

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration****49 CFR Part 572**

[Docket No. NHTSA-99-5156]

RIN 2127-AG78

Anthropomorphic Test Dummy; Occupant Crash Protection

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

ACTION: Extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: This document grants a request to extend the comment period on an agency proposal to adopt new design and performance specifications for a 12-month-old infant dummy. Subsequent to publication of the proposal, the agency received a request for extension of the comment period for 60 days in order to prepare a considered comment to submit in response thereto. NHTSA is extending the comment period from April 22, 1999 to June 22, 1999.

DATES: Extended comment closing date: Comments on the March 8, 1999 proposal, 64 FR 10965, Docket No. 99-5156, must be received by the agency on or before close of business on June 22, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to Docket No. 99-5156 and be submitted to: Docket Management, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590. Docket room hours are from

10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For non-legal issues, you may call Stan Backaitis, Office of Crashworthiness Standards, at 202-366-4912.

For legal issues, you may call Rebecca MacPherson, Office of the Chief Counsel, at 202-366-2992.

You may send mail to both of these officials at National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St., S.W., Washington, D.C., 20590.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On March 8, 1999, NHTSA published a notice of proposed rulemaking to incorporate the Child Restraint Air Bag Interaction (CRABI) 12-month-old dummy into 49 CFR Part 572, and to adopt new design and performance specifications for that dummy. The modified CRABI is especially needed to evaluate the effects of air bag deployment on children who are out of position at the time of a crash. The proposed modifications would provide more useful information to better evaluate child safety in a variety of crash environments. Adopting the modified CRABI dummy would facilitate its use in evaluating the safety of air bags for infants and very young children. The separate issue of specifying the use of the dummy in performance tests, e.g., as part of the occupant protection standard and/or child restraint standard, will be addressed in other rulemakings, most notably the current rulemaking on advanced air bags.

The NPRM specified a comment closing date of April 22, 1999 (45 days

after date of publication). However, on April 14, 1999, we received a request for an extension of the comment closing date from the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers (AAM). The AAM stated that, although it has used the CRABI dummy, it has been unable to adequately access our proposed changes. Upgraded dummies will apparently not be available for evaluation until early May. Accordingly, AAM stated that it will not be able to complete its review and prepare comments prior to the closing date of April 22, 1999. Therefore, AAM requested an additional 60 days for submission of its comments.

Since AAM is the national trade association for vehicle manufacturers representing the majority of new vehicle sales, the agency is interested in its comments. Thus, in order to provide the AAM and other interested parties ample time and opportunity to express their views on the CRABI proposal, NHTSA believes that there is good cause for the extension of the comment period and that such extension is consistent with the public interest. Accordingly, the AAM request to extend the comment period for an additional 60 days is granted.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 322, 30111, 30115, 30117, and 30166; delegation of authority is at 49 CR 1.50.

Issued on: April 16, 1999.

L. Robert Shelton,

Associate Administrator for Safety Performance Standards.

[FR Doc. 99-10084 Filed 4-21-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-59-U