

Issued on: January 2, 1997.
 C.D. Reagan,
 Division Administrator, Austin, Texas.
 [FR Doc. 97-1914 Filed 1-24-97; 8:45 am]
 BILLING CODE 4910-22-M

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. 97-03; Notice 1]

Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 1987 and 1988 Toyota Van Multipurpose Passenger Vehicles Are Eligible for Importation

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming 1987 and 1988 Toyota Van multipurpose passenger vehicles (MPVs) are eligible for importation.

SUMMARY: This notice announces receipt by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a petition for a decision that 1987 and 1988 Toyota Van MPVs that were not originally manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards are eligible for importation into the United States because (1) they are substantially similar to vehicles that were originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States and that were certified by their manufacturer as complying with the safety standards, and (2) they are capable of being readily altered to conform to the standards.

DATES: The closing date for comments on the petition is February 26, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to the docket number and notice number, and be submitted to: Docket Section, Room 5109, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, DC 20590. [Docket hours are from 9:30 am to 4 pm]

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Entwistle, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance, NHTSA (202-366-5306).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Under 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(A), a motor vehicle that was not originally manufactured to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards shall be refused admission into the United States unless NHTSA has decided that the motor vehicle is substantially similar to a motor vehicle originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States,

certified under 49 U.S.C. 30115, and of the same model year as the model of the motor vehicle to be compared, and is capable of being readily altered to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Petitions for eligibility decisions may be submitted by either manufacturers or importers who have registered with NHTSA pursuant to 49 CFR part 592. As specified in 49 CFR 593.7, NHTSA publishes notice in the Federal Register of each petition that it receives, and affords interested persons an opportunity to comment on the petition. At the close of the comment period, NHTSA decides, on the basis of the petition and any comments that it has received, whether the vehicle is eligible for importation. The agency then publishes this decision in the Federal Register.

J.K. Motors of Kingsville, Maryland ("J.K.") (Registered Importer 90-006) has petitioned NHTSA to decide whether 1987 and 1988 Toyota Vans are eligible for importation into the United States. The vehicles which J.K. believes are substantially similar are the 1987 and 1988 Toyota Vans that were manufactured for importation into, and sale in, the United States and certified by their manufacturer, Toyota Motor Corporation, as conforming to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

The petitioner claims that it carefully compared non-U.S. certified 1987 and 1988 Toyota Vans to their U.S. certified counterpart, and found the vehicles to be substantially similar with respect to compliance with most Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

J.K. submitted information with its petition intended to demonstrate that non-U.S. certified 1987 and 1988 Toyota Vans, as originally manufactured, conform to many Federal motor vehicle safety standards in the same manner as their U.S. certified counterparts, or are capable of being readily altered to conform to those standards.

Specifically, the petitioner claims that non-U.S. certified 1987 and 1988 Toyota Vans are identical to their U.S. certified counterparts with respect to compliance with Standard Nos. 102 *Transmission Shift Lever Sequence* * * *, 103 *Defrosting and Defogging Systems*, 104 *Windshield Wiping and Washing Systems*, 105 *Hydraulic Brake Systems*, 106 *Brake Hoses*, 113 *Hood Latch Systems*, 116 *Brake Fluid*, 119 *New Pneumatic Tires*, 124 *Accelerator Control Systems*, 201 *Occupant Protection in Interior Impact*, 202 *Head Restraints*, 204 *Steering Control Rearward Displacement*, 205 *Glazing Materials*, 206 *Door Locks and Door*

Retention Components, 207 *Seating Systems*, 210 *Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages*, 212 *Windshield Retention*, 214 *Side Impact Protection*, 216 *Roof Crush Resistance*, 219 *Windshield Zone Intrusion*, 301 *Fuel System Integrity*, and 302 *Flammability of Interior Materials*.

Petitioner also contends that non-U.S. certified 1987 and 1988 Toyota Vans are capable of being readily altered to meet the following standards, in the manner indicated:

Standard No. 101 *Controls and Displays*: (a) Substitution of a lens marked "Brake" for a lens with an ECE symbol on the brake failure indicator lamp; (b) replacement of the speedometer/odometer with one calibrated in miles per hour.

Standard No. 108 *Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment*: (a) Installation of U.S.-model headlamps and front sidemarker lights; (b) installation of U.S.-model taillamp assemblies which incorporate rear sidemarker lights; (c) installation of a high mounted stop lamp assembly.

Standard No. 111 *Rearview Mirror*: Replacement of the passenger side rearview mirror with a U.S.-model component.

Standard No. 114 *Theft Protection*: Installation of a warning buzzer microswitch and a warning buzzer in the steering lock assembly.

Standard No. 118 *Power Window Systems*: Installation of a relay in the power window system so that the window transport is inoperative when the ignition is switched off.

Standard No. 120 *Tire Selection and Rims*: Installation of a tire information placard.

Standard No. 208 *Occupant Crash Protection*: Installation of a seat belt warning buzzer, wired to the seat belt latch. The petitioner states that the vehicles are equipped with lap and shoulder belts in the front and rear outboard seating positions, and with a lap belt in the rear center seating position.

The petitioner also states that a VIN plate must be installed on the vehicles so that it can be read from outside the left windshield pillar, and a VIN reference label must be installed on the edge of the door or latch post nearest the driver to meet the requirements of 49 CFR part 565.

Interested persons are invited to submit comments on the petition described above. Comments should refer to the docket number and be submitted to: Docket Section, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5109, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. It is requested

but not required that 10 copies be submitted.

All comments received before the close of business on the closing date indicated above will be considered, and will be available for examination in the docket at the above address both before and after that date. To the extent possible, comments filed after the closing date will also be considered. Notice of final action on the petition will be published in the Federal Register pursuant to the authority indicated below.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(A) and (b)(1); 49 CFR 593.8; delegations of authority at 49 CFR 1.50 and 501.8.

Issued on: January 21, 1997.

Marilynne Jacobs,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.

[FR Doc. 97-1839 Filed 1-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-59-P

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-290 (Sub-No. 188X)]

Norfolk and Western Railway Company; Abandonment Exemption; Between Edgefield and Escambia Junction, SC

Norfolk and Western Railway Company (NW) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR Part 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon its 1.5-mile line of railroad between milepost AB-0.0 at Edgefield and milepost AB-1.5 at Escambia Junction, SC.

NW has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) there is no overhead traffic on the line; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the line (or by a state or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) or with any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of complainant within the 2-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.7 (environmental reports), 49 CFR 1105.8 (historic reports), 49 CFR 1105.11 (transmittal letter), 49 CFR 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies) have been met.

As a condition to this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial

revocation under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) must be filed.

Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) has been received, this exemption will be effective on February 26, 1997, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,¹ formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2), and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29² must be filed by February 6, 1997. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by February 18, 1997, with: Office of the Secretary, Case Control Branch, Surface Transportation Board, 1201 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20423.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to applicant's representative: James R. Paschall, General Attorney, Norfolk Southern Corporation, Three Commercial Place, Norfolk, VA 23510.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*.

NW has filed an environmental report which addresses the abandonment's effects, if any, on the environment and historic resources. The Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by January 31, 1997. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 3219, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423) or by calling Elaine Kaiser, Chief of SEA, at (202) 927-6248. Comments on environmental and historic preservation matters must be filed within 15 days after the EA becomes available to the public.

Environmental, historic preservation, public use, or trail use/rail banking conditions will be imposed, where appropriate, in a subsequent decision.

Decided: January 21, 1997.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik,
Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 97-1871 Filed 1-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

¹The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Service Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for a stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Board may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.

²The Board will accept late-filed trail use requests as long as the abandonment has not been consummated and the abandoning railroad is willing to negotiate an agreement.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Customs Service

Non-ABI Processing of Refunds Under the Generalized System of Preferences

AGENCY: Customs Service, Treasury.

ACTION: General notice.

SUMMARY: This document gives notice that Customs has completed the Automated Broker Interface (ABI) processing of certain retroactively-eligible Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) duty refund claims—for the period July 31, 1995, through September 30, 1996—and advises those ABI filers that did not receive a duty refund to contact in writing the port director of the port where the GSP-eligible goods were entered or withdrawn.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 27, 1997.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For general operational aspects: John Pierce, Office of Trade Agreements, (202-927-1249).

For information on specific refunds: The Customs port office where the subject merchandise was entered or withdrawn.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) is a renewable, preferential trade program that allows the products of many developing countries to enter the United States free of duty. On July 31, 1995, continued authority for the GSP program lapsed, and it was not until August 20, 1996, that the entry of eligible merchandise under provisions of the GSP was again authorized until May 31, 1997, pursuant to provisions contained in the GSP Renewal Act of 1996 (the 1996 Act, Pub.L. 104-188, 110 Stat. 1755, at 110 Stat. 1917). The 1996 Act contained certain retroactive applications for the processing of articles entered after July 31, 1995, and before October 1, 1996; such entries were to be liquidated or reliquidated and the deposit of estimated duties refunded with interest, provided that a request for liquidation or reliquidation was filed with Customs by February 16, 1997, *i.e.*, within 180 days after the date of the 1996 Act's enactment, that contained sufficient information to enable Customs to locate the entry or to reconstruct the entry if it cannot be located. See, Federal Register notice of Friday, September 20, 1996 (61 FR 49528).

In anticipation of the 1995 lapse of authority for continued GSP processing of eligible merchandise, Customs