above under **DATES**. To the extent possible, we will also consider comments that the docket receives after that date.

How can I read the comments submitted by other people?

You may read the materials placed in the docket for this document (*e.g.,* the comments submitted in response to this document by other interested persons) at any time by going to *http://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the online instructions for accessing the dockets. You may also read the materials at the Docket Management Facility by going to the street address given above under **ADDRESSES**. The Docket Management Facility is open between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Please note that even after the comment closing date, we will continue to file relevant information on 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.

Issued under authority delegated in 49 CFR 1.95.

Jonathan Morrison,

Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2026–01272 Filed 1–22–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA–2026–0034]

Notice and Request for Comment; Proposal for a New United Nations Global Technical Regulation on Automated Driving Systems (ADS)

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

ACTION: Notice and request for comments on a proposed Global Technical Regulation (GTR) for Automated Driving Systems.

SUMMARY: The United Nations Working Party on Automated/Autonomous and Connected Vehicles (GRVA), under the World Forum for the Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) at United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), has proposed a draft Global Technical Regulation (GTR) for Automated Driving Systems (ADS). NHTSA is seeking public comment on the draft GTR to help inform the U.S. government's position, including how that position could relate to any future domestic actions regarding the safety and performance of Automated Driving Systems.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before February 23, 2026.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by the Docket No. NHTSA–2026–0034 through any of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submissions:* Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal at *http://www.regulations.gov.* Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* (202) 493–2251.
- *Mail or Hand Delivery:* Docket Management, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building, Room W12–140, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays. To be sure someone is there to help you, please call (202) 366–9322 before coming.

Instructions: All submissions must include the agency name and docket number for this notice. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to *http://www.regulations.gov,* including any personal information provided. Please see the Privacy Act heading below.

Privacy Act: 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.). You may review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (65 FR 19477–78) or you may visit *https://www.transportation.gov/privacy.*

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to *http://www.regulations.gov* or the street address listed above. Follow the online instructions for accessing the dockets via internet.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information or access to background documents, contact Caitlin McKeighan, Office of International Policy, Fuel Economy, and Consumer Standards, (202) 923–1215, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, W45–117, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The United States is a contracting party to the 1998 Global Agreement on Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts (the 1998 Agreement) concerning the establishment of Global Technical Regulations (GTRs) for the safety of motor vehicles and their parts and equipment. As a contracting party to the 1998 Agreement, and at the request of the U.S. Department of State, NHTSA serves as the head of delegation and technical lead for the U.S. at the World Forum for the Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29) and its six subsidiary working parties, which provide guidance to WP.29 on specific aspects of vehicle safety. The Working Party on Automated/Autonomous and Connected Vehicles, or GRVA, was established in June 2018 primarily to develop harmonized performance requirements and assessment methods for ADS-equipped and connected vehicles.

For the past five years, GRVA has been working on new draft regulations for ADS-equipped vehicles. This effort has been a global collaboration involving representatives from contracting parties, the automotive industry, international standards organizations, and others. The draft regulation is now being prepared for expected formal review and endorsement by GRVA in spring 2026. The draft GTR included in this docket contains various provisions as follows:

- General Requirements for ADS-equipped vehicles: including requirements for the ADS to perform the Dynamic Driving Task, or DDT;
- The safety of interactions between the User and ADS;
- Manufacturer requirements, including the overall Safety Management System under which the ADS was developed;
- The testing system and environment that the manufacturer used to qualify the safe operation of the ADS;
- Requirements for the submission of a valid Safety Case for the ADS; and
- Post-deployment monitoring capabilities.

If the ADS GTR draft is approved by GRVA, it will then move forward to WP.29 for review and final decision. If WP.29 endorses the draft GTR by vote, it is then formally established and listed as a Global Technical Regulation. From there, each signatory (contracting party) to the 1998 Agreement is expected to initiate processes to incorporate parts or all of the GTR into their individual national regulatory systems. After following their national process, if a contracting party determines that a GTR cannot be incorporated domestically, they would then provide written notice to WP.29 indicating the cause. It is expected that WP.29 will review and vote on the draft ADS GTR later in 2026.

Public Comments Invited: In accordance with 49 CFR part 553, Appendix C, NHTSA is soliciting

specific feedback on the draft GTR to assure that the U.S. position reflects the best available safety data and technical expertise. The draft ADS GTR can be found as an attachment to this docket. Specifically, NHTSA encourages commenters to address the following elements of the draft GTR:

1. *Technical Merit:* Whether the proposed performance requirements and test procedures are technologically feasible and provide safety or other benefits.

2. *Compatibility with U.S. Safety Standards:* Any potential conflicts between the draft GTR and existing U.S. Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS).

3. *Impact on Innovation:* How the adoption of this GTR might affect the development and deployment of ADS technology in the U.S.

4. *Data and Research:* Commenters are encouraged to provide any technical, scientific, or economic data that supports or challenges any of the requirements set forth in the draft GTR.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30111, as delegated at 49 CFR part 1.95.

Issued on January 21, 2026.

Jonathan Morrison,

Administrator.

[FR Doc. 2026–01274 Filed 1–22–26; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

[Docket No. PHMSA–2026–0166]

Pipeline Safety: Distribution Integrity Management Program Considerations for Plastic Piping and Components

AGENCY: Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice; issuance of advisory bulletin.

SUMMARY: PHMSA is issuing this advisory bulletin to remind owners and operators of natural gas distribution systems of requirements under the distribution integrity management program (DIMP) regulations regarding certain plastic piping and components.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy White by phone at 202–923–8268 or by email at *Nancy.White1@dot.gov.*

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On March 24, 2023, a natural gas distribution incident occurred in West Reading, Pennsylvania, resulting in seven fatalities, 10 injuries, the destruction of one building, and damage to two nearby buildings. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigated the incident and subsequently issued Pipeline Investigation Report NTSB/PIR–25/01 (''Investigation Report'').[1]

In the Investigation Report, NTSB issued Safety Recommendation P–25–1 to PHMSA, advising the Agency to issue an advisory bulletin (ADB) to all regulated gas distribution pipeline operators ''referencing distribution integrity management program regulations and encouraging operators to: [c]omplete a one-time inventory of all plastic assets that are located in environments that experience or are at risk of elevated temperatures; [c]ontinue, during maintenance and new construction projects, to identify plastic assets that are in elevated temperature environments; and [e]valuate and mitigate risks to deter the degradation of these assets.'' [2] NTSB also issued Safety Recommendation P–25–2 to PHMSA, advising the issuance of an ADB ''that reviews the details of the March 24, 2023, natural gas-fueled explosion and fire in West Reading, Pennsylvania, and advises all regulated natural gas distribution pipeline operators to address the risk associated with Aldyl A service tees with Delrin inserts, including replacing or remediating them.'' [3]

This ADB alerts owners and operators of natural gas distribution pipeline systems to the West Reading incident; outlines NTSB's findings, recommendations to PHMSA, and probable cause; and provides guidance to operators on implementing DIMP requirements under 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 192, subpart P. These regulations require gas distribution pipeline operators to develop and implement a DIMP and to demonstrate an understanding of their gas distribution system, including identifying ''the characteristics of the pipeline's design and operations and the environmental factors that are necessary to assess the applicable threats and risks to its gas distribution pipeline.'' PHMSA reminds operators to consider accelerated degradation risks associated with elevated temperature environments and encourages operators to complete an inventory of plastic pipe and components that may be susceptible to such environments. The advisory bulletin also summarizes relevant past PHMSA advisories, guidance, Frequently Asked Questions, and research related to brittle-like cracking of plastic pipe, temperature-related degradation, and management of plastic piping materials.

Guidance and advisory bulletins are intended to provide clarity regarding an operator's existing legal obligations but are not themselves rules meant to bind the public in any way; they do not assign duties, create legally enforceable rights, or impose new obligations that are not otherwise contained in regulations. Accordingly, this guidance will not be relied upon by the Department as an independent basis for affirmative enforcement action or other administrative penalty.

I. Advisory Bulletin (ADB–2026–01)

To: Owners and Operators of Natural Gas Distribution Pipeline Systems.

Subject: Distribution Integrity Management Program Considerations for Plastic Piping and Components.

Advisory: On March 24, 2023, a natural gas distribution incident occurred in West Reading, Pennsylvania, resulting in seven fatalities, 10 injuries, the destruction of one building, and damage to two nearby buildings. The National Transportation Safety Board's (NTSB) investigation into this incident revealed the gas distribution operator's retired 1982 Aldyl A service tee with Delrin insert leaked natural gas, which migrated underground into the basement of a candy factory building, accumulated, and then ignited by an unknown source, causing an explosion.[4] NTSB determined the probable cause of the incident was:

[D]egradation of a retired 1982 Aldyl A polyethylene service tee with a Delrin polyacetal insert that allowed natural gas to leak and migrate underground into the R.M. Palmer Company candy factory buildings, where it was ignited by an unknown source. Contributing to the degradation of the service tee and insert were significantly elevated ground temperatures from steam escaping R.M. Palmer Company's corroded underground steam pipe, located near the service tee, that had been unmarked and cracked. Contributing to the steam pipe crack was soil movement and R.M. Palmer Company's lack of awareness of the pipe's corroded state. Contributing to the natural gas leak was UGI Corporation's lack of awareness of the nearby steam pipe, which led to an incomplete integrity management

[1] NTSB, PIR–25/01, *UGI Corporation Natural Gas-Fueled Explosion and Fire, West Reading, Pennsylvania, Mar. 24, 2023* (Mar. 18, 2025) (NTSB/PIR–25/01), available at *https://www.ntsb.gov/investigations/AccidentReports/Reports/PIR2501.pdf.*

[2] NTSB/PIR–25/01 at 85.

[3] *Id.*

[4] NTSB/PIR–25/01 at vii–viii.