

the condition does not create an increased safety risk. As an initial matter, the car wash mode feature must first be activated by the user. Car wash mode is not automatically enabled unless and until the operator activates the feature by affirmatively accepting the option and turning the feature on. Thus, unless car wash mode is already active within the vehicle, the condition described above cannot occur.

3. Once the vehicle has initialized car wash mode, the feature can only be activated through a series of steps using either the vehicle's central touch display or from a touchpad located in the center console. Activating car wash mode is a multi-step process and the process varies depending on the current menu contained on the display screen. For example, if car wash mode has been programmed by the user inside the "favorites" menu, then a series of two touches is needed to activate car wash mode. In all other cases, the operator would first need to change the display screen to the vehicle menu first and from there, navigate to the car wash mode icon. In either case, car wash mode will not become active unless each of these steps is executed in the corresponding order. Because of the complexity involved in navigating through the required sequence of events there is an extremely low likelihood of the car wash mode being inadvertently activated in the first place.

4. Further, the sunroofs in the subject vehicles contain an auto-reverse feature. Upon detecting an object or obstruction inside the sunroof, it will automatically stop and reverse course and fully retract. While the sunroofs do not meet the requirements of paragraph S5, they are certified to the European standard UN-R-21. The European standard incorporates many of the performance features included in the automatic reversal function contained in FMVSS No. 118, paragraph S5. The sunroofs in the subject vehicles will automatically reverse prior to exerting 100 Newtons of pinch force, and consistent with the options provided at paragraph S5.2, the sunroof will either retract to a position at least as wide as the initial position before closing or will allow a 200-mm rod to be inserted in the gap.

5. The Agency has previously granted petitions for inconsequential treatment for FMVSS No. 118 involving similar circumstances and vehicle features. NHTSA granted a petition by General Motors involving a noncompliance with FMVSS No. 118, paragraph S4(e), where for 60 seconds after the vehicles are started, an issue with the sunroof module would allow the sunroof to close via the control button if the engine is turned off and a front door is opened. In that instance, in order to activate the sunroof, a series of specific steps must be taken in order and the steps must be completed within a 60-second time frame. See Decision Granting Petition for Inconsequential Noncompliance by General Motors 73 FR 22459 (April 25, 2008). In granting the petition, the Agency found that the potential for entrapment in a power operated sunroof presented less of a risk of entrapment than power-operated windows because, in general, sunroofs are less physically accessible than

power-operated windows. The decision also focused on the presence of an auto-reverse feature, which would reverse the movement of the sunroof before it exerted a pressure of 100 Newtons. In granting the motion, the Agency noted the presence of this auto-reverse feature as one that would further reduce the risk of entrapment.

6. Much like the conditions present in the General Motors vehicles, the noncompliance in the car wash mode feature of the subject vehicles similarly does not create an increased safety risk. Assuming that the function has been initialized by the operator, a series of specific and coordinated steps must occur in order to activate car wash mode. If those steps are not carried out in the precise order required, then the car wash mode program will not be activated. Even in the unlikely event that the car wash mode function is inadvertently activated, there is no enhanced risk of injury because of the sunroof auto-reverse feature.

Mercedes-Benz concludes by again contending that the subject noncompliance is inconsequential as it relates to motor vehicle safety, and that its petition to be exempted from providing notification of the noncompliance, as required by 49 U.S.C. 30118, and a remedy for the noncompliance, as required by 49 U.S.C. 30120, should be granted.

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, any decision on this petition only applies to the subject vehicles that Mercedes-Benz no longer controlled at the time it determined that the noncompliance existed. However, any decision on this petition does not relieve vehicle distributors and dealers of the prohibitions on the sale, offer for sale, or introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of the noncompliant vehicles under their control after Mercedes-Benz notified them that the subject noncompliance existed.

(Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30118, 30120; delegations of authority at 49 CFR 1.95 and 501.8)

Otto G. Matheke III,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-2020-0082; Notice 1]

Volkswagen Group of America, Inc., Receipt of Petition for Decision of Inconsequential Noncompliance

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

ACTION: Receipt of petition.

SUMMARY: Volkswagen Group of America, Inc. (Volkswagen), has determined that certain model year (MY) 2019-2020 Audi A6, MY 2019-2020 Audi A7, and MY 2020 Audi A6 Allroad motor vehicles do not fully comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 110, *Tire Selection and Rims and Motor Home/Recreation Vehicle Trailer Load Carrying Capacity Information for Motor Vehicles with a GVWR of 4,536 Kilograms (10,000 pounds) or Less*. Volkswagen filed a noncompliance report dated May 20, 2020. Volkswagen simultaneously petitioned NHTSA on May 20, 2020, for a decision that the subject noncompliance is inconsequential as it relates to motor vehicle safety. This notice announces receipt of Volkswagen's petition.

DATES: Send comments on or before November 23, 2020.

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

- *Mail:* Send comments by mail addressed to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

- *Hand Delivery:* Deliver comments by hand to the 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 for Federal holidays.

- *Electronically:* Submit comments electronically by logging onto the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) website at <https://www.regulations.gov/>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

- Comments may also be faxed to (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 comments you have submitted by mail were received, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard with the comments. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to <https://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided.

All comments and supporting materials received before the close of business on the closing date indicated above will be filed in the docket and will be considered. All comments and supporting materials received after the closing date will also be filed and will be considered to the fullest extent possible.

When the petition is granted or denied, notice of the decision will also be published in the **Federal Register** pursuant to the authority indicated at the end of this notice.

All comments, background documentation, and supporting materials submitted to the docket may be viewed by anyone at the address and times given above. The documents may also be viewed on the internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by following the online instructions for accessing the docket. The docket ID number for this petition is shown in the heading of this notice.

DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement is available for review in a **Federal Register** notice published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477–78).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Overview: Volkswagen has determined that certain MY 2019–2020 Audi A6, MY 2019–2020 Audi A7, and MY 2020 Audi A6 Allroad motor vehicles do not fully comply with the requirements of paragraph S4.3(c) of FMVSS No. 110, *Tire Selection and Rims and Motor Home/Recreation Vehicle Trailer Load Carrying Capacity Information for Motor Vehicles with a GVWR of 4,536 Kilograms (10,000 pounds) or Less* (49 CFR 571.110). Volkswagen filed a noncompliance report dated May 20, 2020, pursuant to 49 CFR part 573, *Defect and Noncompliance Responsibility and Reports*. Volkswagen simultaneously petitioned NHTSA on May 20, 2020, for an exemption from the notification and remedy requirements of 49 U.S.C. Chapter 301 on the basis that this noncompliance is inconsequential as it

relates to motor vehicle safety, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 30118(d) and 30120(h) and 49 CFR part 556, *Exemption for Inconsequential Defect or Noncompliance*.

This notice of receipt of Volkswagen'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.

II. Vehicles Involved: Approximately 652 MY 2019–2020 Audi A6, MY 2019–2020 Audi A7, and MY 2020 Audi A6 Allroad motor vehicles, manufactured between September 24, 2018, and May 14, 2020, are potentially involved.

III. Noncompliance: Volkswagen explains that the noncompliance is that the subject vehicles are equipped with a tire placard label (located on the driver's side B-pillar) that was incorrectly printed to include cold tire inflation pressure information for a spare tire that is not present in the affected vehicles and therefore, does not meet the requirements specified in paragraph S4.3(c) of FMVSS No. 110. Specifically, since the subject vehicles are not equipped with a spare tire, the tire placard label should contain the word “none” in the cold tire inflation pressure section.

IV. Rule Requirements: Paragraph S4.3(c) of FMVSS No. 110 includes the requirements relevant to this petition. Vehicle manufacturer's recommended cold tire inflation pressure for front, rear, and spare tires, are subject to the limitations of paragraph S4.3.4. For full-size spare tires, the statement “see above” may, at the manufacturer's option replace manufacturer's recommended cold tire inflation pressure. If no spare tire is provided, the word “none” must replace the manufacturer's recommended cold tire inflation pressure.

V. Summary of Volkswagen's Petition: The following views and arguments presented in this section, “V. Summary of Volkswagen's Petition”, are the views and arguments provided by Volkswagen. They have not been evaluated by the Agency and do not reflect the views of the Agency. Volkswagen described the subject noncompliance and stated their belief that the noncompliance is inconsequential as it relates to motor vehicle safety.

In support of its petition, Volkswagen submitted the following reasoning:

1. The MY 2019–2020 Audi A6, the MY 2019–2020 Audi A7, and the MY 2020 Audi A6 Allroad vehicles are not equipped with a spare tire. The required tire placard label, located on the driver's side B-Pillar, was misprinted and does

not contain the word “none” in the cold tire inflation pressure location for the spare tire, as required under 49 CFR part 571.110 S4.3(c). As the vehicle is not equipped with a spare tire, there is no actual effect on drivability, vehicle safety, or tire wear.

2. Volkswagen submits that the condition described above is inconsequential as it relates to motor vehicle safety because the information misprinted on the tire placard label is applicable to a component (spare tire) which is not equipped in the vehicle. There is no effect on drivability, vehicle safety, or tire wear.

3. Volkswagen says that as of May 15, 2020, the condition has been corrected.

4. Affected vehicles held at the factory have been corrected, and unsold units in dealer inventory will be corrected prior to sale. Additionally, Volkswagen is not aware of any field or customer complaints related to this condition, nor has it been made aware of any accidents or injuries that have occurred as a result of this issue.

Volkswagen concluded by expressing the belief that the subject noncompliance is inconsequential as it relates to motor vehicle safety, and that its petition to be exempted from providing notification of the noncompliance, as required by 49 U.S.C. 30118, and a remedy for the noncompliance, as required by 49 U.S.C. 30120, should be granted.

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, any decision on this petition only applies to the subject vehicles that Volkswagen no longer controlled at the time it determined that the noncompliance existed. However, any decision on this petition does not relieve vehicle distributors and dealers of the prohibitions on the sale, offer for sale, or introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of the noncompliant vehicles under their control after Volkswagen notified them that the subject noncompliance existed.

(Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30118, 30120; delegations of authority at 49 CFR 1.95 and 501.8)

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