

to consider in the new regulation most, if not all, international safety concerns as well as available technological developments.

The U.S. is currently looking into upgrading its door locks and door retention components regulation to provide more stringent requirements. The current regulation was designed to test for door openings in vehicles that were built in the 1960s. Changes in vehicle latch designs common in the 1960s and 1970s have rendered the existing regulations largely obsolete. Likewise, the ECE regulation is now over 30 years old. Neither regulation has been amended significantly since their original adoption. Accordingly, the existing regulations have become less effective and likely do not provide many safety benefits at this time.

In light of the U.S. regulatory upgrade effort, we believe that this would be an excellent opportunity for the international community to develop a GTR concurrently with the U.S. Everyone could benefit from harmonization and new technology-based improvements of the door locks and door retention components regulation. The benefits to the governments would be the improvement of the door locks and door retention components adoption of the best safety practices, the leveraging of resources, and the harmonization of requirements. Manufacturers would benefit from reduction of the cost of development, testing and fabrication process of new models. Finally the consumer would benefit by having better choice of vehicles built to higher, globally recognized standards providing a better level of safety at a lower price.

B. Description of the Proposal to Develop a Regulation

The current requirements only test individual latch components without regard to how those components interact with each other, with other portions of the door, or with the directions of force loading conditions occurring in real world crashes. Door openings are frequently caused by a combination of longitudinal and lateral forces during the crash, which can subject the latch system to compressive longitudinal and tensile lateral forces. These forces often result in structural failures of the latch system as well as other non-latch systems such as hinge strike supports, door frame and door sheet metal. Hence, it would be beneficial to consider developing full system requirements. In addition, current requirements have no test procedure for evaluating the safety of

sliding doors. Consideration of such requirements would be valuable.

The GTR will be applicable for passenger vehicles, multi-purpose vehicles as well as trucks. The performance and test requirements for the door latch, striker and hinges will be based on the stringency needed to attain reasonable safety benefits in a cost effective manner. The GTR will be developed based in part on existing national regulations, directives of contracting parties as well as the international standards and regulations listed below. The U.S. prepared a table to facilitate comparison of the present U.S. and ECE regulations, which are currently being widely used by many contracting parties. The table is available in the docket for this notice.

The results of additional research and testing conducted by any contracting parties since the existing regulations were promulgated will also be factored into the requirements of the draft GTR and may result in the proposal of new requirements.

Elements of the GTR, which cannot be resolved by the Working Party will be identified and dealt with in accordance with protocol established by AC.3 and WP.29. The proposed GTR will be drafted in the format adopted by WP.29 (TRANS/WP.29/882).

C. Existing Regulations and Directives

Though there are no regulations currently contained in the Compendium of Candidates, the following regulations and standards will be taken into account during development of the new global technical regulation regarding door locks and door retention components.

- UN/ECE Regulation 11—Uniform provisions concerning the approval of vehicles with regard to door latches and door retention components.
- U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 49: Transportation; Part 571.206: Door locks and door retention components.
- EU Directive 70/387/EEC, concerning the doors of motor vehicles and their trailers.
- Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Regulation No. 206—Door locks and door retention components.
- Japan Safety Regulation for Road Vehicle Article 25—Entrance.
- Australian Design Rule 2/00—Side Door Latches and Hinges.

D. Existing International Voluntary Standards

The following international voluntary standards will be taken into account during development of the new global technical regulation regarding door locks and door retention components.

- SAE J839, September 1998—Passenger Car Side Door Latch Systems.
- SAE J934, September 1998—Vehicle Passenger Door Hinge Systems.

Issued on: January 29, 2003.

Rose A. McMurray,
Associate Administrator for Planning, Evaluation and Budget.

[FR Doc. 03-2367 Filed 1-31-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-59-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA 2002-13242; Notice 2]

Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, Grant of Application for Decision That Noncompliance Is Inconsequential to Motor Vehicle Safety

Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company (Goodyear) has determined that approximately 2,400 of the 66,697 P275/55R20 Eagle LS and P245/70R16 Wrangler SRA tires manufactured and shipped during the period May 25, 2002 to June 16, 2002, do not meet the labeling requirements mandated by Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 109, "New pneumatic tires."

Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 30118(d) and 30120(h), Goodyear has petitioned for a determination that this noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety and has filed an appropriate report pursuant to 49 CFR part 573, "Defect and Noncompliance Reports." Notice of receipt of the application was published, with a 30-day comment period, on September 5, 2002, in the **Federal Register** (67 FR 56873). NHTSA received no comment on this application.

FMVSS No. 109 (S4.3(d)) requires that each tire shall have permanently molded the generic name of each cord material used in the plies (both sidewall and tread area) of the tire.

From May 25, 2002, to June 16, 2002, Goodyear produced and cured a maximum of 2,400 tires with an erroneous marking. These tires were marked with the cord material identified as polyester when it was actually nylon.

Goodyear states that the subject tires have been tested and the results indicate that all performance requirements of FMVSS No. 109 were met or exceeded. Goodyear considers this to be an isolated case. Goodyear has put into effect additional quality steps to ensure that only the correct fabric and its corresponding marking are used in the