

Some rear emergency exit windows in AmTran RE buses, with 74 inch head room, do not meet the requirement of 41 centimeter vertical opening as specified on FMVSS No. 217. The height of the window opening on the interior wall of the bus is 41.9 centimeters high. The window is hinged at the top, and when opened the bottom edge swings upward and outward with the assistance of "gas springs". When fully opened, the plane of the window inclines at its outward edge toward the ground at approximately 15 degrees. Around the window, there is a frame that projects toward the interior of the bus, perpendicular to the window surface. As the window rotates open, the interior edge of the frame rotates outward and downward, reducing the window opening to 38.8 cm or 2.2 cm less than the specified height.

Data and Arguments Supporting Petition: While the units involved have an opening 2.2 centimeters less than the requirement of FMVSS 217 part S5.2.3.1(b), the windows exceed the requirements of Standard 217, part S5.4.2.1(c) Emergency exit windows. Part S5.4.2.1(c) specifies the following. "After the release mechanism has been operated, each emergency exit window of a school bus shall, under the conditions of S6., both before and after the window retention test of S5.1, using force levels specified in S5.3.3.2, be manually extendable by a single occupant to a position that provides for an opening large enough to admit unobstructed passage, keeping a major axis horizontal at all times, of an ellipsoid generated by rotating about its minor axis an ellipse having a major axis of 50 centimeters and a minor axis of 33 centimeters." The units involved even with the reduced opening have an unobstructed opening of 38.8 centimeters which exceed the minor axis by 5.8 centimeters. Therefore, a passenger able to exit the emergency exit windows shall easily clear the rear emergency exit window as well.

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments on the application of described above. Comments should refer to the docket number and be submitted to: U.S. Department of Transportation Docket Management, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590. It is requested, but not required, that two copies be submitted.

All comments received before the close of business on the closing date indicated below will be considered. The application and supporting materials, and all comments received after the closing date, will also be filed and will be considered to the extent possible. When the application is granted or denied, notice will be published in the

Federal Register pursuant to the authority indicated below.

Comment closing date: November 8, 1999.

(49 U.S.C. 30118 and 30120; delegations of authority at 49 CFR 1.50 and 501.8)

Issued on: October 4, 1999.

Stephen R. Kratzke,

Acting Associate Administrator for Safety Performance Standards.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-99-6269; Notice 1]

IMPCO Technologies; Receipt of Application for Decision of Inconsequential Noncompliance

IMPCO Technologies (IMPCO), of Irvine, California, has determined that a number of 1997 and 1998 bi-fueled compressed natural gas (CNG) Chevrolet/GMC C2500 and Sierra model pickup trucks do not meet the requirements of S5.3 and S5.4 of 49 CFR 571.303, Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 303, "Fuel System Integrity of Compressed Natural Gas Vehicles," and has filed an appropriate report pursuant to 49 CFR Part 573, "Defects and Noncompliance Reports." IMPCO has also applied to be exempted from the notification and remedy requirements of 49 U.S.C. Chapter 301—"Motor Vehicle Safety" on the basis that the noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety.

This notice of receipt of an application is published under 49 U.S.C. 30118 and 30120 and does not represent any agency decision or other exercise of judgement concerning the merits of the application.

FMVSS No. 303, S5.3 requires that CNG vehicles shall be permanently labeled, near the vehicle refueling connection, with the information specified in S5.3.1 and S5.3.2 of this section. The information shall be visible to a person standing next to the vehicle during refueling, in English, and in letters and numbers that are not less than 4.76 mm ³/₁₆ inch) high. S5.3.1 requires the statement: "Service pressure kPa (_____ psig)," and S5.3.2 requires the statement "See

instructions on fuel container for inspection and service life."

S5.4 requires that, when a motor vehicle is delivered to the first purchaser for purposes other than resale, the manufacturer shall provide the purchaser with a written statement of the information in S5.3.1 and S5.3.2 in the owner's manual, or, if there is no owner's manual, on a one-page document. The information shall be in English and in not less than 10 point type.

IMPCO has notified the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that in model years 1997 and 1998, it altered 400, 1997 and 285, 1998 Chevrolet/GMC C2500 and Sierra model pickup trucks that did not fully comply with the labeling requirements specified in 49 CFR 571.303. IMPCO stated that the noncompliance consists of deviations from the wording required on the CNG vehicle label and in the owner's manual.

IMPCO supported its application for inconsequential noncompliance by stating that an out-of-date version of FMVSS No. 303, which did not contain specific requirements, was used by the supplier that prepared the label and owner's manual supplement. As a result the CNG vehicle label applied near the refueling connection, and the owner's manual for the subject vehicles, did not contain the exact statements required by FMVSS No. 303, S5.3 and S5.4.

IMPCO stated that the refueling valve label clearly states the operating pressure and refers the user to the owner's manual for information about tank service life. IMPCO also placed an additional label under the hood, on the fan shroud, that would be visible during more frequent routine service, such as fluid check and oil changes. This additional label again specifies the service pressure and the tank expiration date. IMPCO further stated that the owner's manual indicates the service life, inspection information, and also provides a form to record the expiration date. IMPCO believes that the labels and owner's manual supplement provided with these vehicles are responsive to and consistent with the rationale and intent of the requirements, even though the exact words required by the standard are not used.

The required words and actual words are shown as follows:

FMVSS paragraph	Required label wording	1997 and 1998 Bi-fuel truck label wording
S5.3.	1SERVICE PRESSURE 24820 kPa (3600 psig)	3600 PSI SYSTEM OPERATING PRESSURES.
5.3.2	SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON FUEL CONTAINER FOR INSPECTION AND SERVICE LIFE.	SEE CNG OWNERS MANUAL SUPPLEMENT FOR FUEL TANK SERVICE LIFE.

