

rates. VFLIC will maintain at its principal offices, and make available to the Commission and its staff, a memorandum setting forth in detail the products analyzed in the course of, and the methodology and results of, Applicants' comparative review.

9. VFLIC represents that, before issuing any Future Contracts, it will: make the same determinations on the same basis as to the mortality and expense risk charge under such Future Contracts; and maintain at its executive office, and make available to the Commission and its staff upon request, a memorandum setting forth in detail the methodology used in making such determinations.

10. VFLIC has concluded that there is a reasonable likelihood that the proposed distribution financing arrangements made with respect to the Contracts will benefit the Separate Account and the Other Accounts, and their respective Contract owners. VFLIC represents that it will maintain, and make available to the Commission and its staff upon request, a memorandum setting forth the basis of such conclusion.

11. VFLIC represents that, before issuing any Future Contracts, it will conclude that there is a reasonable likelihood that the distribution financing arrangements proposed for the Future Contracts will benefit the Separate Account, any Other Accounts and their respective Future Contract owners. VFLIC represents that it will maintain, and make available to the Commission and its staff upon request, a memorandum setting forth the basis for such a conclusion.

12. The Separate Account and Other Accounts will be invested only in an underlying fund (or portfolio) which undertakes, in the event VFLIC should adopt a plan for financing distribution expenses pursuant to Rule 12b-1 under the 1940 Act, to have such plan formulated and approved by the fund's board of directors, the majority of whom are not "interested persons" of the fund (or portfolio) within the meaning of Section 2(a)(19) of the 1940 Act.

Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants represent that the exemptions requested are necessary and appropriate in the public interest and consistent with the protection of investors and the purposes fairly intended by the policy and provisions of the 1940 Act.

For the Commission, by the Division of Investment Management, pursuant to delegated authority.

Margaret H. McFarland,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-10055 Filed 4-23-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Coast Guard

[CGD 96-022]

Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (MERPAC) Working Group Meeting Concerning Implementation of the 1995 Amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 (STCW)

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: MERPAC's STCW working group will meet to discuss various issues relating to implementation of the 1995 Amendments to STCW. The meeting is open to the public.

DATES: The MERPAC STCW working group meeting will be held on Thursday, May 16, 1996, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m..

ADDRESSES: The MERPAC STCW working group meeting will be held at the MEBA Engineering School, 27050 St. Michaels Road, Easton, MD 31601-7550. The telephone number is (410) 822-9737.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Commander Jon Sarubbi, Executive Director, or Mr. Mark Gould, Assistant to the Executive Director, Commandant (G-MOS-1), U.S. Coast Guard, 2100 Second Street, SW., Washington, DC 20593-0001; telephone (202) 267-0229, fax (202) 267-4570.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Notice of this meeting is given pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C., App. § 1 et seq. The agenda for the MERPAC STCW working group meeting will include discussion of the following topics:

- (1) Electronic technician (Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and non-GMDSS) requirement;
- (2) Training record book requirement; and,
- (3) Rest hours requirement.

With advance notice, and at the working group chairman's discretion, members of the public may make oral presentations during the meeting. Persons wishing to make oral

presentations should notify Mr. Gould, listed above under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**, no less than five days before the meeting. Written material may be submitted any time for presentation to the subcommittee. However, to ensure advance distribution to each subcommittee member, persons submitting written material are asked to provide 30 copies to Mr. Gould no later than May 9, 1996.

Dated: April 16, 1996.

Joseph J. Angelo,

Director for Standards, Marine Safety and Environmental Protection Directorate.

[FR Doc. 96-10084 Filed 4-23-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-14-M

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. 96-40; Notice 1]

Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 1994 Mercedes-Benz E500 Passenger Cars Are Eligible for Importation

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming 1994 Mercedes-Benz E500 passenger cars are eligible for importation.

SUMMARY: This notice announces receipt by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a petition for a decision that a 1994 Mercedes-Benz E500 that was not originally manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards is eligible for importation into the United States because (1) it is substantially similar to a vehicle that was originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States and that was certified by its manufacturer as complying with the safety standards, and (2) it is capable of being readily altered to conform to the standards.

DATES: The closing date for comments on the petition is May 24, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to the docket number and notice number, and be submitted to: Docket Section, Room 5109, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, DC 20590. [Docket hours are from 9:30 am to 4 pm]

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Entwistle, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance, NHTSA (202-366-5306).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

Under 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(A) (formerly section 108(c)(3)(A)(i)(I) of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act (the Act)), 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 (formerly section 114 of the Act), 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.

Champagne Imports, Inc. of Lansdale, Pennsylvania ("Champagne") (Registered Importer 90-009) has petitioned NHTSA to decide whether 1994 Mercedes-Benz E500 (Model ID 124.036) passenger cars are eligible for importation into the United States. The vehicle which Champagne believes is substantially similar is the 1994 Mercedes-Benz E500 that was manufactured for importation into, and sale in, the United States and certified by its manufacturer, Daimler Benz A.G., as conforming to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

The petitioner claims that it carefully compared the non-U.S. certified 1994 Mercedes-Benz E500 to its U.S. certified counterpart, and found the two vehicles to be substantially similar with respect to compliance with most Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Champagne submitted information with its petition intended to demonstrate that the non-U.S. certified 1994 Mercedes-Benz E500, as originally manufactured, conforms to many Federal motor vehicle safety standards in the same manner as its U.S. certified counterpart, or is capable of being

readily altered to conform to those standards.

Specifically, the petitioner claims that the non-U.S. certified 1994 Mercedes-Benz E500 is identical to its U.S. certified counterpart with respect to compliance with Standards Nos. 102 *Transmission Shift Lever Sequence* . . . , 103 *Defrosting and Defogging Systems*, 104 *Windshield Wiping and Washing Systems*, 105 *Hydraulic Brake Systems*, 106 *Brake Hoses*, 107 *Reflecting Surfaces*, 109 *New Pneumatic Tires*, 113 *Hood Latch Systems*, 116 *Brake Fluid*, 124 *Accelerator Control Systems*, 201 *Occupant Protection in Interior Impact*, 202 *Head Restraints*, 204 *Steering Control Rearward Displacement*, 205 *Glazing Materials*, 207 *Seating Systems*, 209 *Seat Belt Assemblies*, 210 *Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages*, 211 *Wheel Nuts*, *Wheel Discs and Hubcaps*, 212 *Windshield Retention*, 216 *Roof Crush Resistance*, 219 *Windshield Zone Intrusion*, and 302 *Flammability of Interior Materials*.

Additionally, the petitioner states that the non-U.S. certified 1994 Mercedes-Benz E500 complies with the Bumper Standard found in 49 CFR Part 581.

Petitioner also contends that the vehicle is capable of being readily altered to meet the following standards, in the manner indicated:

Standard No. 101 *Controls and Displays*: (a) inscription of the word "Brake" on the brake failure indicator lamp lens; (b) installation of a seat belt warning lamp; (c) recalibration of the speedometer/odometer from kilometers to miles per hour.

Standard No. 108 *Lamps, Reflective Devices and Associated Equipment*: (a) installation of U.S.- model headlamp assemblies which incorporate headlamps with a DOT marking; (b) installation of U.S.- model front and rear sidemarker/reflector assemblies; (c) installation of U.S.- model taillamp assemblies; (d) installation of a high mounted stop lamp. Standard No. 110 *Tire Selection and Rims*: installation of a tire information placard.

Standard No. 111 *Rearview Mirror*: replacement of the convex passenger side rearview mirror.

Standard No. 114 *Theft Protection*: installation of a warning buzzer microswitch and a warning buzzer in the steering lock assembly.

Standard No. 115 *Vehicle Identification Number*: installation of a VIN plate that can be read from outside the left windshield pillar, and a VIN reference label on the edge of the door or latch post nearest the driver.

Standard No. 118 *Power Window Systems*: rewiring of the power window system so that the window transport is

inoperative when the ignition is switched off.

Standard No. 206 *Door Locks and Door Retention Components*: replacement of the rear door locks and locking buttons with U.S.- model components.

Standard No. 208 *Occupant Crash Protection*: (a) installation of a U.S.- model seat belt in the driver's position, or a belt webbing actuated microswitch inside the driver's seat belt retractor; (b) installation of an ignition switch actuated seat belt warning lamp and buzzer. The petitioner states that the vehicle is equipped with an automatic restraint system consisting of a driver's and passenger's side air bag and knee bolster, and that these will be replaced with U.S.-model components, if necessary. The petitioner further states that the vehicle is equipped in each front designated seating position with a combination lap and shoulder restraint that adjusts by means of an automatic retractor and releases by means of a single push button. The petitioner also states that the vehicle is equipped with a combination lap and shoulder restraint that releases by means of a single push button in both rear outboard designated seating positions, and with a lap belt in the rear center designated seating position.

Standard No. 214 *Side Impact Protection*: installation of reinforcing beams in the doors.

Standard No. 301 *Fuel System Integrity*: installation of a rollover valve in the fuel tank vent line between the fuel tank and the evaporative emissions collection canister.

Interested persons are invited to submit comments on the petition described above. Comments should refer to the docket number and be submitted to: Docket Section, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5109, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590. 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: April 18, 1996.

Marilynne Jacobs,

Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.

[FR Doc. 96-10061 Filed 4-23-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-59-P

[Docket No. 96-01; Notice 2]

Decision That Nonconforming 1991 Volkswagen GTI (Canadian) Passenger Cars Are Eligible for Importation

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

ACTION: Notice of decision by NHTSA that nonconforming 1991 Volkswagen GTI (Canadian) passenger cars are eligible for importation.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the decision by NHTSA that 1991 Volkswagen GTI (Canadian) passenger cars not originally manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards are eligible for importation into the United States because they are substantially similar to a vehicle originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States and certified by its manufacturer as complying with the safety standards (the 1991 Volkswagen Golf GTI), and they are capable of being readily altered to conform to the standards.

DATES: This decision is effective as of April 24, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Entwistle, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance, NHTSA (202-366-5306).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Under 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(A) (formerly section 108(c)(3)(A)(i) of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act (the Act)), 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 (formerly section 114 of the Act), 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.

Champagne Imports, Inc. of Lansdale, Pennsylvania ("Champagne") (Registered Importer R-90-009) petitioned NHTSA to decide whether 1991 Volkswagen GTI (Canadian) passenger cars are eligible for importation into the United States. NHTSA published notice of the petition on January 23, 1996 (61 FR 1816) to afford an opportunity for public comment. The notice identified the vehicle that is the subject of the petition as the "1991 Volkswagen Golf GT." In its comments responding to the notice, a representative of Volkswagen, the vehicle's manufacturer, stated that the vehicle identification number (VIN) assigned to the specific vehicle that the petitioner seeks to import identifies that vehicle as a 1991 Volkswagen GTI manufactured in Mexico for the Canadian market. After being apprised of this comment, the petitioner acknowledged that the petition was in error, and that the manufacturer's representative properly identified the vehicle. In view of this correction, this notice describes the petition as pertaining to a 1991 Volkswagen GTI (Canadian).

The notice of petition identified the vehicle that Champagne claims to be substantially similar to the subject vehicle as the version of the 1991 Volkswagen Golf GT that was manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States and certified by its manufacturer, Volkswagenwerke A.G., as conforming to all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards. After reviewing the manufacturer's comments, Champagne informed NHTSA that the comparison vehicle is properly identified as the "1991 Volkswagen Golf GTI." This notice will use that designation in referring to the comparison vehicle. As noted in the notice of petition, the petitioner claimed that it had carefully compared the two vehicles, and found them to be substantially similar with respect to compliance with most applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Specifically, the petitioner claimed that the Volkswagen GTI (Canadian) is identical to the 1991 Volkswagen Golf GTI 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 Brake Systems*, 106 *Brake Hoses*, 107 *Reflecting Surfaces*, 108 *Lamps, Reflective Devices, and Associated Equipment*, 109 *New Pneumatic Tires*, 110 *Tire Selection and Rims*, 111 *Rearview Mirrors*, 113 *Hood Latch Systems*, 114 *Theft Protection*, 115 *Vehicle Identification Number*, 116 *Brake Fluid*, 124 *Accelerator Control Systems*, 201 *Occupant Protection in Interior Impact*, 202 *Head Restraints*, 203 *Impact Protection for the Driver From the Steering Control System*, 204 *Steering Control Rearward Displacement*, 205 *Glazing Materials*, 206 *Door Locks and Door Retention Components*, 207 *Seating Systems*, 209 *Seat Belt Assemblies*, 210 *Seat Belt Assembly Anchorages*, 211 *Wheel Nuts*, 212 *Wheel Discs and Hubcaps*, 212 *Windshield Retention*, 214 *Side Door Strength*, 216 *Roof Crush Resistance*, 219 *Windshield Zone Intrusion*, 301 *Fuel System Integrity*, and 302 *Flammability of Interior Materials*.

Additionally, the petitioner stated that the 1991 Volkswagen GTI (Canadian) complies with the Bumper Standard found in 49 CFR Part 581.

Petitioner also contended that the vehicle is capable of being readily modified to meet the following standards, in the manner indicated:

Standard No. 101 *Controls and Displays*: (a) substitution of a lens marked "Brake" for a lens with an ECE symbol on the brake failure indicator lamp; (b) replacement of the speedometer/odometer assembly with a U.S.-model component.

Standard No. 208 *Occupant Crash Protection*: (a) installation of U.S.-model lap belts in the driver's and front passenger's seating positions; (b) installation of U.S.-model automatic shoulder restraints in the driver's and front passenger's seating positions. The petitioner stated that the rear outboard designated seating positions are equipped with combination lap and shoulder restraints that release by means of a single push button.

One comment was received in response to the notice of petition, from Volkswagen of America, Inc. ("Volkswagen"), the United States representative of Volkswagen AG, the vehicle's manufacturer. In addition to these companies, the comment was submitted on behalf of Volkswagen de Mexico. In its comment, Volkswagen stated that in order to conform to the 1991 Volkswagen GTI (Canadian) to the requirements of Standard No. 101, the instrument cluster would have to be