[FR Doc. 01–4109 Filed 2–16–01; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA–2001–8842; Notice 1]

General Motors Corporation; Receipt of Application for Decision of Inconsequential Noncompliance

General Motors Corporation (GM) of Warren, Michigan, has determined that it has manufactured approximately 33,916 vehicles that fail to comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 225, ''Child Restraint Anchorage Systems,'' and has filed an appropriate report pursuant to 49 CFR Part 573, ''Defects and Noncompliance Reports.'' GM 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 petition.

FMVSS No. 225 establishes requirements for child restraint anchorage systems to ensure their proper location and strength for the effective securing of child restraints, to reduce the likelihood of the anchorage systems' failure, and to increase the likelihood that child restraints are properly secured and thus more fully achieve their potential effectiveness in motor vehicles. S15.1.2 of the standard prescribes the dimensions and location of the anchorages. Specifically, S15.1.2.1(a) requires that the lower anchorages be 6 mm ± 0.1 mm in diameter.

GM has determined that certain vehicles it has manufactured have lower anchorages that do not meet the requirements of S15.1.2.1(a). The vehicles containing the noncompliance are certain 2001 Model Year Chevrolet Venture, Oldsmobile Silhouette, Pontiac Montana and Aztek model vehicles. Approximately 17,377 Pontiac Aztecs and 5,215 Pontiac Montanas, 8,370 Chevrolet Ventures, and 2,954 Oldsmobile Silhouette (U–vans) were built with lower anchorage bars whose diameter are either above or below the required 6.0 ± 0.1 mm.

GM supports its application for inconsequential noncompliance with the following:

In the case of the Aztek, this condition was caused by the inadvertent release of component drawings that allowed the lower anchorage bar material to be supplied out of compliance. For the U vans and Azteks, it was not originally known that the coating process for the lower anchorage bar was not capable of holding the required tolerance. As a result, some of the lower anchorages of the subject vehicles do not meet the diameter specification.

These lower anchorages do, however, meet all of the location, strength and marking requirements of FMVSS 225. In the static strength test, the lower anchor bars are the first structural parts to deform. The static strength performance requirements of the standard are met even though anchor bars that meet the diameter specification fully deform in the static strength test. Based on analysis, the smallest diameter bars will not deform any more than those that meet the diameter requirement and, therefore, the static strength performance requirements for the lower anchorages will still be met. The ultimate load potential of the seat/vehicle system is not affected by the smaller diameter anchor bars because the bars are not the load limiting component.

The purpose of the diameter specification is to ensure compatibility with child restraints that contain the new LATCH attachment mechanisms. Child restraint manufacturers currently offer to U.S. customers two child seats with LATCH attachment mechanisms: the Fisher Price Safe Embrace and the Cosco Triad. Both of these child seats use a hook mechanism to attach to the lower anchorage bars. This hook mechanism has the same configuration and geometry as the top tether hook specified in Figure 11 of FMVSS 213. Based on our examination of these hooks, the integrity and performance of the attachment will not be materially affected by the small deviations from the specification for the diameter of the lower anchor. Consistent with our observations about the compatibility of the lower anchors with the available child seats, GM has received no warranty claims or customer complaints about these anchors.

GM personnel have seen other proposed child seats using the LATCH attachment mechanism that may be offered in the United States. GM is not aware of any proposed U.S. child seat latch mechanism that would not be compatible with the anchors on the subject vehicles. Furthermore, all child seats, in addition to the requirements for a latch mechanism, must also be designed to work with the vehicle seat belt system. Therefore, each child seat, whether LATCH compatible or not, will be able to be safely secured to each of these vehicles. We cannot rule out the possibility of an incompatible attachment mechanism in the future. While we do not think it is likely, it is possible that a slotted attachment could be designed and that the slot might be too small to accept some of these anchors that exceed 6.1 mm. To address this situation, GM plans to send a letter to owners to advise them on how to handle such a situation. We do not forsee any problem with future designs and the anchors that are below 5.9 mm.

GM believes that all LATCH equipped child restraints today and those expected in the near future will successfully attach to the lower anchorage bars on these vehicles. The letter will address future issues, if they should occur. As a result, GM believes that this noncompliance with S15.1.2.1 of FMVSS 225 is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety, and therefore, requests the affected vehicles be exempted from the notification, recall and remedy provisions of Section 30120 of the Safety Act.

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments on the application of GM 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, the notice will be published in the **Federal Register** pursuant to the authority indicated below.

Comment closing date: March 22, 2001.

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

Issued on: February 13, 2001.

Stephen R. Kratzke,

Associate Administrator for Safety Performance Standards.

[FR Doc. 01–4097 Filed 2–16–01; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB–33 (Sub-No. 166X)]

Union Pacific Railroad Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Adams and Hall Counties, NE (Hansen Industrial Lead Between Hastings and Hansen, NE)

On January 31, 2001, Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) filed with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) a petition under 49 U.S.C. 10502 for exemption from the provisions of 49 U.S.C. 10903 to abandon a line of railroad known as the Hansen Industrial Lead, extending from milepost 1.0 near Hastings to the end of the line at milepost 7.50 at Hansen, in Adams and Hall Counties, NE, a distance of 6.50 miles. The line traverses U.S. Postal Service Zip Code 68901. There are no stations on the line.

The line does not contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation in UP's possession will be made available promptly to those requesting it.

The interest of railroad employees will be protected by the conditions set forth in *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen,* 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979).

By issuance of this notice, the Board is instituting an exemption proceeding pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 10502(b). A final decision will be issued by May 21, 2001.

Any offer of financial assistance (OFA) under 49 CFR 1152.27(b)(2) will be due no later than 10 days after service of a decision granting the petition for exemption. Each OFA must be accompanied by a $1,000 filing fee. *See* 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

All interested persons should be aware that, following abandonment of rail service and salvage of the line, the line may be suitable for other public use, including interim trail use. Any request for a public use condition under 49 CFR 1152.28 or for trail use/rail banking under 49 CFR 1152.29 will be due no later than March 12, 2001. Each trail use request must be accompanied by a $150 filing fee. *See* 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(27).

All filings in response to this notice must refer to STB Docket No. AB–33 (Sub-No. 166X) and must be sent to: (1) Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423–0001; and (2) James P. Gatlin, General Attorney, 1416 Dodge Street, Room 830, Omaha, NE 68179–0830. Replies to the UP petition are due on or before March 12, 2001.

Persons seeking further information concerning abandonment procedures may contact the Board's Office of Public Services at (202) 565–1592 or refer to the full abandonment or discontinuance regulations at 49 CFR part 1152. Questions concerning environmental issues may be directed to the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) at (202) 565–1545. [TDD for the hearing impaired is available at 1–800–877–8339.]

An environmental assessment (EA) (or environmental impact statement (EIS), if necessary) prepared by SEA will be served upon all parties of record and upon any agencies or other persons who commented during its preparation. Other interested persons may contact SEA to obtain a copy of the EA (or EIS). EAs in these abandonment proceedings normally will be made available within 60 days of the filing of the petition. The deadline for submission of comments on the EA will generally be within 30 days of its service.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at ''WWW.STB.DOT.GOV.''

Decided: February 7, 2001.

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

Vernon A. Williams,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 01–3759 Filed 2–16–01; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB–33 (Sub-No. 165X)]

Union Pacific Railroad Company—Abandonment Exemption—in Caddo Parish, LA

Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments and Discontinuances of Service and Trackage Rights* to abandon a 0.47-mile line of railroad over the Good Roads Lead from milepost 8.21 to milepost 8.68 in Shreveport, Caddo Parish, LA. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Codes 71101 and 71103.

UP has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) there is no overhead traffic moving over 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 and discontinuance 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 March 22, 2001, 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),[2] and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by March 2, 2001. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by March 12, 2001, with: Surface Transportation Board, Office of the Secretary, Case Control Unit, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20423.

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[1] The 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.

[2] Each offer of financial assistance must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at $1000. *See* 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).