

Federal Communications Commission.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Air Force

48 CFR Part 5350

Types of Contracts

AGENCY: Department of the Air Force, Department of Defense.

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: The Department of the Air Force is amending Title 48, Chapter 53 of the CFR by removing Part 5350, Extraordinary Contractual Actions. This rule is removed because it is outdated and was deleted from the Air Force Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (AFFARS) by Air Force Acquisition Circular (AFAC) 96-1 in June 1997.

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 14, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. David Powell, SAF/AQCP, 1060 Air Force Pentagon, Washington, DC 20330-1060, telephone (703) 588-7062.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority: 5 U.S.C. 301 and FAR 1.301.

PART 5350—[REMOVED]

Accordingly, 48 CFR, Chapter 53, is amended by removing Part 5350.

Carolyn A. Lunsford,

Air Force Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

49 CFR Part 571

[Docket No. NHTSA-98-4934]

RIN 2127-AH24

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Occupant Crash Protection

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

ACTION: Final rule, correcting amendment.

SUMMARY: This document amends a final rule that was published in March 1997

that expedites the depowering of air bags. This correcting amendment clarifies that: The "corridor" defining the bounds of permissible sled acceleration will be shifted to contain the time at which the sled acceleration first reaches 0.5 g, to account for "lag" in the components of the sled system. This will make the sled test easier to conduct because early variations in sled acceleration lag will not in themselves cause the sled pulse to be outside the required acceleration corridor. While the neck injury criteria for flexion bending moment and extension bending moment are intended to be measured by the six-axis load cell, located in the dummy head, the values measured at that point will be mathematically corrected to reflect the corresponding values at the occipital condyle, a lower point near the base of the dummy's skull. Prior to testing, the engine, transmissions, axles, exhaust, vehicle frame, and vehicle body must be rigidly secured to the vehicle and/or the sled. Fluids, batteries and unsecured components will be removed. These steps will prevent spikes in the acceleration curve during the test that would result from these components moving.

DATES: *Effective Date:* The amendments made to this final rule are effective December 28, 1998.

Petitions: Petitions for reconsideration must be received by February 11, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Petitions for reconsideration should refer to the docket number of this rule and be submitted to: Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information about air bags and related rulemaking: Visit the NHTSA web site at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov> and click on the icon "Air Bag Page".

For technical issues: Mr. John Lee, Office of Safety Performance Standards, NPS-10, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590. Telephone (202) 366-4924. Fax: (202) 493-2739.

For legal issues: Mr. Paul Atelsek, Office of Chief Counsel, NCC-20, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590. Telephone (202) 366-2992. Fax: (202) 366-3820.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

On March 19, 1997, NHTSA published a final rule amending Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208,

"Occupant Crash Protection" to temporarily permit a supplemental test procedure for air bag restraint systems (62 FR 12960-12975). The intent of the optional test procedure, known as the sled test, was to enable vehicle manufacturers to expedite their efforts to depower the air bags in their vehicles by 20 to 35 percent. The agency estimated that this amount of depowering would reduce the risk of injury and death to out-of-position child passengers, and small statured drivers and passengers.

In the final rule, the agency added a new section to Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208, "Occupant Crash Protection," S13, "Alternative unbelted test for vehicles manufactured before September 1, 2001." This new optional compliance test can be used as a substitute for the 30 mile-per-hour unbelted barrier test for air bag-equipped vehicles. The new sled test procedure involved mounting a full (i.e., completed) vehicle equipped with two unbelted 50th percentile adult male Hybrid III dummies on a sled. The sled is accelerated very rapidly backwards (relative to the direction that the occupants would be facing) by a piston mounted in front of the sled, thus simulating the deceleration that would be experienced in a 30 mph crash. The standard specifies the ranges within which the level of acceleration must fall at stated time intervals. This is referred to as the "sled pulse." The standard specifies ranges, instead of an exact single level of acceleration since defining an exact sled pulse is impracticable due to vehicle and equipment variations. The ranges of acceleration at each moment of the test collectively define a corridor within which the actual test acceleration must fall. The air bags are triggered 20 ms after the sled acceleration reaches 0.5 g. The standard also specifies neck injury criteria for the dummies.

When the final rule was issued, neither the agency nor the automotive industry had much experience with full-vehicle sled testing. Therefore, some of the test conditions and definitions used in the procedure were only partially defined. When manufacturers began to follow the optional sled test procedure, they encountered problems. Recently, several manufacturers approached the agency requesting clarifications of technical issues involving the final rule. The following is a discussion of these technical issues.

II. Issues

Two manufacturers and a vehicle test laboratory have approached the agency with specific questions concerning the