

Over 75 percent of the 646 consumer survey participants were unaware of the existence of the AALA labels. Many participants who did read the label said they used the country-of-assembly information, but none said they used the numerical U.S./Canadian parts content score or the engine/transmission information. Overall U.S./Canadian parts content in new cars and light trucks dropped from 70 percent in model year 1995 to 67.6 percent in 1998; however, it increased from 47 to 59 percent in transplants while dropping from 89 to 84 percent in Big 3 vehicles.

How can I influence NHTSA's thinking on this evaluation?

NHTSA welcomes public review of the technical report and invites reviewers to submit comments about the data and the statistical methods used in the analyses. NHTSA will submit to the Docket a response to the comments and, if appropriate, additional analyses that update, supplement or revise the technical report.

The agency is especially interested in learning of any additional data or information on the following topics:

- Measures that could make the labels more widely known, more convenient, easier to understand or more influential for consumers, or less costly to produce.
- Evidence that consumers are aware of and/or influenced by the labels, or related information.
- Evidence that the labels, or related data, have been used as a marketing, advertising, or public-information tool by manufacturers, dealers, or any other organizations.
- Evidence that the labels, or related considerations have influenced decisions on where to manufacture or purchase parts, or to assemble vehicles.
- Factors that have influenced the trends in U.S./Canadian parts content before, during and after the 1994-98 period studied in the report.

How do I prepare and submit comments?

Your comments must be written and in English. To ensure that your comments are correctly filed in the Docket, please include the Docket number of this document (NHTSA-2001-9023) in your comments.

Your primary comments must not be more than 15 pages long (49 CFR 553.21). However, you may attach additional documents to your primary comments. There is no limit on the length of the attachments.

Please send two paper copies of your comments to Docket Management or submit them electronically. The mailing

address is U. S. Department of Transportation Docket Management, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590. If you submit your comments electronically, log onto the Dockets Management System website at <http://dms.dot.gov> and click on "Help & Information" or "Help/Info" to obtain instructions.

We also request, but do not require you to send a copy to Charles J. Kahane, Chief, Evaluation Division, NPP-22, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5208, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590 (alternatively, FAX to 202-366-2559 or e-mail to ckahane@nhtsa.dot.gov). He can check if your comments have been received at the Docket and he can expedite their review by NHTSA.

How can I be sure that my comments were received?

If you wish Docket Management to notify you upon its receipt of your comments, enclose a self-addressed, stamped postcard in the envelope containing your comments. Upon receiving your comments, Docket Management will return the postcard by mail.

How do I submit confidential business information?

If you wish to submit any information under a claim of confidentiality, send three copies of your complete submission, including the information you claim to be confidential business information, to the Chief Counsel, NCC-01, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5219, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Include a cover letter supplying the information specified in our confidential business information regulation (49 CFR Part 512).

In addition, send two copies from which you have deleted the claimed confidential business information to Docket Management, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590, or submit them electronically.

Will the agency consider late comments?

In our response, we will consider all comments that Docket Management receives before the close of business on the comment closing date indicated above under **DATES**. To the extent possible, we will also consider comments that Docket Management receives after that date.

Please note that even after the comment closing date, we will continue to file relevant information in the Docket as it becomes available. Further,

some people may submit late comments. Accordingly, we recommend that you periodically check the Docket for new material.

How can I read the comments submitted by other people?

You may read the comments by visiting Docket Management in person at Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

You may also see the comments on the Internet by taking the following steps:

- Go to the Docket Management System (DMS) Web page of the Department of Transportation (<http://dms.dot.gov>).
- On that page, click on "search."
- On the next page (<http://dms.dot.gov/search/>) type in the four-digit Docket number shown at the beginning of this Notice (6545). Click on "search."
- On the next page, which contains Docket summary information for the Docket you selected, click on the desired comments. You may also download the comments.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30111, 30168; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50 and 501.8.

William H. Walsh,

Associate Administrator for Plans and Policy.
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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

[Docket No. RSPA-01-8587;
Notice No. 01-06]

Hazardous Materials Safety: Public Meeting Related to Customer Service and Regulatory Review

AGENCY: Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: RSPA will hold a public meeting to seek information from the public on improving safety, reducing costs (especially to small businesses), and increasing customer service through RSPA's management of the national hazardous materials transportation safety program. This meeting is being held in conjunction with a Hazardous Materials Multimodal Training Seminar sponsored by RSPA on March 27 and 28, 2001.

ADDRESSES: The public meeting will be held at the Sheraton North Charleston

Hotel, 4770 Goer Drive, North Charleston, South Carolina 29406 (843-747-1900). For information on facilities or services for individuals with disabilities or to request special assistance at the meetings, contact Eileen Edmonson at the address or telephone number listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** as soon as possible.

DATES: The public meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 28, 2001, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.; however, the meeting may end prior to 4:00 p.m., depending on public interest.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Eileen Edmonson, Office of Hazardous Materials Standards, RSPA, Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. Telephone 202-366-8553.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Focus on Issues of Interest to Affected Parties

RSPA (we) is interested in soliciting comments on the kind and quality of services our customers want and their level of satisfaction with the services we currently provide to promote understanding of and compliance with the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR; 49 CFR Parts 171-180). These services include the following:

(1) *Hazardous Materials Information Center (HMIC)*. A staff of three persons is available from Monday to Friday (except federal holidays) between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. EST to address telephone inquiries from shippers, carriers, packaging manufacturers, and other persons concerning requirements in the HMR for the safe transportation of hazardous materials. In 2000, the HMIC handled more than 33,000 calls. The toll-free number is 1-800-HMR-4922.

(2) *Internet access*. Our site on the worldwide web (<http://hazmat.dot.gov>) provides information concerning hazardous materials rulemakings, exemptions, letters of clarification, international activities, incident data, the 2000 Emergency Response Guidebook, and much more.

(3) *Fax on demand*. For persons who do not have access to the Internet, we operate an automated fax-back system that allows callers access to more than 600 pages of informational materials, including letters of clarification and recently published rulemakings, through their own fax machines. A facsimile copy of the catalog of available documents may be obtained by accessing the fax-on-demand feature through our HMIC number 1-800-HMR-4922.

(4) *Training*. To promote compliance with the HMR, we distribute brochures, charts, publications, training materials, videotapes, and other safety-related information to hazmat employers and hazmat employees in the private and government sectors and to the general public. We also offer hazardous materials training to federal, state, and local enforcement agencies, industry, and emergency response personnel. In addition, we provide personal computer-based self-study programs through a CD-ROM modular training series.

(5) *Government-Industry partnerships*. To the extent resources permit, we participate in meetings, conferences, training workshops, and the like, sponsored by the public sector, industry, and international organizations having an interest in the safe transportation of hazardous materials.

Regulations and Administrative Procedures

On January 12, 2001, we published a notice of regulatory review (Docket No. RSPA-01-8587, 66 FR 2870) requesting comments on the economic impact of the HMR on small entities. This year we are analyzing rules in 49 CFR parts 174, Carriage by Rail, and 177, Carriage by Public Highway. We are inviting participants to take this opportunity to suggest whether or not we, in an effort to lessen the impact on small entities, should revise or revoke specific rules.

We are also interested in receiving comments on the quality of our processing of written requests for information, applications for exemptions and approvals, registration statements, and other administrative actions. Participants are encouraged to provide suggestions on how we can improve our performance in processing these administrative actions.

We welcome all comments on ways to improve the understanding of and compliance with the HMR, including removal of obsolete requirements, revisions to conflicting or confusing requirements, and the use of plain language. We will also address inquiries concerning new or proposed requirements, including recently published actions concerning:

- Proposed revisions for infectious substances and genetically modified materials to: (1) Adopt new classification criteria for infectious substances based on defining criteria developed by the World Health Organization and consistent with international transportation standards; (2) eliminate the current exception for diagnostic specimens and impose new

packaging and hazardous communication requirements; (3) limit the current exception for biological products to biological products licensed for use by the Food and Drug Administration or U.S. Department of Agriculture; (4) adopt new requirements for the transportation of genetically modified micro-organisms consistent with international requirements; and (5) provide new bulk packaging options for the transportation of regulated medical waste, based on current exemption provisions (Docket No. RSPA-98-3971, 66 FR 6942, January 22, 2001).

- Harmonization of the HMR requirements with standards published in the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code, and the International Civil Aviation Organization's Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air (Docket No. RSPA-2000-7702; 65 FR 63294, October 23, 2000).

Representatives from the United States Coast Guard, Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Railroad Administration, and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration will participate with RSPA in this public meeting to address mode-specific issues.

Conduct of the Meeting

This is an informal meeting intended to foster a dialogue between agency personnel and persons affected by the hazardous materials transportation safety program. The presiding official may find it necessary to limit the time available to each person to ensure that all participants have an opportunity to speak. Conversely, this meeting may conclude earlier than 4 p.m. if all persons wishing to participate have been heard. While there will be no transcript of the meeting, RSPA will prepare a written summary and post it in this notice's docket (RSPA-01-8587). Persons interested in participating in this public meeting need not be registered for the Hazardous Materials Multimodal Training Seminar.

Robert A. McGuire,

Associate Administrator for Hazardous Materials Safety, Research and Special Programs Administration.

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