safety-related investigations being conducted in accordance with NHTSA responsibilities under provisions of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966. When an investigation is begun, it should not be assumed that a defect exists; only that a safety-related problem has been reported with sufficient indication of its existence to justify a formal investigation. The aim of the formal investigation is to establish whether a vehicle defect is causing the problem, and, if so, how it happens, and how it may be remedied. The NHTSA will make public its conclusions upon completion of each investigation. In line with the foregoing, the NHTSA solicits from the public pertinent information relating to the cases listed. By submitting such information, you make your contribution to highway safety.

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
128	Ford	F-250	1968-1969	16 x 5.5 Two Piece Wheel	Lock Ring Gutter Failure
282	Ford	Ford Mercury	1965-1974	15 x 5-inch Single Piece Wheel	Alleged Wheel Rim Failure
C2-32	General Motors	GMC 1/2-Ton Pickups	1960-1970	15 x 5.5-inch Single Piece Wheel	Alleged Wheel Rim Failure
C2-53	Ford	All	1967 and later	Dual Brake Master Cylinders	Failure of Cylinder Due to Corrosion
C2-60	Volkswagen	All	Pre-1963	Heater	Engine Fume Intrusion into Passenger Compartment

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

I. INVESTIGATIONS

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
C2-61	Ford	Ford, Mercury	1969-1971	15 x 6.5 Single Piece Wheel	Disc Failure
C3-02	Honda	CB 750, CB 500 CB 450 (K3 & K4)	All	Gas Tank Filler Cap	Becomes Dislodged Allowing Gas to be Ignited
C3-03	Chrysler	All "C" Body	1969-1973	Bulkhead Electrical Connector	Becomes Disconnected
C3-27	General Motors	Chevrolet Vega	1971-1973	Steering Relay Rod	Alleged Lockup of the Steering Relay Rod by Foreign Objects
C3-34	General Motors	Light Duty Trucks	1966-1971	Rear Axle Control Arm	Alleged Rear Axle Control Arm Failures
C3-35	International Harvester	Travelall 1110, 4x4	1972-1973	Steering Arm Ball	Alleged Steering Instability Upon Hard or Panic Brake Use
C3-43	General Motors	Cadillac Eldorado & Oldsmobile	1967-1973	Front Wheel Mounting Bolts	Alleged Failure of Front Wheel Mounting Bolts
C4-07	Ford	Ford & Mercury	1970-1971	Hood Latch	Failure of Latch Mechanism
C4-08	International Harvester	1600, 1700 and 1800 Series Loadstar Chassis	1972-1973	Rear Axle U-Bolts/Nuts	Alleged Low Torque of Rear Axle U-Bolts/Nuts

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

I. INVESTIGATIONS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
C4-09	Chrysler	Dodge Darts and Plymouth Valiants	1967-1972	Brake Proportioning Valve	Rear Wheel Lockup
C4-10	Winnebago	D24 Motorhome	1970-1971	Front End Suspension	Alleged Front End Suspension Overload
C4-11	Action Industries, Inc.	24 and 25-Foot Motorhome	1971	Front End Suspension	Alleged Unsatisfactory Performance of the Front End Suspension Components
C4-12	Champion Home Builders	24-Foot Motorhome	1971	Front End Suspension	Alleged Inadequate Front End Suspension System
C4-13	Boise Cascade	Lifetime Premier 23-Foot Motorhome	1969-1971	Front End Suspension	Alleged Inadequate Front End Suspension System
C4-14	PRF Industries	Travco 220 Motorhome	1970	Front End Suspension	Alleged Inadequate Front End Suspension System
C4-15	General Motors	Cadillac	1969-1970	Air Conditioner Blower Relay	Failure May Cause Overloading of Electrical Harness
C4-17	General Motors	Chevrolet Series C, P. G-10 Trucks and GMC Series C, P & G-1500 Trucks	1971-1972	Steering Tie Rod	Separation of Ball From Socket

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

I. INVESTIGATIONS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
C4-18	Ford	Fairlane and Ranchero Mercury Montego Ford Falcon Mercury Comet	1965-1969 1965-1969 1965-1970 1965-1970	Engine Mounts	Secondary Effects from Shearing of Engine Mounts
C4-20	Toyota	Coronas and Corollas	1971	Hood Latch	Alleged Unsatisfactory Per- formance of the Hood Latch System
C4-23	General Motors	Buick Opel	1964-1971	Fuel Tank and System	Fuel System Integrity
C4-26	General Motors	All Passenger Cars	1967-1973	Power Steering Gear	Alleged Power Steering Lockup and Self-Steering Problems
C4-28	Ford	All Pintos	1971-1972	Rack and Pinion Steering	Alleged Steering Difficulty or Loss of Steering Control
C4-29	Ford	All With 4-Barrel Carburetors	1968-1974	Non-Metallic Fast Idle Cam	Breakage Causes Jamming of Throttle in Open Position
C4-30	Ford	School Bus B-700	1966-1974	Brake Drum	Alleged Front Brake Drum Failure
C4-34	Nissan	Datsun 510 Datsun 1200	1969-1971 1971	Filler Hose and Three-Way Conn- ector	Alleged Filler Hose and Three-Way Connector Leaks

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

I. INVESTIGATIONS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
C4-35	Nissan	Datsun 510	1968-1971	Transverse Link	Alleged Transverse Link Failure
C4-44	General Motors	All With Rochester Carburetors	1965-1972	Carburetor Float	Alleged Carburetor Flooding Due to Float Saturation
C4-46	Western Auto	Wizard A-5030	Various	Auto Jack Stand	Failure of Meet Load Rating
C4-52	International Harvester	Scout II Travelall and Pickup	1970-1973	Brake Lining	Alleged Erratic Service Brake Operation or Performance
C4-53	General Motors	Chevelle	1965-1969	Engine Mounts	Alleged Engine Mount Failure
C4-59	Volkswagen	VW Type 3 prior to August 1971; Porsche 914 1.8, 1.7 and 2.0 Liter Engine; VW Type 4, 1.7 Liter Engine	1970-1972	Bosch Fuel Injector	Alleged Electronic Fuel Injector Leakage
C5-01	General Motors	Chevrolet Corvettes	1964-1974	Rear Wheel Bearing	Failure of Rear Wheel Bearings
C5-03	International Harvester	Travelalls and Pickups	1974	Battery Cable	Alleged Shorting of the Positive Battery Cable

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

I. INVESTIGATIONS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
C5-04	Ceat S. p. A.	Mercurio 10.00 x 20/22, 14-ply (Load Range G) Steel Belted Radial	Various	Tire	Failure in Bead Area
C5-07	General Motors	Pontiac; all V8 Equipped Engines	1966-1972	Timing Gear and Chain	Failure of Timing Gear and Chain
C5-08	Toyota Motor Sales	Corolla and Carina Vehicles equipped with 1600cc Engine	1971-1973	Throttle	Alleged Throttle Sticking
C5-09	Kar-Rite	Jack Stand Model 1052, Rated at 4,000 Pounds	All	Jack Stand	Alleged Unsatisfactory Performance
C5-25	Volvo	Volvo	1973	Front Bumper Bracket	Failure of Front Bumper Support Bracket
C5-26	Ford	Mercury Capri	1971-1973	Seat Failures	Failure in Reclining Mechanism Allowing Seat to Rotate Rearwards which Could Result in Loss of Control
C5-32	Fruhling Products Incorporated	Fruhling SAF-T-RELEASE Motorcycle Helmet Chin Strap	All	Helmet Strap Fastner	Motorcycle Helmet Strap May be Prone to Opening While in Use

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

I. INVESTIGATIONS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
C6-19	Alsport, Inc.	Tri-Sport, SL Series	1974	Chassis, Drive Train and Brake	Alleged Failure of Chassis Drive Train and Brake
C6-22	American Motors Corporation	Pacer	1975	Power Steering Gear	Alleged Leakage of Rack and Pinion Seal Resulting in Possible Loss of Steering Control
C6-31	Ford	F-250 and F-350 Series Trucks	1972-1974	Budd Duo-Rim & "C" Section Side Ring	Alleged Explosive Separation of "C" Section Side Ring From Budd Duo-Rim Wheels

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

II. INVESTIGATIONS IN LITIGATION, INITIAL DETERMINATION AND/OR SUSPENSION

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
140	Ford (FINAL DEFECT DETERMINATION MADE 8-12-75, IN LITIGATION)	Mustang and Cougar	1968-1969	Seat Back Pivot Arm	Inboard Pivot Failures
161	GM, CHRYSLER, AMC and FORD (INITIAL DEFECT DETERMINATION MADE 5-16-75)	All	1965-1971	Power Brake Vaccum	No Power Assist With Failure
190.009	Monitor Coach (INITIAL DEFECT DETERMINATION MADE 12-1-76)	All Travel Trailers	1965-1970	Suspension System	Overloading of Suspension
287	Ford (INITIAL DEFECT DETERMINATION MADE 12-17-76)	Galaxie	1968-1970	Front Wheel Spindle	Fatigue Crack in Heel Area
C3-11	General Motors (IN LITIGATION 2-13-74)	Cadillac	1959-1960	Steering Pitman Arm	Fatigue Failure Causing Loss of Vehicle Control
C3-29	Ford (FINAL DEFECT DETERMINATION MADE 12-30-75, IN LITIGATION)	Mercury Capri	1971-1973	Windshield Wiper Arm Shaft and Motor	Arm Detaches from Drive Shaft Motor. Failure Due to Underpower

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

III. SURVEYS AND AUDITS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
181.S	All Manufacturers	Various	Various	Parts Return Program	Review of Various Related Parts that May Contribute to a Safety Defect
S2-16	All Manufacturers	Recreational Vehicles	Various	Axles, Springs, Wheels & Tires	Loading of Suspension May Exceed Component Ratings
S4-45	Various	Various	Various	Auto Jack Stands and Auto Ramps	Failure to Meet Load Rating
S4-54	All Manufacturers	School Bus	All	Total Vehicle	Review of Records to Determine Possibility of Safety Defects
S4-55	All Manufacturers	Recreational Vehicles	Various	Wheels, Springs, Tires & Axles	Loading of Suspension May Exceed Component Rating in Late Model Vehicles
S6-09	Harley Davidson Company	Harley Davidson Motorcycle	1973-1974	Front Disc Brake Caliper Leakage	Alleged Leakage of Front Disc Brake Caliper
A3-04	Toyota	1200 and 1600cc	1970-1971	Fuel System	Recall #72-0014

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

III. SURVEYS AND AUDITS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
A5-06	Mack Trucks	CF, MB, R, RD and TU	1974	Front Axle	Recall #74-0001
A5-15	Ford	Torino, T-Bird, Montego, Cougar, Ranchero and Continental Mark IV	1974	Speed Control	Recall #74-0011
A6-03	International Harvester	Transtar II	1974	Incorrect Routing of Air Lines	Recall #74-0220
A6-04	General Motors	Cadillac; all except Eldorado	1973-1974	Steering Idler Arm Assembly	Recall #74-0202
A6-05	Bluebird Body	School Bus, Ford	1974	Tubing and Fittings to Rear Brake Chamber	Recall #74-0209
A6-11	International Harvester	Loadstar and Cargostar	1975	Routing of Air Supply Lines/Valves to Avoid Frame Contact and Subsequent Damage	Recall #75-0191
A6-12	Nissan Motors	Datsun FL-510	1971-1975	Alleged Gasoline Leak	Recall #75-0181

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

III. SURVEYS AND AUDITS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
A6-13	American Motors	Matador	1975	Alleged Failure of Carburetor Secondary Throttle Lock-out Lever	Recall #75-0057
A6-15	Sebring Vanguard Incorporated	Citicars	April thru Dec. 1974	Alleged Failure of Master Cylinder Check Valve	Recall #75-0034
A6-17	Freightliner, Inc.	All	1967-1975	Alleged Brake Pedal Failure	Recall #75-0119
A6-18	General Motors	Chevrolet, Buick and Oldsmobile	1975	Alleged Failure of Spare Tire Hold Down Hook	Recall #75-0129
A6-20	General Motors	Cadillac Seville	1976	Flexible Coupling Steering Gear	Recall #75-0180
A6-21	Flexible Transit	Bus	1974-1975	Front Axle Radius Rod Bracket	Recall #75-0177
A6-23	British Leyland	Austin Marina	1974-1975	Deterioration of Front Brake Hoses	Recall #75-0174
A6-24	Norton Triumph Corporation	Triumph T160 Trident Motor-cycle	1975	Alleged Failure of Rear Foot Brake Lever	Recall #75-0157

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

III. SURVEYS AND AUDITS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
A6-25	Ford	Certain Econolines and Light Duty Trucks	1975	Failure of Front Brake Caliper	Recall #75-0134
A6-26	Chrysler Corp.	Various Plymouths and Dodges	1975	Disengagement of the Lower Control Arm Strut	Recall #75-0126
A6-27	Yamaha International Corp.	LB80-11AC and LB80-11HC Motorcycles	1976	Potential Oil Delivery Pipe Problem	Recall #75-0126
A6-28	Ford	Capri I Capri II	1974 1976	Potential Front Brake Hose Leakage	Recall #75-0093
A6-29	Chrysler	Plymouth, Dodge and Chrysler	1974-1975	Potential Tandem Power Brake Booster Diaphragm Failure	Recall #75-0086
A6-30	Ford	1974 F Series Trucks and 1974-1975 B Series	1974-1975	Front Spring Rear Hangar Bracket	Recall #76-0035
A6-32	General Motors	Chevette	1976	Front Brake Hose Gets Hung Up On Lower Control Arm	Recall #76-0022
A6-33	American Honda	360 Series Motorcycle	1974-1975	Drive Chain Cam Tensioner	Recall #75-0066

HS Form 338A (Feb. 1975)

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

III. SURVEYS AND AUDITS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
A6-34	Mercedes Benz	All Models	1976	Cruise Control Cable Sticking	Recall #76-0027
A6-35	Chrysler Corp.	Cordoba and Dodge Charger	1975	Cruise Control Lost Motion Link Going Over Center and Jamming	Recall #76-0008
A7-02	White Motor Corp.	Autocar	10-1-73 thru 2-30-76	Steering Arm Failure	Recall #76-0073
A7-03	Fiat Motor Co.	Lancia Beta Coupe and Sedan	1975-1976	Brake Line Assembly	Recall #76-0071
A7-04	International Harvester	C.O. and Conventional Transtar & Glider Kits	1976	Steering Clamp Bolt Failure due to insufficient torque	Recall #76-0143
A7-05	Coachmen Industries	Certain Presidential, Statesman & V.I.P. Model Class A Motorhomes	9-1-74 thru 8-28-76	Failure of Gasoline Tank Support System	Recall #76-0146
A7-06	Ford Motor Co.	Econoline E-100, E-150, E-250 & E-350	1976	Steering Gear Attachment	Recall #76-0165

CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS OF ALLEGED SAFETY RELATED DEFECTS

Report for
Month Ending: January 31, 1977

III. SURVEYS AND AUDITS

CASE NO.	MANUFACTURER/MAKE	MODEL	YEAR	COMPONENT	POSSIBLE PROBLEMS
A7-07	Argosy Manufacturing Company	Argosy Trailers 22D6V1757 thru 26T6V2540 (serial numbers)	1976	Furnace Exhaust Vent Adaptor	Recall #76-0167
A7-08	Ford Motor Co.	Pinto, Bobcat & Mustang II	1976	Fuel Hose	Recall #76-0170
A7-09	AM General Corp.	Transi Coach All Models	1973-1976	Steering Prop Shaft Yoke Pinch Bolt	Recall #76-0188

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517



FIRST CLASS



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

TAD-493

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

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY
April 20, 1977

NHTSA -- 29-77 (BMA)
Tel. 202-426-0670

DOT WARNS OF PROBLEM WITH HONDA MOTORCYCLE BRAKES

The government today warned owners of 1975 and 1976 Honda motorcycles, models GL 1000 and CB 750F, that their motorcycle brakes may fail while operating in the rain.

The warning came from the U. S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), which said the problem may be severe and it has opened a formal defect investigation into the matter.

The federal safety agency said it has no reports of collisions or injuries, but it has been notified by Honda that the company has received 183 customer complaints on the brake problem. The NHTSA estimated the number of these vehicles on the highway at 75,000.

Owner reports indicate a loss of initial braking force upon each brake application during continued operation in the rain. The problem, the agency said, is caused by water soaking the disc brake pads on both front and rear wheels.

The government noted that only owners of Honda motorcycles equipped with both front and rear wheel disc brakes have complained of brake failures.

The NHTSA urged Honda motorcycle owners who have experienced braking problems to have their vehicles checked immediately. To assist the government in its investigation, the safety agency asked motorcycle owners to report any brake failures.

Information should include the year and model of the motorcycle, its serial number, a description of the problem, and whether an accident, injury or other hazardous situation developed. Reports should be sent to:

Office of Consumer Services, N40-41
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh St., SW
Washington, D. C. 20590

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

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

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY
April 27, 1977

NHTSA == 32-77 (BAB)
Tel. 202-426-9550

CITIZEN GRANTS APPROVED

Two groups and five individuals interested in participating in the federal regulatory proceeding dealing with occupant crash protection in passenger cars have been awarded financial grants totaling almost \$14,000, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced today.

The money is being made available under a new one-year demonstration program designed to promote public participation in certain regulatory activities conducted by the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Those awarded funds and the amount of their grants are:

Center for Auto Safety, Washington, D.C., approximately \$5,000

Economics and Science Planning, Inc., Washington, D.C.

approximately \$4,420

Philip Draper, Berkeley, Calif., approximately \$1,000

Kathy Kenworthy, Berkeley, Calif., approximately \$1,000

Judy Taylor, Berkeley, Calif., approximately \$1,000

Ron Washington, Berkeley, Calif., approximately \$500

Pearl Irene Birchard, Culver City, Calif., approximately \$500

All of the individuals except Ms Birchard are handicapped as the result of spinal injuries received in automobile crashes.

The grant recipients applied for financial aid so that they could participate in an April 27 public hearing to discuss possible standards calling for the installation of passive restraint systems, such as air bags or passive belts, effective with 1981 model year passenger cars. The two groups will also submit written comments to the public docket by May 27.

The hearing, scheduled to being at 9:30 a.m. at the Departmental Auditorium (Constitution Avenue between 12th and 14th Streets, N.W.) was announced by Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams last month.

Applications for federal funds are evaluated by a panel of departmental officials. Last month, the agency granted its first financial awards, totaling \$37,000, to four groups that wanted to participate in a hearing on fuel economy standards for passenger automobiles manufactured in model years 1981 through 1984.

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590



FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
April 29, 1977

NHTSA-- 31-77 (BMA)
Tel. 202-426-0670

DEAF DRIVER SAFETY TIPS
AVAILABLE IN SPANISH TEXT

The U. S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) today announced the publication of a Spanish language version of its booklet "Tips on Car Care and Safety for Deaf Drivers."

In announcing the availability of this booklet, Joan Claybrook, NHTSA Administrator, emphasized that it is "part of the safety agency's program to provide consumer services to all segments of the motoring public."

First published in July 1975, the booklet was developed by a department specialist who, as the father of two deaf sons of driving age, was uniquely adept at combining his own expertise in safety with the special skills and needs of deaf drivers. The English language version has been reprinted and widely circulated through both state and federal sponsorship and is in use in all of the nation's major institutions serving those with impaired hearing.

-more-

The booklet provides important advice on how a deaf driver can detect existing or potential automotive problems through use of senses other than hearing. Intended primarily for the novice deaf driver, the booklet also provides suggestions on how a deaf driver can react to the many diverse highway situations which normally require the use of hearing and voice communication.

The general public may obtain single copies of this booklet, free, by writing to:

General Services Division/Distribution
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh St., SW
Washington, D.C. 20590

#####

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY
May 5, 1977

NHTSA -- 32-77 (BA)
Tel. 202-426-0670

GENERAL MOTORS, FORD AND VOLKSWAGEN VEHICLES UNDER NEW DEFECT INVESTIGATIONS

Three new Federal investigations of alleged safety defects involving General Motors, Ford, and Volkswagen vehicles were announced today by the U. S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

For several months, NHTSA has been conducting an inquiry (Case C7-21) involving the power brake booster on 2.2 million 1976 General Motors vehicles. These include certain Chevrolets, Pontiacs, Oldsmobiles, Buicks, Cadillacs, and GMC trucks. The problem involves failure of the power brake booster, and is the result of gasoline vapor condensing in the booster can. This accumulation of liquid gasoline vapor condensing in the booster can causes the booster diaphragm to deteriorate and rupture, with a consequent loss of power brake assist and the necessity for the driver to use abnormally high brake pedal forces to stop the vehicle.

Two minor accidents have been reported thus far to General Motors due to the failure of the power brake booster. However, the possibility of future serious accidents exists.

On May 2, the agency received official notice from General Motors that the company plans a defect recall campaign. The company says it plans to produce and install a special charcoal fuel filter in the vacuum booster line between the engine and the power brake booster of all affected vehicles. Because of production and distribution lead times and testing requirements, the manufacturer has indicated that parts will not be available at dealerships for at least several months. The owners of all vehicles involved in this campaign will be notified by letter when parts are available for their vehicles.

NHTSA Administrator, Joan Claybrook, has urged General Motors "to speed up the testing and repair of this critical safety component." The agency also urges dealers to inspect brake booster diaphragms for possible rubber deterioration.

The agency advises owners of 1976 General Motor vehicles who experience partial or total loss of power brake assist to take their vehicles to their dealer for inspection and correction.

The Ford-related investigation (Case C7-13) was opened in response to two reports of noncollision accidents and one low-speed collision accident in which it was alleged that the plastic instrument panels on the subject vehicles shattered, leaving sharp edges which could lacerate and puncture vehicle occupants. In two cases, lacerations were alleged to have occurred to either the occupant's arm or face. The vehicles involved include an estimated 192,053 1975-1977 Ford Econoline and Club Wagons without instrument panel padding.

NHTSA's investigation of various Volkswagen models, all equipped with similar throttle control systems, is based on owner complaints that design weakness of the system leads to broken throttle cables, with less control over the vehicle's speed. The 59 owner complaints received include nine alleged property damage accidents, five of which involved injuries.

The Volkswagen investigation (Case C7-14) involves an estimated 370,200 vehicles of the following models: 1975-76 Rabbit and Scirocco; 1974-75 Dasher; 1973-74-75 Audi; 1975 Type I sedans (Beetle); and 1976 Type II vehicles (Vans).

NHTSA reminded all owners of the affected General Motors, Ford, and Volkswagen vehicles that all these problems represent a threat to their safety. The agency requests all owners of these vehicles who have experienced any of these problems to report the details of their experiences, in writing, to the Office of Defects Investigation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D.C. 20590. Motorists may also report these problems to the NHTSA Auto Safety Hotline by calling toll-free, 800-424-9393 (for Washington, D.C. residents, the number is 426-0123).

#####



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
May 6, 1977

NHTSA -- 35-77 (HP)
Tel: 202-426-9550

DOT DENIES INDUSTRY PETITIONS
TO RECONSIDER BUMPER STANDARD

The U.S. Department of Transportation today denied petitions by automobile manufacturers for reconsideration of new damage standards set for bumpers to reduce consumer costs in low-speed collisions.

But, the Department approved petitions to have the standards permit some damage to minor bumper components in such crashes.

Damage standards issued by the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in March 1976 limited damage to passenger car bumpers and prohibit damage to vehicle surfaces in low-speed crashes, beginning with cars manufactured in the 1979 model year.

Effective Sept. 1, 1978, the new standard requires that all new passenger cars be equipped with front and rear bumpers capable of sustaining barrier and pendulum impacts at 5 m.p.h. and corner impacts at 3 m.p.h.

No damage will be permitted to any part of the vehicle except to the bumper itself and the brackets, fasteners, etc., that attach the bumpers to the chassis frame. The pendulum test insures greater uniformity in bumper height to help eliminate damage caused by mismatching bumpers.

In addition to specifying limitations on damage to non-safety related components and vehicle surface areas, the standard also incorporates the safety requirements currently contained in Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 215, Exterior Protection, which prohibits damage to vehicle lighting, fuel, braking, steering, exhaust, cooling and latching systems.

- more -

Two requests made by petitioners were granted by the NHTSA, which determined that bumper components, commonly known as filler panels and stone shields, and license plate brackets would be permitted to sustain the same degree of damage as the bumper face bar.

Last February, in response to petitions by General Motors and Ford, the safety agency proposed a one year delay in the effective date of the second phase requirements of the standard, from Sept. 1, 1979, to Sept. 1, 1980. These requirements limit damage to the bumper face bar to 3/8-inch dents and limit overall bumper set to 3/4-inch. Bumper set is the overall flattening of the bumper face bar.

The government will take action shortly on the proposed delay.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS





DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
May 13, 1977

NHTSA -- 37-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT SCHEDULES PUBLIC MEETING ON ELECTRIC AND HYBRID VEHICLES

The application of federal motor vehicle safety standards to electric and hybrid vehicles will be discussed at a public meeting in July, the U. S. Department of Transportation announced today.

The department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is inviting persons interested in the subject to present their views at the meeting, scheduled for July 11 in Room 2230 of the DOT headquarters building, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D. C. The meeting will continue on July 12 if additional time is necessary to hear all presentations.

The NHTSA also announced it is accepting applications for financial assistance from parties who wish to participate in the public meeting. The money is being made available under a new one-year demonstration program designed to promote public participation in certain administrative proceedings or regulatory activities conducted by the agency.

Individuals or organizations who can effectively supplement the record of the proceeding, but who are financially unable to participate, may apply for financial assistance. Applications for funds must be submitted by June 6 and will be evaluated by a panel of NHTSA and DOT officials.

Copies of the regulation and procedures for applying for financial assistance may be obtained from Jeannette Feldman, Office of the Administrator, NHTSA, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D. C. 20590, or by calling 202-426-1614.

Last September, the Congress enacted the Electric and Hybrid Vehicle Research, Development, and Demonstration Act of 1976. A section of that Act directs the NHTSA to conduct a study on the current and future applicability of safety standards and regulations to electric and hybrid vehicles. Under the Act, a hybrid vehicle means one which is propelled by a combination of an electric motor and other power source.

The results of that study are to be reported to the Administrator of the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA) and to the Congress by Sept. 17, 1977, and will be considered in future vehicle safety rulemaking by the NHTSA.

The NHTSA believes that one effective way to gather information for the study is through a public meeting at which the unique safety aspects of current and future electric and hybrid vehicles would be discussed.

The meeting is expected to focus on the anticipated usage of electric private and commercial vehicles, the appropriateness of current and future safety standards to protect occupants of such vehicles, and safeguards for electric and hybrid vehicles when involved in collisions with conventional vehicles.

Persons who want to make written comments only should submit their views to the docket by July 12, 1977. Written submissions should be mailed to Docket No. 77-04, Notice 1, Docket Section, NHTSA, Room 5108, Washington, D. C. 20590. Persons who wish to appear at the hearing should contact Sam Daniel in NHTSA's Motor Vehicle Programs office by June 27, either in writing or by phone at 202-426-2264.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation

news:

Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590



FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY
May 18, 1977

NHTSA -- 34-77 (RC)
Tel. 202-426-9550

TRAFFIC FATALITIES SHOW MARCH INCREASE

The nation's traffic fatalities increased seven percent in March over the same month a year ago, the U. S. Transportation Department announced today.

The number of persons killed in traffic accidents this March was estimated at 3,382, compared to 3,153 traffic deaths in March 1976.

However, total fatalities for the first quarter of 1977 declined two percent to an estimated 8,892 deaths, or 174 fewer than the 9,066 fatalities reported for the first three months of 1976.

The totals are based on preliminary figures reported to the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) by the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The increase marks the first time this year that the monthly fatality count was above the corresponding period of a year ago.

#####

U. S. Department of Transportation

news:

Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590



FOR RELEASE THURSDAY
May 19, 1977

NHTSA -- 38-77 (BAB)
Tel. 202-426-0670

NHTSA QUERIES
FORD ON RECALL

CONSUMER ADVISORY

The U. S. Department of Transportation has asked for an accounting by the Ford Motor Co. for problems that have arisen in connection with a court-ordered defect recall campaign involving 1968 and 1969 Mustangs and Cougars with defective driver (bucket style) seats.

The department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) says it learned from a consumer early this month that replacement parts for the defective seats were not yet available at Ford and Lincoln-Mercury dealers, although the company had already advised owners of the cars that they would be available by April 30.

In addition, another owner reported that one large dealer in northern Virginia has required that the seats be inspected prior to making the necessary repairs. A federal court has ordered that all driver's seats be repaired in the affected vehicles, not that they be "inspected."

-more-

After a two-year legal battle, a United States District Court found that the defect in the driver's seats of the Mustangs and Cougars could result in the seat back suddenly falling backwards at speeds up to 60 miles per hour. When this happens, the driver could fall into the back seat and lose control of the car. The District Court found that the seat failures present "a severe threat to motor vehicle safety" to some 500,000 owners of the affected vehicles.

The court heard evidence that several accidents have occurred as a result of such seat failures, including injuries resulting in hospitalization. Ford's own expert witness later stated that a total of approximately 170,000 driver seat failures may have occurred.

NHTSA Administrator Joan Claybrook wants Ford President Lee Iacocca "to explain the delay in getting the appropriate repair parts to its dealers, and to provide a timetable when the parts will be available." The agency also requests assurances from the company that its dealers are instructed that all driver's seats in the affected vehicles be repaired without any requirement for a prior inspection.

For their safety until the repair is obtained, the agency warns owners of such vehicles that they should prop a large, firm object (such as a suitcase) behind the driver's seat when the vehicle is in use.

In the meantime, NHTSA suggests that owners of 1968 and 1969 Mustangs and Cougars ask that their driver's seats be repaired at the earliest possible date, and to insist that they be repaired free of charge, regardless of any requirements for prior inspection a dealer tries to impose.

(A copy of the government's letter is attached)

#####



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

THE ADMINISTRATOR

MAY 16 1977

Mr. L. A. Iacocca
President, Ford Motor Company
The American Road
Dearborn, Michigan 48121

Dear Mr. Iacocca:

In an order dated October 20, 1976, Judge George Hart of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia ordered Ford Motor Company (Ford) to notify owners of and remedy 1968 and 1969 Mustangs and Cougars with defective driver seats. On April 29, 1977, Ford notified the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of the commencement of its campaign to remedy these defective seats in all of the affected vehicles free of charge to the owners.

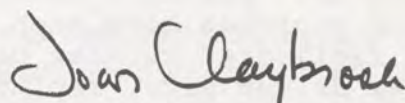
Certain information has come to my attention that greatly concerns me. First, I have learned that owners of the affected vehicles have been turned away by your dealer repair facilities because only passenger side, and no or very few driver side, replacement parts are available. Second, I have learned that one of your large dealerships, Koons Ford, Inc., of Falls Church, Virginia, has told owners of the affected vehicles that the defect in the driver seat will not be remedied until service personnel have made an inspection of the seat and, further, that replacement parts will not be made available until such inspection is made.

In view of the seriousness of this defect and the history of this case and the litigation associated with it, I am requesting that you account to me for the failure of Ford to provide the proper replacement parts to its dealerships. In addition, in order to determine what future action may be necessary on my part to effectuate Judge Hart's order, I am further requesting that you provide me with a timetable which will indicate when and in what quantities the driver side replacement parts will be available at each of your dealerships.

As you know, Judge Hart's order required Ford to repair all driver side bucket seats in 1968 and 1969 Mustangs and Cougars. There is no predicate for an inspection prior to such repair. I request your assurance that you will not tolerate any action of Ford or on behalf of Ford that in any way appears to be directed to dissuading any owner from having his defective driver seat repaired. Therefore, I am requesting that Koons Ford be informed forthwith that it should not state or imply that any predicate of inspection is required prior to repair of the driver seat free of charge. I am also requesting that you provide me with assurances that no dealer has been instructed either in writing or orally, by Ford employees in Dearborn or anywhere in the field, to inform owners who want their driver seat repaired that there is any predicate of inspection before having the repair done. I also want your further assurances that no such Ford employee either orally or in writing has instructed any dealer, or has been instructed by Ford to instruct any dealer, that owners should be dissuaded or otherwise discouraged from having their cars repaired.

Your reply to this letter within one week of its date, will be appreciated.

Sincerely,



Joan Claybrook

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation

news:



Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE MONDAY
May 23, 1977

NHTSA--36-77 (DB)
Tel. 202-426-9550

LEVIN APPOINTED
NHTSA CHIEF COUNSEL

The appointment of Joseph J. Levin, Jr. as Chief Counsel of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), was announced today by U. S. Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams.

Levin, 34, a native of Montgomery, Ala., received his law degree from the University of Alabama in 1966 and practiced law for 6 months before entering the Army where he served as a military intelligence officer from 1967 to 1969. He returned to practice of law in Montgomery from 1969 to 1972.

In 1972, he co-founded the Southern Poverty Law Center, a non-profit, civil rights litigating foundation, where he served as legal director and general counsel. While in that position he argued and won a landmark sex discrimination case, Frontiero v. Richardson, before the U. S. Supreme Court. The case charged the armed services with denying benefits to women.

Levin also argued and won before the high court, Gilmore v. Montgomery, establishing the precedent that exclusive temporary use of public recreational facilities by private segregated schools is constitutionally impermissible.

In 1976, Levin co-founded the National Gun Control Center and the National Death Penalty Foundation to educate the public on the effects of the free flow of handguns and reinstatement of the death penalty, respectively.

-more-

He was coordinator for Carter/Mondale Policy Planning from August to November 1976, with the responsibility for health, welfare reform, justice and employment discrimination.

After the election, Levin functioned as Team Leader for the Justice/EEOC cluster of Presidential transition, responsible for policy analysis and liaison with the Department of Justice, EEOC and the District of Columbia city government. He also served as a Special Assistant to the U. S. Attorney General from January 1977 until his appointment.

Levin is married, and the father of three daughters. He was educated in the public schools of his native Montgomery and received his BA in 1964 from the University of Alabama.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation

news:



Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590

CONSUMER ADVISORY

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY

May 24, 1977

NHTSA 40-77 (BMA)

Tel. (202) 426-0670

1974 Porsche 914 and 1971 thru
1977 Mercury Capri Vehicles
Being Investigated by DOT

Two new Federal investigations of alleged safety defects involving 1974 Porsche model 914 vehicles and 1971 through 1977 Mercury Capri vehicles were announced today by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The Porsche investigation involves the possibility of engine compartment fires in 1974 Porsche model 914 vehicles manufactured by Volkswagen A.G. The investigation (Case C7-11) is based on 17 owner complaints alleging the occurrence, without warning, of fuel-fed engine compartment fires. Thus far, no injuries have been reported.

This investigation involves an estimated 16,000 vehicles which are equipped with an electronic fuel injector system that sprays fuel, under high pressure, into the flow of air entering the engine's combustion chamber. Owner complaints allege that fuel leaks from the pressurized fuel supply system allow fuel and vapors to collect in the engine compartment. Ignition of the fumes is reportedly caused by high voltage ignition wire leakage or by engine backfire through the air cleaner.

NHTSA Administrator, Joan Claybrook, said "we urge owners of 1974 Porsche 914 vehicles to be alert to any strong odor of gasoline in the passenger compartment or fuel stains on the surface under parked vehicles. If such symptoms are present, vehicle owners should contact their dealers immediately."

The Mercury Capri investigation (Case C7-10) involves alleged front stabilizer bar failures on 1971 through 1974 and 1976 through 1977 Mercury Capri vehicles which are manufactured in Germany for the Ford Motor Company. There was no 1975 model of this vehicle. The investigation involves 452,870 vehicles produced during the 1971 through 1976 model years; since the 1977 model has just been introduced, no production figures are yet available on this model.

This case was opened on the basis of a petition from Dr. Stuart F. Faunce, P.E., of Fanwood, New Jersey. Dr. Faunce owns a 1972 Mercury Capri and alleged that he was involved in an accident as a result of improper design and manufacture of the front stabilizer bar. The vehicle owner claimed that the stabilizer bar failed due to metal fatigue and because the part was improperly finished. There are no known pre-failure symptoms. Information received by NHTSA indicates that the same stabilizer bar was used on 1971 through 1977 model year Capris.

The failure could result in a loss of vehicle control. The front stabilizer bar is a component of the vehicle suspension system. The stabilizer bar, together with other suspension system components, regulates front wheel movements and reduces shock loading stresses on the steering linkage caused by road surface irregularities. The principal functions of the stabilizer bar, however, are to counter the vehicle's tendency to roll or lean in cornering maneuvers and to control the fore and aft movement of the front wheels. The centrifugal forces caused by such maneuvers place a downward stress on one end of the stabilizer bar and an upward stress on the other end. The stabilizer bar resists these loads, thereby impeding vehicle roll and lean and maintaining side-to-side equilibrium of the vehicle.

The NHTSA has contracted with the Automobile Clubs of California, Missouri, and Connecticut to assist in this investigation. These clubs operate diagnostic stations and, through their membership rolls, can identify owners of the vehicles involved. They are notifying a specified number of owners of vehicles of the type under investigation, to bring their vehicles to the diagnostic station for removal and replacement of the stabilizer bar. The removed stabilizer bars will be sent to NHTSA for metallurgical testing.

In addition, the federal safety agency has alerted the more than 500 independent repair shops participating in the NHTSA Parts Return Program to report any failures of stabilizer bars brought to their attention, and to submit the failed components.

The NHTSA requests all owners of these vehicles who have experienced any of these problems to report the details of their experiences, in writing, to the Office of Defects Investigation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D.C. 20590. Motorists may also report these problems to the NHTSA Auto Safety Hotline by calling toll-free, (800) 424-9393 (for Washington D.C. residents the number is 426-0123).

#####

Faint, illegible text at the top of the page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side.

Two paragraphs of faint, illegible text in the middle of the page.

Two paragraphs of faint, illegible text in the lower middle section of the page.

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation

news:



Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
May 27, 1977

NHTSA -- 39-77 (RC)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT SETS NEW DATE FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE HEARING

The U. S. Department of Transportation today rescheduled a previously announced public meeting on the application of federal motor vehicle safety standards to electric and hybrid vehicles.

July 14 has been selected as the new meeting date by the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The federal safety agency explained that the initial date of July 11 was in conflict with the Fifth International Congress on Automotive Safety, scheduled for July 11-13 in Boston, and sponsored by the National Motor Vehicle Safety Advisory Council.

Persons interested in electric and hybrid vehicle development have been invited to express their views at the meeting which will be held in Room 2230 of the DOT headquarters building, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D. C. If additional time is required to hear all presentations, the meeting will continue on July 15, NHTSA said.

Congress, through enactment of the Electric and Hybrid Vehicle Research, Development and Demonstration Act of 1976, has directed NHTSA to conduct a study on the current and future applicability of safety standards and regulations to electric and hybrid vehicles. Under the Act, a hybrid vehicle means one which is propelled by a combination of an electric motor and other power source.

The results of that study are to be reported to the Administrator of the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA) and to the Congress by Sept. 17, 1977, and will be considered in future vehicle safety rulemaking by NHTSA.

The public meeting will explore the anticipated usage of private and commercial electric vehicles, the appropriateness of current and future safety standards to protect the occupants of such vehicles, and safeguards for electric and hybrid vehicles when involved in collisions with conventional vehicles.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation

news:



Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590
FOR RELEASE TUESDAY
May 31, 1977

NHTSA -- 42-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

NATION'S TRAFFIC TOLL SHOWS APRIL INCREASE

The nation's traffic fatalities climbed more than two percent in April over the level of April 1976, the U. S. Department of Transportation said today.

The number of persons killed in traffic accidents last month (April) is estimated at 3,635, a boost of 96 over the 3,539 fatalities reported in April 1976.

The totals are based on preliminary figures reported to the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) by the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Total fatalities, however, for the first four months of 1977 are slightly below the corresponding period of a year ago, with an estimated 12,527 deaths compared to 12,605 in the January through April period of 1976.

Joan Claybrook, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administrator, said she was concerned over the April figures, which marked the second straight month that the fatality count was above the corresponding period of a year ago.

"We know there will be more drivers and more cars on the highway with the start of the summer season just ahead and we urge all motorists to redouble their efforts to observe traffic safety rules, especially the 55 mile-per-hour speed limit."

Ms. Claybrook also said motorists should guard against drinking alcohol when driving and urged all vehicle occupants to use the safety belts now available in almost all cars.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation

news:



Office of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
June 3, 1977

NHTSA -- 44-77 (BA.)
Tel. 202-426-0670

DOT WARNS OF FAN BLADE BREAKAGE
ON 1970-1977 FORD MOTOR CO.
PASSENGER CARS AND LIGHT TRUCKS

CONSUMER ADVISORY

The government today warned owners of 1970 through 1977 Ford Motor Co. passenger cars and light trucks that the blades on their engine cooling fans could break off, resulting in vehicle damage and possible personal injury.

The warning came from the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), which has opened a formal defect investigation (Case C7-24) into the matter.

Joan Claybrook, NHTSA Administrator, said that "if such breakage occurs while the vehicle is in motion, vehicle damage such as dented hoods and severed hoses could result. The danger, however, is greatest for service personnel and vehicle owners who perform their own maintenance, since blade breakage while the hood is open and the engine is running, can result in serious injuries to persons working on the engine or standing nearby."

Involved in this investigation are those Ford, Mercury, and Lincoln passenger cars and Ford light trucks that are equipped with "flex-fans." While the number of vehicles so equipped is presently undetermined, over 6,200,000 fans of this type were shipped to Ford assembly plants for use on 1970-1977 Ford passenger cars.

After opening this investigation, NHTSA was informed that Ford intends to recall certain 1972 vehicles equipped with flex-fans. These include 1972 model Lincolns, Ford Torinos, and Mercury Montegos equipped with air conditioning and 302, 351 and 400 CID engines.

Ford Motor Company has agreed to recall approximately 400,000 vehicles. Beginning June 22, Ford will notify owners of the affected vehicles by mail as required by the statute, and at the same time will supply parts to dealers to replace the defective fans. The NHTSA safety defect investigation will continue to determine if vehicles of other models or other model years should be recalled as well.

These flex-fans consists of five or seven curved, flexible blades. As fan rotating speed increases with an increase in engine operating speed, the blades flex backward or flatten out. This reduction in fan blade pitch results in less engine horsepower consumption from operation, and results in noise reduction as well. Apparently, the constant flexing of the blades over a period of time, coupled with other factors, results in metal fatigue which causes the fan blades to crack and break off. Because the fan rotates at high speeds, the broken pieces can be propelled with great velocity. While there are no known reliable pre-failure symptoms, those aware of this potential problem may, through careful examination of their fans, detect the beginning of cracks before blade breakage results. Should a crack be detected, the vehicle should be taken to the dealer immediately for repair.

The federal safety agency said it has received 29 reports of flex-fan breakage, including one where a mechanic suffered a severe arm injury. In response to an NHTSA query, Ford reported receipt or awareness of 185 complaints of fan blade breakage, including 13 reports of injury.

NHTSA reminded all owners of the affected Ford vehicles, as well as service personnel who perform maintenance on them, that this problem may represent a threat to their safety.

The NHTSA administrator suggested that persons working on such vehicles check for the presence of cracks in the fan blade before starting the engine. She also said "if you must work on the engine with the engine running, remember that a broken fan blade can be propelled straight up, down, or to either side of the rotating fan, so keep all parts of your body away from such areas."

All owners of these vehicles who have experienced this problem are requested to report the details, in writing, to the Office of Defects Investigation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D.C. 20590. The problem may also be reported to the NHTSA Auto Safety Hotline by calling, toll-free, (800) 424-9393 (for Washington, D.C. residents the number is 426-0123).

#####

U. S. Department of Transportation news:



Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY
June 8, 1977

NHTSA -- 41-77 (DB)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DUGOFF NAMED NHTSA DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR

The appointment of Howard J. Dugoff as Deputy Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) was announced today by Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams.

He will serve as deputy to Ms. Joan Claybrook, who was sworn in as Administrator of the federal safety agency on April 8.

Dugoff, who holds Bachelor's and Master's Degrees in mechanical engineering and physics from Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, N. J., has served in various executive positions with NHTSA for more than three years.

In November 1975, he was appointed Associate Administrator for Planning and Evaluation, where he was responsible for the planning, development, and evaluation of federal motor vehicle and traffic safety programs. Before being appointed to that position, Dugoff was Chief of the Handling and Stability Division in NHTSA's Motor Vehicle Programs Office.

In August 1976, Dugoff was named as Associate Administrator for Research and Development, where he was responsible for the activities of five program offices and one laboratory conducting research in highway traffic safety.

Prior to joining NHTSA, Dugoff, 40, was Chief of Research and Analysis for the U. S. Army Tank-Automotive Command in Detroit, Mich., from 1971 until early 1974. In 1973, he was awarded the Department of the Army Research and Development Achievement Award.

Between 1967 and 1971, he was a research engineer at the Highway Safety Research Institute at the University of Michigan. He was also engaged in research activities between 1959 and 1967 at the Davidson Laboratory of Stevens Institute of Technology, investigating the dynamic performance of automotive and hydro-dynamic vehicle systems.

A native of Yonkers, New York, Dugoff is the author of more than 40 technical publications in the general areas of vehicle dynamics and highway safety, and has lectured on the subjects of applied mechanics and automotive engineering at several universities.

Dugoff and his wife, the former Sandra Karp, live in Potomac, Md., with their three children.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation

news:



Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE 11 AM THURSDAY
JUNE 9, 1977

NHTSA -- 45-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT AWARDS CONTRACTS TO BUILD EXPERIMENTAL CARS

Experimental cars that are fuel efficient, clean, economical and safe will be designed and constructed for the U. S. Department of Transportation under contracts announced today.

In January 1977, preliminary contracts were awarded to two companies for initiation of Phase III of the Research Safety Vehicle (RSV) program, designed to build and test safety features that could be included in cars by the mid-1980s. The program is focusing on cars weighing less than 3,000 pounds that will permit survival of occupants in 50 mph head-on crashes.

The awards announced today formalize the preliminary contracts and are the result of detailed negotiations over the past several months.

The department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) awarded the contracts to the Calspan Corp. of Buffalo, N. Y. for \$5.6 million and to Minicars, Inc. of Goleta, Calif. for \$5.9 million.

Completion of this stage of the five-year program will lead to Phase IV activity involving a complete evaluation of emissions, fuel economy, damageability and safety, including crash testing of the vehicles by an independent contractor beginning in 1978.

-more-

"Every driver in this country will benefit by this project," said Administrator Joan Claybrook of the NHTSA. "I see no reason why any consumer should pay with his or her life for an accident that superior automotive design could prevent.

"The basic goal of the experimental vehicle program is to devise safety features that can readily be adapted to current design and production line assembly. These vehicles will clearly demonstrate to the American public the levels of performance, safety and fuel economy which they can expect in future automobiles," Ms. Claybrook said.

The administrator noted that the major objective of the program "is to provide a sound technical data base for future cost-effective safety, damageability and fuel economy standards, and to encourage voluntary adoption of such features by the auto industry throughout the world."

From rubber to rooftop, both mockup models produced by the RSV contractors are unique and offer the consumer advantages not found in today's cars, NHTSA said.

Calspan, with Chrysler Corp. as a major subcontractor, has adopted a "state of the art" approach for its 2,700 pound car which features front wheel drive for better control, a sidewise mounted engine expected to produce 29 miles per gallon fuel economy, improved visibility, advanced passive restraints, tires that can run flat at normal highway speeds until a service station is reached, and an overall design that provides maximum passenger protection in head-on or rearend crashes at up to 50 miles per hour, or up to 45 m. p. h. in side impacts.

The company will refine this basic design and produce 17 experimental cars for final testing late next year, NHTSA said. These particular models will be designed to exceed the objectives of the current motor vehicle safety standards, serve as a basis for possible future changes in the standards, and meet the 1985 statutory fuel economy requirements of 27.5 mpg. All of these program goals are well within industry production capability the safety agency said.

Minicars provides the same degree of protection in a sub-compact car that boasts a large interior volume for comfort. The company's mockup features 325 degrees of visibility, "gull wing" doors for easy access and weighs less than 2,150 pounds.

The Minicars vehicle is designed to ultimately produce more than 34 miles per gallon with a stratified charge engine. Minicars also will explore the use of a variety of other engines and power-trains, including diesel engines.

Current work on this vehicle includes an air bag for crash protection, foam filled body structure members for added protection, a compartmentalized front end that can be easily and inexpensively replaced in event of damage, four wheel independent suspension and anti-skid brakes that cut stopping distances 30 percent when compared to today's cars, and a dashboard electronics display that enables the driver to monitor the running health of the car, and provides a radar system that will signal a warning if the vehicle is too close to the rear of another vehicle and automatically actuates the braking system if a high speed crash is unavoidable.

Minicars' more innovative RSV design concept will produce a lighter vehicle not as conventional as the Calspan design. By integrating advanced technology engines and transmissions in this lightweight vehicle, NHTSA said fuel economy levels of 50 to 60 mpg appear achievable.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation news:



Office of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY
June 14, 1977

TOYOTA, CHRYSLER
DEFECT INVESTIGATIONS/
1976 RECALL REPORT

CONSUMER ADVISORY

NHTSA -- 46-77 (IHC)
Tel. (202) 426-0670

Two new investigations of alleged safety defects in Toyota's 1969-72 Corona Mark II and Chrysler Corp's 1975-77 Dart, Valiant, Aspen and Volare models were announced today by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The Toyota investigation concerns a potential electrical fire emanating from the center console in 1969-72 Corona Mark II models with automatic transmissions. The agency has recently received reports of 22 fires and estimates that 100,000 vehicles may be subject to the problem. The agency has received a report of one death due to a fire in one of these cars, but the cause of the fire is not yet known. The agency has no other reports of death or injury.

According to NHTSA, the fires may begin when the vehicles are shifted into park, causing a short which starts the electrical fire. The fire can quickly spread to the console located between the front seats which houses the automatic transmission shift lever. No pre-fire symptoms are known. NHTSA has received reports from individual owners as well as insurance companies affiliated with the Auto Club of Southern California and the California State Automobile Association.

The problem in the Chrysler cars is engine stalling. The safety agency has received 114 owner complaints reporting a stalling problem. To date, there are no reports of injuries, but two accidents are believed related to this problem.

Most owner complaints reported several unsuccessful attempts to have the stalling corrected by dealers. NHTSA Administrator Joan Claybrook commented, "We are not certain what causes this stalling but we are interested in receiving more reports from owners who are experiencing the problem." The agency estimates there may be more than one million vehicles subject to the investigation.

The agency requests owners who have experienced these or other safety problems to report the details in writing to the Office of Defects Investigation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D.C. 20590. Owners may also report these problems to the NHTSA Auto Safety Hotline by calling toll-free (800) 424-9393 (for Washington, D.C. residents, the number is 426-0123).

In addition to the new investigations, NHTSA announced the availability of its annual report of motor vehicle defect recall campaigns for 1976. During the year, vehicle manufacturers issued 209 recalls involving more than 3.5 million motor vehicles. The report also lists the recall of more than 330,000 items of vehicle equipment and nearly 464,000 tires.

Ms. Claybrook noted that "the 1976 total brings to 52.4 million the number of vehicles recalled since 1966 when the national traffic safety effort was initiated."

The report, entitled "Motor Vehicle Safety Defect Recall Campaigns" and covering the period from Jan. 1, 1976 to Dec. 31, 1976, may be purchased for \$2.30 from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. It contains information on each recall campaign, the models involved, a short description of the defect, and the manufacturer's corrective action.

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation

news:

Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590



FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
June 24, 1977

NHTSA -- 49-77 (BA)
Tel. 202-426-0670

VOLKSWAGEN TO RECALL 1970-1974 PORSCHE 914's

All 1970-1974 Porsche Model 914 vehicles imported into the United States are to be recalled for correction of fuel system problems which could result in engine compartment fires, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced today.

Actual recall will take place some time in late summer, and will involve approximately 84,000 vehicles imported by Volkswagen of America.

In notifying the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of its plans, Volkswagen indicated that the recall cannot take place sooner than late summer because repair kits have to be made and assembled by Volkswagen A.G. in Germany and shipped to the United States. Vehicle owners will be notified by the manufacturer when repair kits are available.

NHTSA Administrator Joan Claybrook contacted VW to urge them "to speed up the recall and correction of this very serious safety problem." She advised VW that "a delay of two or three months in correcting a fire problem seemed unwarranted, especially where some of the corrective components may otherwise be readily available."

-more-

In February 1977, the NHTSA opened a safety-related investigation involving 1974 model Porsche 914 vehicles. The investigation was based on 17 owner complaints alleging the occurrence, without warning, of fuel-fed engine compartment fires.

The investigation shows that the fires are apparently the result of fuel leaks due to fuel hose deterioration from battery acid, or improperly installed sealing rings on fuel injectors. The investigation has also revealed that models other than those produced in 1974 may experience the same problems.

To date, 34 cases of engine compartment fires have been reported; however no reports of injury have been received.

NHTSA Administrator Joan Claybrook repeated an earlier warning to owners of Porsche 914 vehicles. "We urge all owners of Porsche 914 vehicles, regardless of model year, to be alert to any strong odor of gasoline in the passenger compartment, obvious signs of fuel system deterioration, or fuel stains on the surface under parked vehicles. If such symptoms are present, vehicle owners should seek repairs immediately."

Repairs for correction of this problem will include installation of an improved battery cover, installation of a label near the battery warning owners that overfilling of the battery or removal of the cover may result in deterioration of engine fuel lines, replacement of all flexible fuel lines, and inspection, with replacement if necessary, of all external fuel injector seals.

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation

news:



Office of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY
June 30, 1977

NHTSA -- 48-77
Tel. 202-426-9550

There is strong evidence that motorists on the nation's streets and highways were considerably safer in 1976 than they were a decade ago, according to a government survey.

That conclusion is one of many facts and figures on highway safety made public today by the U.S. Department of Transportation with the release of two annual reports transmitted to the Congress by President Carter.

Required by the Highway Safety Act of 1966 and the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966, the reports are submitted annually to the Congress. They constitute a review by DOT's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of the causes and complexity of the traffic safety problems, and the programs and research undertaken by the federal government to reduce highway deaths and injuries.

The reports show:

- Although approximately 45,000 persons died in traffic accidents last year, and nearly four million others suffered injuries, those totals represent a marked improvement over the situation in 1966, prior to the passage of the legislation which initiated the national traffic safety programs.

- Between 1966 and 1976, the fatality rate (deaths per 100 million miles driven) declined from 5.58 to 3.30. At the same time, the number of licensed drivers increased 32.6 percent (from 100,959,000 to 133,874,000); the number of registered vehicles jumped 48.1 percent (95,946,000 to 142,397,000); and the number of miles of vehicle travel rose 49.1 percent (from 930 million to one trillion 391 million).

- more -

= The fuel shortage and imposition of the 55 mile-per-hour national speed limit law together resulted in a dramatic decline of 9,000 traffic deaths in 1974 compared with 1973. About half of that number can be attributed to the lower speed limit. In 1975 and 1976, the fatality levels remained at approximately the same level (44,492 and 45,113 respectively).

= Had the 1966 fatality rate held constant, the 1976 national traffic death toll would have been about 79,000. The cumulative total of lives saved over the 10-year period is conservatively estimated at 200,000.

= Continuation of the 55 mph speed limit, safety devices to protect life on the highways and in cars, campaigns for better driving habits, development of techniques for seeking corrections and remedies for drunken driving, continued research, and investigations of vehicle safety problems were cited as having contributed to a safer driving environment.

The reports concluded that although progress is being made, there is a long way to go before highway deaths and injuries are contained. The NHTSA is placing a priority on those solutions to problems most likely to produce the most effective results at the lowest cost. Priority programs include enforcement of the 55 mph national speed limit, increased use of safety belts, improving occupant safety in vehicles, control over the excessive use of alcohol among drivers, the development of research safety vehicles to lead the way to future auto safety standards, and data collection and analysis.

Copies of the two annual reports may be obtained by writing to: General Services Division/Distribution, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D. C. 20590.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U.S. Department of Transportation

news:



Office of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY
July 6, 1977

CONSUMER ADVISORY

NHTSA - 50-77 (BMA)
Tel. (202) 426-0670

FORD TO RECALL 1975-1977 VANS TO INSTALL INSTRUMENT PANEL PADS

The U.S. Department of Transportation today announced that the Ford Motor Co. will recall some 250,000 of its 1975-1977 Ford Econoline Vans and Club Wagons that have unpadded plastic instrument panels that shatter on impact.

The recall, which will begin about Oct. 1, will involve the installation of an instrument panel pad to prevent injuries to passengers who might hit the panel during an accident or sudden stop. Owners of the affected vehicles will be notified by Ford when the parts needed to make repairs are available.

Joan Claybrook, Administrator of the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), warned owners of these vehicles that "because the delay in initiating a recall campaign could result in additional injuries, it is particularly important that occupants of these Ford vans use their safety belts."

The federal safety agency chief reminded motorists that in the event of an accident or sudden stop involving impact of a vehicle occupant with the plastic instrument panel on these vehicles, the instrument panel could shatter, leaving sharp and jagged edges that could lacerate, cut and puncture vehicle occupants.

A safety-related investigation of these Ford vans was opened in April 1977, based on two reports to NHTSA of non-collision accidents, and one low-speed collision in which it was alleged that the plastic instrument panels on these vehicles shattered, leaving sharp edges.

In two of these cases, lacerations were said to have occurred to either the occupant's arm or face. Since the investigation was initiated, two additional incidents with similar injuries have been reported.

On June 16, Ford notified the NHTSA of its intention to recall the affected vehicles. The manufacturer also indicated that the vehicles could not be recalled sooner because of the time required to prepare necessary molds and produce and distribute the new panels.

Ms. Claybrook said "the agency is urging Ford to do everything possible to expedite the supply of the new pads."

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation news:



Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590

NHTSA--53-77 (HP)

Tel. 202-426-9550

TRAFFIC FATALITIES DECLINE
FOUR PERCENT IN MAY

FOR RELEASE MONDAY
July 11, 1977

Traffic fatalities in the United States declined more than four percent in May below the level of May 1976, the U.S. Department of Transportation announced today.

The number of persons killed in traffic accidents in May is estimated at 3,909, or 178 fewer than the 4,087 fatalities reported in May 1976.

The totals are based on preliminary figures reported to the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) by the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

It marked the first time since February that the monthly fatality count was below the corresponding period of a year ago.

Total fatalities for the first five months of 1977 are running almost two percent below the same period of a year ago, with an estimated 16,436 deaths compared to 16,767 in the January through May period of 1976.

NHTSA Administrator Joan Claybrook said "these figures give continued evidence that many motorists are cooperating with the lower speed limits, recognizing that there is a big payoff in safety as well as in fuel conservation. We believe that enforcement of the 55 mile per hour speed limit and the use of available safety belts will contribute to an even more significant reduction in the traffic toll."

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation

news:

Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590



FOR RELEASE TUESDAY
July 12, 1977

NHTSA--52-77(HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT STUDY RECOMMENDS CHANGES IN HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM STANDARDS

A study conducted by the U.S. Department of Transportation concludes that mandatory compliance by the states with 18 federal highway safety standards is no longer appropriate.

In a report transmitted to Congress by Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams, the study recommends that the present standards be replaced with a limited number of uniform requirements. It also says a more flexible approach is needed in the management and operation of the state and community highway safety program.

The report, mandated by Congress under the 1976 Highway Safety Act, represents the department's evaluation of the status and future of the highway safety program.

Legislation adopted more than 10 years ago established a national program aimed at reducing motor vehicle accidents, injuries and fatalities. The Highway Safety Act of 1966 required the adoption of standards around which states and communities were to organize their safety programs, supplemented by federal grants.

The study finds that these programs, in existence for more than 10 years, along with important vehicle safety standards and lower speeds have had a positive influence on highway safety in the United States. Since 1966, the fatality rate (deaths per 100 million miles of vehicle travel) has declined from 5.58 to 3.30, an all-time low.

- more -

The report notes that most of the countermeasures incorporated in the present highway safety program standards are now in common use, which was not the case a decade ago.

The study concludes that state highway safety agencies have developed to the point where they should be relied on to identify their most critical safety problems and finance activities aimed at solving them. Programs would be directed toward young drivers, pedestrians, and accidents involving alcohol. Enforcement of the 55 mile per hour speed limit and the promotion of safety belt usage would be encouraged.

In the report, the department recommends that the federal requirement for mandatory compliance with 18 highway safety program standards be replaced with a limited number of uniform requirements in the following six areas:

- o Rules of the road
- o Vehicle registration, titling and theft
- o Driver licensing
- o Traffic control devices
- o Highway design, construction and maintenance
- o Traffic record systems

The other highway safety program standards would serve as guidelines for state and local governments. They would continue to provide the best information available as to the most effective means of carrying out highway safety countermeasures.

The report also recommends that the state highway safety agencies become more actively involved in the coordination of overall state highway safety activities, and in highway safety planning at the local level.

Other recommendations suggest modification of the present incentive grant program to encourage new approaches to highway safety problems, and call for the elimination of financial sanctions against the states provided for in the present statute, since they serve no useful purpose and severely strain the federal/state partnership.

The study of the highway safety program was conducted in cooperation with the states, as well as with the full participation of the entire highway safety community.

#####

U. S. Department of Transportation

news:



Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE TUESDAY
July 12, 1977

CONSUMER ADVISORY

NHTSA - 54-77 (IHC)
Tel. (202) 426-0670

IH TRUCK HUBS BEING
INVESTIGATED

A safety investigation of 1975-1977 International Harvester heavy trucks was announced today by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The investigation centers on alleged failures of aluminum wheel hubs which can cause damage to elements in the braking system of these vehicles.

The department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) described the symptoms of the problem as a looseness or shimmy in the steering mechanism of trucks with 10,800 and 12,000 pound axles. Drivers also reported oil/grease leaks in the front wheel and hub area.

To date, there have been no reports of accidents or injuries attributed to this problem, but NHTSA Administrator Joan Claybrook said that "our intention is to determine the scope and cause of this problem and to find out just how serious it is."

The agency has received 98 reports of aluminum wheel hub failures from International Harvester. The company estimates there are 22,000 trucks on the road with these hubs.

The NHTSA is urging truck drivers, or trucking companies and other truck users experiencing this problem to report it to: the Office of Defects Investigation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D.C. 20590. These problems may also be reported to the NHTSA Auto Safety Hotline by calling toll-free, (800) 424-9393 (for Washington D.C. residents the number is 426-0123).

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation

news:



Office of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY
July 13, 1977

NHTSA 56-77
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT CHANGES LOCATION FOR PUBLIC MEETING ON BUMPERS

The U.S. Department of Transportation today changed the location of a public meeting scheduled for July 28 to discuss proposed amendments to the federal bumper standard.

The meeting, which starts at 9:30 a.m., will be held at the U.S. Department of Commerce Auditorium at 14th St. and Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, D.C. The session will continue on July 29 if more time is needed.

In the June 16 Federal Register notice, the site of the meeting was listed as the Departmental Auditorium, which is located in a building around the corner from the Department of Commerce Auditorium.

The meeting is designed to give all interested persons an opportunity to present their views on the government proposals.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation

news:



Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY
July 14, 1977

NHTSA -- 58-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

MUSTANGS AND COUGARS RECALL

The U.S. Department of Transportation has again asked Ford Motor Co. to explain why problems have arisen in connection with a court-ordered recall campaign involving 1968 and 1969 Mustangs and Cougars with defective bucket style driver seats.

After an initial inquiry into the problem by Joan Claybrook, Administrator of the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Ford President Lee A. Iacocca provided assurances that the campaign would be run properly. However, consumer complaints have continued to arrive at the NHTSA. These have been predominately associated with a shortage of replacement parts at Ford and Lincoln-Mercury dealers, where the automobiles are supposed to be repaired.

Iacocca had assured Ms. Claybrook that parts would be sent to dealers during the week of May 16, 1977, but according to reports received from around the country, the dealers have all but run out, and the owners are forced to continue driving dangerously defective vehicles.

After a two-year legal battle, a U.S. District Court found that the defect in the driver's seats of the Mustangs and Cougars could result in the seat back suddenly falling backwards at speeds of up to 60 miles per hour. When this happens, the driver could fall into the back seat and lose control of the car. The District Court found that the seat failures present "a severe threat to motor vehicle safety" to some 500,000 owners of the vehicles.

-more-

The court heard evidence that several accidents have occurred as a result of such seat failures, including injuries resulting in hospitalization. Ford's own expert witness later stated that a total of approximately 170,000 driver seat failures may have occurred.

Ms. Claybrook has now asked Iacocca to advise her when additional parts will be sent. In addition, she has queried him on additional practices regarding Ford's recall campaign that may tend to dissuade owners from bringing their vehicles in for repair. These include (1) directing owners to bring their vehicles to dealers many miles from their homes and (2) suggesting to its dealers that prior "district approval" be required for certain repairs. In addition, Ford failed to notify the NHTSA that there was a shortage of the driver seat replacement parts until a consumer brought the problem to the attention of the agency, which in turn requested an explanation from Ford.

Finally, a consumer from Redwood City, Calif., has asked that the NHTSA conduct a hearing to determine whether Ford has reasonably carried out its obligation to repair the defective vehicles. This development has been called to the attention of Iacocca, and the NHTSA is now considering the petition. The agency has begun an audit of Ford's campaign to determine the exact scope of the problems that have been reported.

For their safety until the repair is made, the NHTSA warns owners of the defective Mustangs and Cougars that they should prop a large, firm object (such as a suitcase) behind the driver's seat when the vehicle is in use.

In the meantime, the agency suggests that owners ask dealers to repair these seats at the earliest possible date, and to insist that dealers obtain parts immediately.

Any owner who has experienced a problem in having his 1968 or 1969 Mustang or Cougar driver's seat repaired is asked to please contact the Administrator, NHTSA, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, D.C. 20590.

#####

U. S. Department of Transportation news:



Office of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
July 15, 1977

NHTSA == 57-77 (RC)
Tel. 202-426-9550

DOT GRANTS EXTENSION
FOR WINDSHIELD TESTS

A one year extension of the effective date of a federal safety standard requiring windshield mounting tests for a variety of light trucks and buses was announced today by the U. S. Department of Transportation.

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 212, "Windshield Mounting," has been effective for passenger cars since Jan. 1, 1970. It was amended last year by the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to include multipurpose vehicles, trucks and buses, with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less, effective Sept. 1, 1977. In response to petitions for reconsideration, the effective date has been extended to Sept. 1, 1978, to permit design changes and retooling necessary for compliance with the amended standard, NHTSA said.

In addition, "walk-in, van-type" vehicles have been added to the list of exempted vehicles considered to have impractical designs to meet the requirements of the standard, the federal safety agency said. Other exempted vehicles include forward control vehicles, such as campers and vans, and open body vehicles with fold down windshields.

Windshield retention requirements under the amended standard for both cars and trucks differ according to the type of passenger restraint system used. Vehicles using a passive system, such as the air bag, would be required to retain at least 50 percent of their windshield periphery contact area after the vehicle, equipped with test dummies, is crashed into a barrier at any speed up to and including 30 miles per hour. Those equipped with an active system, such as seat belts, must retain no less than 75 percent of the windshield periphery contact area, under the same test conditions, but with the seat belt system worn by the dummy.

#####

U.S. Department of Transportation

Chief of Public Affairs

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517



FIRST CLASS

U. S. Department of Transportation news:



Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY
July 20, 1977

NHTSA -- 59-77 (DB)
Tel. 202-426-9550

NEW MATERIALS PROMOTE SAFETY BELT USAGE

A new series of pamphlets on safety belts for use by educators was announced today by the Department of Transportation in its continuing effort to encourage use of belts to reduce automobile fatalities and injuries.

Written in layman's language, the pamphlets are aimed at safety educators to mobilize their influence on new and potential drivers.

With more than 100 million passenger cars in the United States (about 92 percent of the total number registered) equipped with safety belts, their use is the most cost effective highway safety measure available to the public. The current belt usage rate is estimated at 20 percent, and is credited with saving an estimated 3,000 lives annually. An increase in the usage rate to 70 percent would save an additional 9,000 to 10,000 lives each year.

In announcing distribution of the publications, Joan Claybrook, head of the Department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said, "Parents, teachers, students, medical personnel, businessmen, and the police--all need to join the national effort to explain the life-saving qualities of the safety belts which are already installed in automobiles. We hope that local communities, with the aid of their state agencies, will use these publications to assist in solving this problem."

Over 100,000 copies of the new pamphlets have been sent to elementary school principals, driver education teachers, administrators of college and university driver education preparation programs, directors of audio-visual centers, presidents of insurance companies, safety directors, driving school instructors, safety educators and information officers of service clubs.

- more -

Previous materials designed for specific groups of drivers and passengers have been directed at elementary school children, driver education students, employees of government agencies, industrial organizations and service clubs.

NHTSA will make print negatives of all of the materials available to officials and organizations wishing to print their own copies.

For single free copies of each pamphlet, write to:

General Services Division/Distribution
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Washington, D. C. 20590

Following is a descriptive list of all the new materials:

GETTING THE SAFETY BELT MESSAGE ACROSS--A GUIDE FOR DRIVER EDUCATION INSTRUCTORS

Presents guidelines for 5 classroom presentations on safety belts to supplement regular driver education curriculum

THE SAFETY BELT MESSAGE-- The Student's Lesson

Self Directed Student's Learning Booklet presenting the reasons that safety belts should be worn and HOW TO WEAR THEM PROPERLY

TEACHING THE SAFETY BELT MESSAGE-- A Guide for Teachers of Driver Education Instructors

Outlines several methods for presenting the topic of safety belts in the classroom.

HOW MANY OF THESE FAIRY TALES HAVE YOU TOLD?

Presents most common reasons given for not wearing safety belts and counters them with facts.

THE AUTOMOBILE SAFETY BELT FACT BOOK

Provides comprehensive information and data about most aspects of safety belts.

SAFETY BELT ACTIVITY BOOK--A Guide for Teachers of Grades K-6

Illustrated instructions for 20 classroom/group activities designed to inform children about belts and encourage their use.

SAFETY BELT GAME

Board game for 2 to 4 children to play suitable for grades 2-6.

SAFETY BELTS - FACT AND FICTION

Materials include slides, audio cassette and leader's booklet.
Authoritative narration that shows why safety belts should be worn
and counters some common myths for not wearing belts; suitable for
general audience in an educational setting:

Driver Education Students
Employees
Service Organization Members
Public Meetings Such as:

- o Service Clubs
- o PTA
- o Community Functions
- o General Safety Programs

ENCOURAGING EMPLOYEES TO USE SAFETY BELTS

Booklet covers the following:

How to organize a safety belt program
Basic programs
Distributing literature
Audio-Visual presentation
Classroom type presentation
Demonstration
Comprehensive Program:

Describes tailoring program to information needs of employes
Includes Procedure for Program Evaluation

#####

U. S. Department of Transportation

news:

Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590



CONSUMER ADVISORY

FOR RELEASE THURSDAY
July 28, 1977

NHTSA 61-77 (IHC)
Tel. 426-0670

BRITISH LEYLAND INVESTIGATIONS

Two new safety investigations involving recent vintage British Leyland vehicles were announced today by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

According to the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the first investigation involves a suspected throttle cable problem in 1975-1977 TR-7 vehicles. Owner reports indicate a strong likelihood of either a partial or complete failure of the cables. In a partial failure, the accelerator may stick in an open position reducing the driver's control over vehicle speed. A complete failure of the cable will result in a loss of engine power.

NHTSA Administrator Joan Claybrook said, "We consider either failure to be potentially dangerous. In the partial failure, we hope drivers will have enough presence of mind to either turn the ignition to OFF (not LOCK because it will lock the steering) or shift into NEUTRAL. These may be the safest ways to stop the cars."

The agency has received 122 complaints including four reported accidents alleging throttle cable failures. Approximately 33,000 TR-7s have been sold in the U.S.

The second investigation involves 1975-77 Spitfire and TR-7 vehicles and centers on reported failures in the ignition amplifier causing the cars to misfire, stall in traffic and fail to restart. The agency has received 67 complaints directly from owners and others forwarded from British Leyland in response to inquiries. To date, there have been no accidents reported. In addition to the 33,000 TR-7s, there have been more than 20,000 Spitfires sold since 1975.

The NHTSA is urging anyone experiencing these problems to report them to: the Office of Defect Investigations, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20590. Owners may also report problems to the NHTSA Auto Safety Hotline by calling toll-free (800) 424-9393 (for Washington, D.C. residents the number is 426-0123).

#



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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation

news:

Office of Public Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20590



FOR RELEASE THURSDAY
July 28, 1977

NHTSA-- 62-77 (BAB)
Tel. 202-426-9550

AUTO DEALERS ALERTED TO NEW REQUIREMENTS

An informal Department of Transportation canvass of more than 200 automobile dealers across the country has shown that many of them apparently are not complying with new fuel economy regulations. The survey was conducted between May 20 and June 3 by the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The 1975 energy conservation law requires all new car dealers to display prominently in their showrooms a Gas Mileage Guide for new cars published jointly by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Federal Energy Administration (FEA). Through NHTSA's 10 Regional Offices around the country, 222 auto dealers representing 12 auto manufacturers and 18 car makes were checked to see if they are meeting the requirements that the consumer information be displayed and made available immediately to consumers free of charge.

The 1975 law established a program to improve automobile fuel economy through enforcement of federal standards and through dissemination of consumer information. Authority to enforce the law and the regulations prescribed under it has been delegated to NHTSA.

-more-

The canvass showed that about 60 percent of the dealers are not complying with the law. NHTSA Administrator Joan Claybrook said of the study, "While this survey was not a statistically valid random sample, the results do suggest to us that many dealers are not making the automotive fuel economy information available to consumers as the law intends. We are, therefore, asking the assistance of the National Automobile Dealers Association in alerting its members and their dealers to the legal requirements and making sure they are aware of the law and its penalties."

Penalty for non-compliance is a fine of not more than \$10,000 per day for each violation. The agency has authority to make appropriate compromises on the amount of the penalty.

Claybrook added, "It is our responsibility under the law to see that this information is made readily available to consumers, and we intend to see that it is done. We are informed that the FEA arranged for distribution of the Gas Mileage Guide to all dealers through the Government Printing Office last March. We can see no reason why it is not now available in all dealer showrooms.

"For the information of those dealers who still might not be aware of this obligation, we are sending a letter to all dealers which will make clear their responsibilities under the law. We also are alerting dealers that the FEA will be preparing a new Gas Mileage Guide for the 1978 models, which will be distributed this fall. We are hopeful that dealers will respond by making this fuel economy information readily available to consumers who come into their showroom, and minimize the need for this agency to bring enforcement actions."

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation news:



Office of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
July 29, 1977

CONSUMER ADVISORY

NHTSA - 51-77 (IHC)
Tel. (202) 426-0670

HELMET FASTENER RECALL

The U.S. Department of Transportation today issued a warning to motorcyclists about the safety of 57,000 Saf-T-Release helmet fasteners manufactured by F.P., Inc. of Pasadena, Calif.

The fasteners have been recalled by the manufacturer because a potentially defective coil spring may allow them to open under impact, permitting the helmets to come off.

The warning to motorcyclists is being issued because the manufacturer does not have a record of the names and addresses of purchasers to notify individually by mail.

The department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) opened an investigation in 1975 after receiving an allegation that a cyclist had been killed when his helmet strap -- employing a Saf-T-Release fastener -- failed.

NHTSA testing found that helmets fitted with the Saf-T-Release fastener failed to pass retention tests designed to measure the holding strength of the chin strap. The recalled fasteners were manufactured between 1969 and 1975.

NHTSA Administrator Joan Claybrook said, "This piece of equipment is usually sold through catalogue, motorcycle and accessory shops to customers who already own motorcycle helmets and want to replace the more traditional D-ring fastener. Although the manufacturer does not

have the names of these purchasers. The firm has assured us it will notify the distributors about this recall and will replace the recalled fasteners.

F.P., Inc., will replace at no charge the recalled fasteners with fasteners of a newer design. Cyclists who have the Saf-T-Release fasteners should remove the fasteners from their helmets and send them, along with their names and addresses, to: F.P., Inc., P.O. Box 5295, Pasadena, Calif. 91107. Cyclists will receive the replacement fastener by return mail.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517

FIRST CLASS



U. S. Department of Transportation news:



Office of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR RELEASE FRIDAY
July 29, 1977

NHTSA -- 63-77 (HP)
Tel. 202-426-9550

JUNE FATALITIES RISE

The nation's traffic fatalities climbed more than four percent in June over the level of June 1976, the U. S. Department of Transportation said today.

The number of persons killed in traffic accidents in June is estimated at 4,138, an increase of 173 over the 3,965 fatalities reported in June of last year.

The totals are based on preliminary figures reported to the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) by the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Total fatalities, however, for the first six months of 1977 are running a fraction below the corresponding period of a year ago, with an estimated 20,755 deaths compared to 20,811 recorded in the January through June period of 1976.

#####

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

Official Business

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
DOT 517



FIRST CLASS