

operation parameters on the number of plies in the tire. In addition, the tires are certified to meet all the performance requirements of FMVSS No. 119 and all other informational markings as required by FMVSS No. 119 are present. Cooper has corrected the problem.

In consideration of the foregoing, NHTSA has decided that the petitioner has met its burden of persuasion that the noncompliance described is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety. Accordingly, Cooper's petition is granted and the petitioner is exempted from the obligation of providing notification of, and a remedy for, the noncompliance.

(Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30118, 30120; delegations of authority at CFR 1.50 and 501.8)

Issued on: September 2, 2005.

Ronald L. Medford,

Senior Associate Administrator for Vehicle Safety.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA 2005-21928; Notice 2]

Cooper Tire & Rubber Company, Grant of Petition for Decision of Inconsequential Noncompliance

Cooper Tire & Rubber Company (Cooper) has determined that certain tires it manufactured during 2004 and 2005 do not comply with S6.5(f) of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 119, "New pneumatic tires for vehicles other than passenger cars." Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 30118(d) and 30120(h), Cooper 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 a petition was published, with a 30-day comment period, on July 29, 2005 in the **Federal Register** (70 FR 43935). NHTSA received no comments.

Cooper produced approximately 15,692 Cooper brand tires during the period from October 3, 2004 through April 9, 2005 that do not comply with FMVSS No. 119, S6.5(f). S6.5(f) of FMVSS No. 119 requires that each tire shall be marked with "[t]he actual number of plies * * * in the sidewall and, if different, in the tread area." The noncompliant tires were marked "tread 2 ply steel + 3 ply polyester; sidewall 3

ply polyester." The correct marking should read "tread 1 ply nylon, 2 ply steel + 3 ply polyester; sidewall 3 ply polyester."

Cooper believes that the noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety and that no corrective action is warranted. Cooper states that "the incorrect number of tread plies on each tire does not present a safety-related defect. In addition to having the number of tread plies marked on the sidewall, the subject tires have an additional nylon tread ply." Cooper states that the tires comply with all other requirements of FMVSS No. 119.

The Transportation Recall, Enhancement, Accountability, and Documentation (TREAD) Act (Pub. L. 106-414) required, among other things, that the agency initiate rulemaking to improve tire label information. In response, the agency published an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) in the **Federal Register** on December 1, 2000 (65 FR 75222).

The agency received more than 20 comments on the tire labeling information required by 49 CFR 571.109 and 119, Part 567, Part 574, and Part 575. In addition, the agency conducted a series of focus groups, as required by the TREAD Act, to examine consumer perceptions and understanding of tire labeling. Few of the focus group participants had knowledge of tire labeling beyond the tire brand name, tire size, and tire pressure.

Based on the information obtained from comments to the ANPRM and the consumer focus groups, we have concluded that it is likely that few consumers have been influenced by the tire construction information (number of plies and cord material in the sidewall and tread plies) provided on the tire label when deciding to buy a motor vehicle or tire.

Therefore, the agency agrees with Cooper's statement that the incorrect markings in this case do not present a serious safety concern.¹ There is no effect of the noncompliance on the operational safety of vehicles on which these tires are mounted. In the agency's judgment, the incorrect labeling of the tire construction information will have an inconsequential effect on motor vehicle safety because most consumers do not base tire purchases or vehicle operation parameters on the number of plies in the tire. In addition, the tires are certified to meet all the performance

¹ This decision is limited to its specific facts. As some commenters on the ANPRM noted, the existence of steel in a tire's sidewall can be relevant to the manner in which it should be repaired or retreaded.

requirements of FMVSS No. 119 and all other informational markings as required by FMVSS No. 119 are present. Cooper has corrected the problem.

In consideration of the foregoing, NHTSA has decided that the petitioner has met its burden of persuasion that the noncompliance described is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety. Accordingly, Cooper's petition is granted and the petitioner is exempted from the obligation of providing notification of, and a remedy for, the noncompliance.

(Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30118, 30120; delegations of authority at CFR 1.50 and 501.8)

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Ronald L. Medford,

Senior Associate Administrator for Vehicle Safety.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Withdrawal of Petition for Exemption From the Federal Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard; DaimlerChrysler

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

ACTION: Notice; withdrawal of petition for exemption.

SUMMARY: This notice withdraws the petition by DaimlerChrysler Corporation (DaimlerChrysler) for an exemption from the parts marking requirements of the vehicle theft prevention standard for the Jeep Liberty vehicle line.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: In a petition dated March 30, 2005, DaimlerChrysler requested an exemption from the parts marking requirements of the theft prevention standard (49 CFR part 541) for the Jeep Liberty vehicle line, beginning with model year (MY) 2006. The petition requested an exemption from the parts marking requirements pursuant to 49 CFR part 543, Exemption from Vehicle Theft Prevention Standard, based on the installation of an antitheft device as standard equipment for the entire vehicle line. On July 12, 2005, the agency granted in full the petition of