

the name of a geographic location other than the true country of origin of the article, the country of origin marking always must appear in close proximity to those words. The document solicited public comments that were to be received on or before January 16, 1996.

Customs has been requested to extend the period of time for comments in order to afford interested parties additional time to study the proposed regulatory changes and prepare responsive comments. Customs believes that it would be appropriate to grant the request. Accordingly, the period of time for the submission of comments is being extended 30 days.

Dated: December 20, 1995.

Stuart P. Seidel,

Assistant Commissioner, Office of Regulations and Rulings.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

49 CFR Part 571

[Docket No. 95-72, Notice 2]

RIN 2127-AF75

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), DOT.

ACTION: Extension of Comment Period for a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking.

SUMMARY: This document grants three requests to extend the comment period on an agency proposal to amend the geometric visibility requirements of signal lamps and the rear side marker color, both contained Standard No. 108, Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment. The goal of the proposed amendment is to assist international efforts to harmonize the lighting requirements of continental Europe, the United Kingdom, Japan and the United States. A lengthy extension of the comment period is desirable because a large number of governmental and industry parties require time to achieve internal consensus on the usefulness of the NHTSA proposal. The comment closing date is changed from December 26, 1995 to May 16, 1996.

DATES: Comments on docket 95-72, Notice 1 must be received on or before May 16, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to the Docket No. 95-72, Notice 1 and be

submitted to: Docket Section, room 5109, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590 (Docket hours are from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rich Van Iderstine, Office of Safety Performance Standards, NHTSA, telephone (202) 366-5280, FAX (202) 366-4329. Please note that written comments should be sent to the Docket Section rather than faxed to the above contact person.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NHTSA's proposal responded to a petition from the Groupe Travail de Bruxelles 1952 (GTB). GTB is composed of vehicle and lamp manufacturers from Europe, Japan and the United States. GTB is an advisory group for the two organizations operating under the United Nations' Economic Commission for Europe that are involved in establishing motor vehicle lighting standards: The Meeting of Experts on Lighting and Light Signaling (GRE) and the Working Party on the Construction of Motor Vehicles (WP29). GTB requested the extension of the comment period, and an extension was supported by similar requests from the American Automobile Manufacturers Association (AAMA) and the Chairman of GRE, Mr. G.J.M. Meekel.

In its comment period extension request, GTB explained the process it was pursuing in its quest for harmonization. GTB submitted its petition to NHTSA concurrently with its proposal to GRE for amendments of the European regulations. NHTSA proposed some of the suggestions in the GTB petition but not others. GTB believes that NHTSA's response has greatly complicated its dealings with several European countries and Japan. Therefore, according to GTB, arriving at a constructive response to NHTSA's NPRM will not be a trivial matter. AAMA cited that a special meeting of GTB to discuss these issues was not scheduled until December 20, 1995 and that any recommendations developed at this meeting could not be acted upon by GRE until its Spring meeting. Mr. Meekel also mentioned GRE's early Spring meeting and the desire for discussions there and submission of comments resulting from that meeting.

It is NHTSA's general policy to deny requests for comment period extensions based on the timing of formal meetings of interested associations. Modern communication technology provides many rapid ways (e.g., fax, teleconferencing, e-mail, etc.) for associations to communicate with members and reach consensus. However, NHTSA believes that GTB's

desire for an extension is motivated by more than the mere mechanics of international communication. NHTSA's proposal did not provide GTB with the easiest path to harmonization. NHTSA understands the difficulty of finding a signal lamp harmonization solution that would benefit U.S. and international vehicle manufacturers while satisfying the concerns of the various regulatory bodies. NHTSA agrees that this first step toward lighting harmonization may be unusually time-consuming if it is to be productive.

The agency wants to elevate international harmonization among its priorities. However, it views a seven month comment period for this notice as a special circumstance and not a precedent for future rulemaking actions regarding harmonization.

After reviewing the situation, NHTSA agrees with the petitioners that additional time is desirable so that GTB may determine the level of flexibility on the part of European authorities for signal lighting harmonization. Accordingly, the agency believes that there is good cause for the extension and that the extension is consistent with the public interest. Based on the above considerations, the agency has decided to extend the comment period until May 16, 1996.

Issued on: December 19, 1995.

Barry Felrice,

Associate Administrator for Safety Performance Standards.

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49 CFR Part 571

[Docket No. 95-98-No1]

Public Meeting With Manufacturers of School Buses and School Transportation Providers

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting; request for comments.

SUMMARY: This document announces a public meeting at which NHTSA will seek information from school bus manufacturers, school transportation providers, and other members of the public on issues related to the transportation of school children. NHTSA is also requesting suggestions for actions with respect to NHTSA's regulations and Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) that govern the manufacture of school buses. This document also invites written comments on the same subject.