

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-2008-0184; Notice 1]

Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, Receipt of Petition for Decision of Inconsequential Noncompliance

Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company (Goodyear), has determined that certain passenger car tires manufactured from June 2, 2008 through July 10, 2008 did not fully comply with paragraphs S5.5(e) and S5.5(f) of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) No. 139 *New Pneumatic Radial Tires for Light Vehicles*. Goodyear has filed an appropriate report pursuant to 49 CFR Part 573, *Defect and Noncompliance Responsibility and Reports*.

Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 30118(d) and 30120(h) (see implementing rule at 49 CFR part 556), Goodyear has petitioned for an exemption from the notification and remedy requirements of 49 U.S.C. Chapter 301 on the basis that this noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety.

This notice of receipt of Goodyear's petition is published under 49 U.S.C. 30118 and 30120 and does not represent any agency decision or other exercise of judgment concerning the merits of the petition.

Affected are approximately 112 size P265/60R18 109S Dunlop Rover AT passenger car tires manufactured from June 2, 2008 through July 10, 2008.

Paragraphs S5.5(e) and S5.5(f) of FMVSS No. 139 require in pertinent part:

S5.5 Tire markings. Except as specified in paragraphs (a) through (i) of S5.5, each tire must be marked on each sidewall with the information specified in S5.5(a) through (d) and on one sidewall with the information specified in S5.5(e) through (i) according to the phase-in schedule specified in S7 of this standard. The markings must be placed between the maximum section width and the bead on at least one sidewall, unless the maximum section width of the tire is located in an area that is not more than one-fourth of the distance from the bead to the shoulder of the tire. If the maximum section width falls within that area, those markings must appear between the bead and a point one-half the distance from the bead to the shoulder of the tire, on at least one sidewall. The markings must be in letters and numerals not less than 0.078 inches high and raised above or sunk below the tire surface not less than 0.015 inches * * *

(e) The generic name of each cord material used in the plies (both sidewall and tread area) of the tire;

(f) The actual number of plies in the sidewall, and the actual number of plies in the tread area, if different * * *

Goodyear explains that the noncompliance is that, due to a mold labeling error, the sidewall marking incorrectly describes the plies in the tread area of the tires.

Specifically, the tires in question were inadvertently manufactured with "Tread 2 Polyester + 2 Steel + 1 Nylon" marked on the sidewall. The labeling should have been "Tread 2 Polyester + 2 Steel."

Goodyear makes the argument that this noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety because the noncompliant sidewall marking does not affect the safety of the tire and that the tires were built as designed and all other sidewall identification markings and safety information is correct.

Goodyear points out that NHTSA has previously granted petitions for sidewall marking noncompliances that it believes are similar to the instant noncompliance.

Goodyear also stated that it has corrected the problem that caused these errors so that they will not be repeated in future production.

In summation, Goodyear states that it believes that because the noncompliances are inconsequential to motor vehicle safety that no corrective action is warranted.

NHTSA notes that the statutory provisions (49 U.S.C. 30118(d) and 30120(h)) that permit manufacturers to file petitions for a determination of inconsequentiality allow NHTSA to exempt manufacturers only from the duties found in sections 30118 and 30120, respectively, to notify owners, purchasers, and dealers of a defect or noncompliance and to remedy the defect or noncompliance. Therefore, these provisions only apply to vehicles and equipment that have already passed from the manufacturer to an owner, purchaser, or dealer.

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments on this petition. Comments must refer to the docket and notice number cited at the beginning of this notice and be submitted by any of the following methods:

a. By mail addressed to: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590.

b. By hand delivery to U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590. The Docket Section is open on weekdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. except Federal Holidays.

c. Electronically: by logging onto the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) Web site at <http://www.regulations.gov/>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments. Comments may also be faxed to 1-202-493-2251.

Comments must be written in the English language, and be no greater than 15 pages in length, although there is no limit to the length of necessary attachments to the comments. If comments are submitted in hard copy form, please ensure that two copies are provided. If you wish to receive confirmation that your comments were received, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard with the comments. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov/>, including any personal information provided.

Anyone is able to search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477-78).

You may view documents submitted to a docket at the address and times given above. You may also view the documents on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov/> by following the online instructions for accessing the dockets available at that Web site.

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

Comment closing date: January 20, 2009.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30118, 30120; delegations of authority at CFR 1.50 and 501.8.

Issued on: December 10, 2008.

Claude H. Harris,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.
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