

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration****[Docket No. NHTSA-2002-14088]****Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming European Market 1994 Jeep Grand Cherokee Multipurpose Passenger Vehicles Are Eligible for Importation****AGENCY:** National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.**ACTION:** Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming European Market 1994 Jeep Grand Cherokee multipurpose passenger vehicles (MPVs) are eligible for importation.

SUMMARY: This document announces receipt by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a petition for a decision that LHD 1994 Jeep Grand Cherokee MPVs manufactured for sale in Europe that were not originally manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards are eligible for importation into the United States because (1) they are substantially similar to vehicles that were originally manufactured for sale in the United States and that were certified by their manufacturer as complying with the safety standards, and (2) they are capable of being readily altered to conform to the standards.

DATES: The closing date for comments on the petition is February 18, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to the docket number and notice number, and be submitted to: Docket Management, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh St., SW., Washington, DC 20590. (Docket hours are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) 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 (Volume 65, Number 70; Pages 19477-78) or you may visit <http://dms.dot.gov>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Coleman Sachs, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance, NHTSA (202-366-3151).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

Under 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(A), a motor vehicle that was not originally manufactured to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety

standards shall be refused admission into the United States unless NHTSA has decided that the motor vehicle is substantially similar to a motor vehicle originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States, certified under 49 U.S.C. 30115, and of the same model year as the model of the motor vehicle to be compared, and is capable of being readily altered to conform to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Petitions for eligibility decisions may be submitted by either manufacturers or importers who have registered with NHTSA pursuant to 49 CFR part 592. As specified in 49 CFR 593.7, NHTSA publishes notice in the **Federal Register** of each petition that it receives, and affords interested persons an opportunity to comment on the petition. At the close of the comment period, NHTSA decides, on the basis of the petition and any comments that it has received, whether the vehicle is eligible for importation. The agency then publishes this decision in the **Federal Register**.

Wallace Environmental Testing Laboratories, Inc. of Houston, Texas ("WETL") (Registered Importer 90-005) has petitioned NHTSA to decide whether 1994 Jeep Grand Cherokee MPVs originally manufactured for sale in Europe are eligible for importation into the United States. The vehicles which WETL believes are substantially similar are 1994 Jeep Grand Cherokee MPVs that were manufactured for sale in the United States and certified by their manufacturer, Chrysler Corporation, as conforming to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

The petitioner claims that it carefully compared non-U.S. certified European Market 1994 Jeep Grand Cherokee MPVs to their U.S.-certified counterparts, and found the vehicles to be substantially similar with respect to compliance with most Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

WETL submitted information with its petition intended to demonstrate that non-U.S. certified European Market 1994 Jeep Grand Cherokee MPVs, as originally manufactured, conform to many Federal motor vehicle safety standards in the same manner as their U.S. certified counterparts, or are capable of being readily altered to conform to those standards.

Specifically, the petitioner claims that non-U.S. certified European Market 1994 Jeep Grand Cherokee MPVs are identical to their U.S. certified counterparts with respect to compliance with Standard Nos. 102 *Transmission Shift Lever Sequence* * * *, 103

Defrosting and Defogging Systems, 104 *Windshield Wiping and Washing Systems*, 105 *Hydraulic and Electric Brake Systems*, 106 *Brake Hoses*, 113 *Hood Latch Systems*, 114 *Theft Protection* (noting that the vehicle has an audible anti-theft system that sounds when the key is left in the ignition lock and the driver's door is opened), 116 *Motor Vehicle Brake Fluids*, 118 *Power Window Systems* (noting that the window transport mechanism is inoperative when the ignition is switched off and the door is opened), 119 *New Pneumatic Tires for Vehicles other than Passenger Cars*, 120 *Tire Selection and Rims for Vehicles other than Passenger Cars*, 124 *Accelerator Control Systems*, 201 *Occupant Protection in Interior Impact*, 202 *Head Restraints*, 204 *Steering Control Rearward Displacement*, 205 *Glazing Materials*, 206 *Door Locks and Door Retention Components*, 207 *Seating Systems*, 208 *Occupant Crash Protection* (noting that the vehicle is equipped with a safety belt warning system that includes an audible gong and illuminated dash light, with Type II seat belts in the front and rear outboard designated seating positions, and with a U.S.-model air bag and knee bolster in the driver's seating position), 209 *Seat Belt Assemblies*, 210 *Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages*, 212 *Windshield Retention*, 214 *Side Impact Protection*, 216 *Roof Crush Resistance*, 219 *Windshield Zone Intrusion*, 301 *Fuel System Integrity* (noting that a rollover valve is integrated into the fuel module assembly, and is identical to that equipped on the vehicle's U.S. certified counterpart) and 302 *Flammability of Interior Materials*.

Additionally, the petitioner states that non-U.S. certified LHD Japanese Market 1994 Jeep Grand Cherokee MPVs comply with the Bumper Standard found in 49 CFR part 581, and with the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) plate requirement of 49 CFR part 565.

Petitioner further contends that the vehicles are capable of being readily altered to meet the following standard, in the manner indicated:

Standard No. 101 Controls and Displays: addition of the brake symbol.

Standard No. 108 Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment: replacement of the headlight assemblies, which include sidemarker lights, and taillamp assemblies with U.S. model components.

Standard No. 111 Rearview Mirrors: inscription of the required warning statement on the passenger side rearview mirror.

The petitioner states that all vehicles must be inspected prior to importation