

responsibility and authority to ensure that the hearing progresses at a reasonable pace and in an orderly manner.

To ensure that interested parties receive a full and fair informal hearing as specified by 29 CFR part 1911, the ALJ has the authority and power to: Regulate the course of the proceedings; dispose of procedural requests, objections, and comparable matters; confine the presentations to matters pertinent to the issues raised; use appropriate means to regulate the conduct of the parties who are present at the hearing; question witnesses, and permit others to question witnesses; and limit the time for such questions. At the close of the hearing, the ALJ will establish a post-hearing comment period for parties who participated in the hearing. During the first part of this period, the participants may submit additional data and information to OSHA, while during the second part of this period, they may submit briefs, arguments, and summations.

Notice of Intention to Appear to Provide Testimony at the Informal Public Hearings. Interested parties who intend to provide oral testimony at the informal public hearings must file a notice of intention to appear by using the procedures specified above in the sections titled **DATES** and **ADDRESSES**. This notice must provide the: Name, address, and telephone number of each individual who will provide testimony; capacity (e.g., name of the establishment/organization the individual is representing; the individual's occupational title and position) in which each individual will testify; approximate amount of time required for each individual's testimony; specific issues each individual will address, including a brief statement of the position that the individual will take with respect to each of these issues; and any documentary evidence the individual will present, including a brief summary of the evidence.

OSHA emphasizes that the hearings are open to the public, and that interested parties are welcome to attend. However, only a party who files a proper notice of intention to appear may ask questions and participate fully in the proceedings. While a party who did not file a notice of intention to appear may be allowed to testify at the hearing if time permits, this determination is at the discretion of the presiding ALJ.

Hearing Testimony and Documentary Evidence. Any party requesting more than 10 minutes to testify at the informal public hearing, or who intends to submit documentary evidence at the

hearing, must, unless already having done so, provide the complete text of the testimony and the documentary evidence as specified above in the sections titled **DATE** and **ADDRESSES**. The Agency will review each submission and determine if the information it contains warrants the amount of time requested. If OSHA believes the requested time is excessive, it will allocate an appropriate amount of time to the presentation, and will notify the participant of this action, and the reasons for the action, prior to the hearing. The Agency may limit to 10 minutes the presentation of any participant who fails to comply substantially with these procedural requirements; in such instances, OSHA may request the participant to return for questions at a later time.

Please note that you may not attach materials such as studies or journal articles to testimony or documentary evidence faxes if they are more than 10 pages long. If you wish to include such materials, you must submit three copies to the OSHA Docket Office at the address listed above. When submitting such materials to the OSHA Docket Office, you must clearly identify your comments by name, date, Docket Number, and subject so that we can attach the materials to your faxed or mailed comments.

Certification of the Record and Final Determination After the Informal Public Hearing. Following the close of the hearing and post-hearing comment period, the presiding ALJ will certify the record to the Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health; the record will consist of all of the written comments, oral testimony, and documentary evidence received during the proceeding. However, the ALJ does not make or recommend any decisions as to the content of the final standard. Following certification of the record, OSHA will review the proposed provisions in light of all the evidence received as part of the record, and then will issue the final determinations based on the entire record.

Authority

John L. Henshaw, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20210, directed the preparation of this document. It is issued under section 6(b) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 655), Secretary of Labor's Order No. 5-2002 (67 FR 65008) and 29 CFR part 1911.

Signed in Washington, DC on April 16, 2003.

John L. Henshaw,

Assistant Secretary of Labor.

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Mine Safety and Health Administration

30 CFR Parts 56 and 57

RIN: 1219-AA98 (Phase 6)

Seat Belts for Off-Road Work Machines and Wheeled Agricultural Tractors at Metal and Nonmetal Mines

AGENCY: Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), Labor.

ACTION: Proposed rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: MSHA is issuing a proposed rule that would update the Agency's requirements for operator restraint systems (seat belts) for off-road work machines and wheeled agricultural tractors at metal and nonmetal mines. The existing standards require seat belts for off-road work machines to meet the requirements of the Society of Automotive Engineers' (SAE) consensus standard SAE J386-1985, and seat belts for wheeled agricultural tractors to meet the requirements of SAE J1194-1983. Since MSHA promulgated these standards, however, the SAE has revised them to reflect technological advances in seat belt design and materials. Seat belts meeting the specifications of earlier versions of these SAE standards are no longer routinely installed by manufacturers. The proposed rule would permit seat belts to meet the requirements of the more recent revisions of the SAE J386 and SAE J1194 standards.

DATES: Submit comments by May 21, 2003.

The incorporation by reference of certain publications in this rule is approved by the Director of the Federal Register as of the effective date of the final rule.

ADDRESSES: Clearly identify comments as such and submit them either electronically to ; by facsimile to 202-693-9441; or by regular mail or hand delivery to MSHA, Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances, 1100 Wilson Blvd., Room 2352, Arlington, Virginia 22209-3939. Comments are posted for public viewing at <http://www.msha.gov/currentcomments>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Marvin W. Nichols, Director; Office of