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(k) *3HT cylinders*. In addition to the other requirements of this section, a cylinder marked DOT-3HT must be requalified in accordance with CGA Pamphlet C-8.

#### § 180.211 [Amended]

■ 25. In § 180.211, in paragraph (d)(1)(iii), the reference “180.215(d)(2)” is removed and “180.215(c)(2)” is added in its place.

#### § 180.215 [Amended]

■ 26. In § 180.215, in paragraph(b)(1), the heading “Pressure test records.” is removed and “Calibration test records.” is added in its place.

Issued in Washington DC on May 2, 2003, under authority delegated in 49 CFR part 1.

Edward A. Brigham,

*Acting Deputy Administrator, Research and Special Programs Administration.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

#### 49 CFR Part 571

[Docket No. NHTSA-2003-14711]

RIN 2127-AI49

### Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards; Child Restraint Anchorage Systems

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

**ACTION:** Final rule; interim final rule; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** This document amends the Federal motor vehicle safety standard on child restraint anchorage systems to: Reflect an extension of the date by which final-stage manufacturers and alterers were required to install tether anchorages in vehicles subject to the standard; and temporarily exclude “funeral coaches” (as defined in this document) from the standard altogether. It responds to requests from the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association and from Accubuilt, Inc., respectively. This document adopts the first amendment on a final basis and the second on an interim final basis. The agency also requests comments on the second amendment.

**DATES:** This rule is effective May 8, 2003. The final rule reflects that the mandatory compliance date for installing tether anchorages in vehicles

produced by final-stage manufacturers and alterers was changed from September 1, 2000, to May 1, 2001. This rule excludes funeral coaches from Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 225 until May 10, 2004. After reviewing the comments received on this document, NHTSA will decide whether to exclude funeral coaches from the standard on a permanent basis. Because these amendments relieve restrictions on a class of manufacturer that comprises a substantial number of small businesses, we have determined that it is in the public interest to make the changes effective immediately.

You should submit your comments early enough to ensure that Docket Management receives them not later than July 7, 2003.

**ADDRESSES:** Submit written comments to the Docket Management System, U.S. Department of Transportation, PL 401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. Comments should refer to Docket Number (NHTSA-7938) and be submitted in two copies. If you wish to receive confirmation of receipt of your written comments, include a self-addressed, stamped postcard.

Comments may also be submitted to the docket electronically by logging onto the Docket Management System website at <http://dms.dot.gov>. Click on “Help & Information” to obtain instructions for filing the comment electronically. In every case, the comment should refer to the docket number.

The Docket Management System is located on the Plaza level of the Nassif Building at the Department of Transportation at the above address. You can review public dockets there between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. You can also review comments on-line at the DOT Docket Management System web site at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For non-legal questions, Mike Huntley, NHTSA Office of Crashworthiness Standards, Special Vehicle and Systems Division, 400 Seventh St., SW., Washington, DC 20590 (telephone 202-366-0029). For legal questions, Deirdre Fujita, NHTSA Office of Chief Counsel, 400 Seventh St., SW., Washington, DC 20590 (telephone 202-366-2992).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

#### I. “Petition for Extraordinary Relief” From the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association

##### Background

On March 5, 1999, NHTSA published a final rule establishing a new Federal motor vehicle safety standard that

required motor vehicle manufacturers to install child restraint anchorage systems that are standardized and independent of the vehicle seat belts.<sup>1</sup> (64 FR 10786) (Docket No. 98-3390, Notice 2) (Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 225, 49 CFR 571.225.) Each system is composed of three anchorages: Two lower anchorages and one upper anchorage. The lower anchorages are two 6 millimeter (mm) round bars fastened to the vehicle 720 mm apart and located at the intersection of the vehicle seat cushion and seat back. The upper anchorage is a permanent structure to which the hook of a child restraint upper tether may be attached for the purpose of transferring load from the child restraint to the vehicle structure.

#### Phase-In Requirements

In the notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) for the March 1999 final rule, we recognized that upper tether anchorages could be installed at an earlier date than the lower anchorages (February 20, 1997; 62 FR 7858). We also recognized that more time would be needed to implement a requirement for a rigid bar lower anchorage system (which the final rule ultimately adopted) than an alternative (flexible webbing) lower anchorage system the agency was considering at the time. We requested comments on whether phasing in the requirement for the lower anchorages would be appropriate, and how long a period would be needed to achieve full implementation. We did not raise the possibility of either phasing in the requirement for upper tether anchorages, or delaying the effective date of the upper tether anchorage requirement for vehicles manufactured in more than one stage (*see* 62 FR at 7874).

Based on the information we received, we adopted a three-year phase-in schedule for the lower anchorages in S14 of Standard No. 225. S14 is titled “Lower anchorages phase-in requirements for vehicles manufactured on or after September 1, 2000 and before September 1, 2002.” In S14.3, which we titled “Alternative phase-in schedule for final-stage manufacturers and alterers,” we specified that a final-stage manufacturer or alterer may, at its option, comply with an alternative requirement during the phase-in. The alternative, specified in S14.3(a), stated that the vehicles “are not required to comply with the requirements specified

<sup>1</sup> See 64 FR 47566; August 31, 1999 (Docket No. NHTSA-99-6160) and 65 FR 46628; July 31, 2000 (Docket No. NHTSA-7648) for later amendments of the rule.