

and replacement of any seat belts, air bag control units, air bags, and knee bolsters with U.S.-model components on vehicles that are not already so equipped. Petitioner states that the vehicle should be equipped with an automatic restraint system consisting of driver's and passenger's air bags and knee bolsters, air bag crash sensors, and an air bag control unit. Petitioner also states that the vehicle should be equipped with combination lap and shoulder belts that are self-tensioning and that release by means of a single red pushbutton. Petitioner further states that the vehicle is equipped with a seat belt warning lamp.

Standard No. 209 Seat Belt Assemblies: Inspection of all vehicles and replacement of the seat belt assemblies with U.S.-model components on vehicles that are not already so equipped.

Standard No. 210 Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages: Inspection of all vehicles and replacement of the seat belt anchorages with U.S.-model components on vehicle that are not already so equipped.

Standard No. 214 Side Impact Protection: Inspection of all vehicles to ensure that they are equipped with door bars identical to those in U.S. certified models and installation of those components on vehicles that are not already so equipped.

Standard No. 225 Child Restraint Anchorage Systems: Installation of U.S.-model tether anchorages in all coupe model vehicles.

Standard No. 301 Fuel System Integrity: Replacement of the charcoal canister, air pump, fuel filler neck, and rollover valve with U.S.-model components.

Standard No. 401 Interior Trunk Release: Installation of additional cable and an actuator to permit the trunk lid to be released from inside the trunk.

The petitioner states that all vehicles must be inspected prior to importation to ensure that they are equipped with anti-theft devices identical to those found on the U.S.-certified model, which are necessary to meet the requirements of the Theft Prevention Standard found in 49 CFR part 541. The petitioner states that the U.S.-model component will be installed on any vehicles that are not already so equipped.

In addition, the petitioner states that front and rear bumper reinforcements must be added to the vehicles to comply with the Bumper Standard found in 49 CFR part 581. The petitioner states that it will use components that have already been tested to the requirements of the Bumper Standard by another registered

importer, Webautoworld of Pompano Beach, Florida.

The petitioner also states that a vehicle identification plate must be affixed to the vehicle near the left windshield post and a reference and certification label must be affixed to the edge of the driver's side door or to the latch post nearest the driver to meet the requirements of 49 CFR part 565. In addition, a certification label must be affixed to the driver's side doorjamb to meet the requirements of 49 CFR part 567.

Interested persons are invited to submit comments on the petition described above. Comments should refer to the docket 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.]. It is requested but not required that 10 copies be submitted.

All comments received before the close of business on the closing date indicated above will be considered, and will be available for examination in the docket at the above address both before and after that date. To the extent possible, comments filed after the closing date will also be considered. Notice of final action on the petition will be published in the **Federal Register** pursuant to the authority indicated below.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(A) and (b)(1); 49 CFR 593.8; delegations of authority at 49 CFR 1.50 and 501.8.

Issued on: December 3, 2003.

Kenneth N. Weinstein,
Associate Administrator for Enforcement.
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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Petition for Exemption From the Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard; BMW

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

ACTION: Grant of petition for exemption.

SUMMARY: This notice grants in full the petition of BMW of North America, Inc., (BMW) for an exemption of a high-theft line, the BMW 6 vehicle line, from the parts-marking requirements of the vehicle theft prevention standard. This petition is granted because the agency has determined that the antitheft device to be placed on the line as standard equipment is likely to be as effective in

reducing and deterring motor vehicle theft as compliance with the parts-marking requirements.

DATES: The exemption granted by this notice is effective beginning with the 2004 model year (MY).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Rosalind Proctor, Office of Planning and Consumer Standards, NHTSA, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Ms. Proctor's telephone number is (202) 366-0846. Her fax number is (202) 493-2290.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In a petition dated July 21, 2003, BMW of North America, Inc. (BMW), requested exemption from the parts-marking requirements of the theft prevention standard (49 CFR Part 541) for the BMW 6 vehicle line, beginning with MY 2004. The petition has been filed pursuant to 49 CFR Part 543, Exemption from Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard, based on the installation of an antitheft device as standard equipment for an entire vehicle line. Based on the evidence submitted by BMW, the agency believes that the antitheft device for the BMW 6 vehicle line is likely to be as effective in reducing and deterring motor vehicle theft as compliance with the parts-marking requirements of the theft prevention standard (49 CFR Part 541).

BMW's submittal is considered a complete petition, as required by 49 CFR Part 543.7, in that it meets the general requirements contained in 543.5 and the specific content requirements of 543.6.

In its petition, BMW provided a detailed description and diagram of the identity, design, and location of the components of the antitheft device for the new line. BMW will install its antitheft device as standard equipment on the MY 2004 BMW 6 vehicle line. The antitheft device is a passive, electronically-coded vehicle immobilizer (EWS) system. The device will prevent the vehicle from being driven away under its own engine power in the event the ignition lock and doors have been manipulated. The device is automatically activated when the engine is shut off and the vehicle key is removed from the ignition lock cylinder. In addition to the key, the antitheft device can be activated by the use of its radio frequency remote control. Locking the vehicle door and trunk by using the key cylinder or the radio frequency remote control will further secure the vehicle. BMW stated that the frequency codes for the remote control constantly change to prevent an unauthorized person from opening the