

under an EPA contract becomes an unacceptable risk to the Government, the contractor shall immediately remove that employee from the site, notify the Contracting Officer that such a removal has taken place, and replace them with a qualified substitute. If the approval of the Contracting Officer was initially required for the removed employee, Contracting Officer approval is required for the replacement employee.

(g) *Contracting Officer Notification.*

Prior to commencement of on-site contract performance, the contractor shall notify the Contracting Officer that the background checks and suitability determinations required by this clause have been completed for affected individuals.

(h) *Flowdown Provision.*

The Contractor agrees to insert terms that conform substantially to the language of this clause in all subcontracts under this contract. (End of clause)

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

49 CFR Part 571

[Docket No. 2002-12347; Notice 01]

New Rearview Technology and Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 111; Rearview Mirrors

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

ACTION: Request for comments.

SUMMARY: The agency has received two petitions asking us to amend the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard for rearview mirrors. AM General Corporation (AM General) petitioned the agency to amend the standard to permit vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of more than 4,536 kilograms (kg) and with an overall length that is less than 508 centimeters (cm) to have the option of being equipped with a passenger-side convex mirror with an area of at least 323 square centimeters (cm²). Currently, these vehicles are required to have a flat passenger-side mirror with a reflective area of at least 323 cm². The agency granted AM General's petition on May 23, 2001.

In addition, Ms. Barbara Sanford petitioned the agency to amend the rearview mirror standard to require that all commercial trucks traveling on interstate highways have convex mirrors affixed to their front right and left fenders to give drivers of these vehicles

a better view of the area around them while making a lane change. The agency granted Ms. Sanford's petition on May 21, 2001.

This document discusses the recommendations submitted by AM General and Ms. Sanford and asks questions that we hope will help us to determine whether they would be beneficial to safety and at what cost. In addition to addressing the aforementioned petitions, the agency also wishes to take this opportunity to examine the rearview mirror standard as a whole to determine whether there are any amendments that can be made to allow consumers to utilize innovations in mirror and other rearview technology that have been developed since the standard was last amended in 1982. It should be pointed out that the changes to the standard that are being explored are to eliminate impediments to new technology. Any amendments would permit, but not require, the use of new technology.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before March 24, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Comments must refer to the docket and notice numbers cited at the beginning of this notice and be submitted to: Docket Management, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC 20590. It is requested, but not required, that two copies of the comments be provided. The Docket Section is open on weekdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Chris Flanigan, Office of Rulemaking, NHTSA, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Mr. Flanigan's telephone number is (202) 366-4918 and his facsimile number is (202) 366-4329.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Standard No. 111

When standard No. 111 was promulgated in 1967, it applied only to passenger cars. The standard only permitted the use of mirrors of unit magnification (hereafter referred to as flat mirrors) at that time. On August 12, 1975, the agency published a final rule that extended the passenger car requirements to multipurpose passenger vehicles, trucks, and buses with a GVWR 4,536 kg or less (hereafter referred to as light trucks) [40 FR 33825]. The final rule established requirements for light trucks to have either outside flat mirrors that meet passenger car requirements or mirrors with an area of at least 126 cm².

The August 12, 1975 notice also established requirements that

multipurpose passenger vehicles, trucks, and buses with a GVWR of between 4,536 kg and 11,340 kg have flat outside mirrors with a reflective surface of not less than 323 cm². On December 30, 1976, the agency published a final rule that established requirements for multipurpose passenger vehicles, trucks, and buses with a GVWR of 11,340 kg or more. The requirements specified that these vehicles have outside mirrors with a reflective surface of not less than 323 cm².

Until 1982, the agency allowed only flat mirrors on vehicles with a GVWR of 4,536 kg or less other than school buses (hereafter referred to as "light vehicles"). However, on September 2, 1982, the agency published a final rule amending Standard No. 111 to allow constant radius of curvature or spherical convex mirrors (hereafter referred to as "convex mirrors") to be used on light vehicles [47 FR 38698]. The surface of this type of mirror is curved to increase the field of view. This action was in response to a May 6, 1976, petition from General Motors Corporation (GM). GM petitioned the agency to amend the standard to allow convex mirrors on the passenger side of light vehicles where the interior mirror did not meet the field of view requirements. GM pointed out in its petition that convex mirrors would provide a wider field of view than the flat mirrors of the same size.

The amendment gave light vehicles that do not meet the field of view requirements for their interior mirror the option of having an outside mirror of unit magnification or a convex mirror installed on the passenger side. The agency, however, was concerned about the greater difficulties in correctly judging distance and speed that occur using convex mirrors as a result of the distortion of the objects being viewed. This concern has to be balanced by the fact that convex mirrors greatly increase the driver's field of view and, therefore, reduce the necessity for head movement to detect other vehicles.

Since convex mirrors have been permitted on the passenger side of light vehicles, many manufacturers have used them. Today, most light vehicles have a convex mirror on the passenger side. However, the agency still receives complaints from consumers about these mirrors. As described below, convex mirrors have characteristics that present problems for a portion of the driving public.

Currently Permitted Mirrors

The main difference between a flat mirror and convex mirror is that the image of an object viewed in a convex