

original EIS, and reconsider them, if appropriate.

Because public scoping meetings for the Saddle Road Improvements project were held in Hilo, Kona and Waimea during the development of the original EIS, no additional scoping is required for an ongoing project, where an SEIS is prepared that does not involve a reassessment of the entire action. However, letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State and local agencies, and to private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed or are known to have interest in this proposal. Public hearings will be held in both West and East Hawai'i. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the hearings. The draft SEIS will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the public hearing. To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and that all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the SEIS should be directed to the FHWA-CFLHD or the HDOT at the addresses provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal Programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued on: November 27, 2007.

**Ricardo Suarez, P.E.,**  
Division Engineer, CFLHD.

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

#### Denial of Motor Vehicle Defect Petition

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

**ACTION:** Denial of petition for a defect investigation.

**SUMMARY:** This notice sets forth the reasons for the denial of a petition submitted pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 30162 by Mr. Richard H. McSwain of McSwain Engineering Inc. to NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation (ODI), received June 29, 2007, requesting that the agency commence a proceeding to determine the existence of a defect related to motor vehicle safety with

respect to the manual seatback recliner mechanism in model year 1989-1992 Ford Probe vehicles (subject vehicles). After a review of the petition and other information, NHTSA has concluded that further expenditure of the agency's investigative resources on the issues raised by the petition does not appear to be warranted. The agency accordingly has denied the petition. The petition is hereinafter identified as DP07-001.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Steve Chan, Safety Defects Engineer, Defects Assessment Division, Office of Defects Investigation, NHTSA, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590. Telephone: (202) 366-8537.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On June 29, 2007, NHTSA received a petition from Mr. Richard H. McSwain of McSwain Engineering Inc., requesting that the agency investigate the failure of the seatback recliner mechanisms in the subject vehicles. The petition is based on an examination of a passenger side front seat recliner mechanism from a subject vehicle involved in a multi-vehicle collision, of an exemplar seat, as well as mechanical testing of a seat from a subject vehicle. The petitioner identified a failure mode involving bypass of the seatback stop pin (inside the recliner mechanism) during forward movement of the seatback, such as when entering and exiting the rear seat. The petition stated that stop pin bypass allows the recliner mechanism sector gear to over-travel with respect to the pawl. Return of the seatback to the upright position may then bend the first tooth of the pawl, resulting in a false or partial engagement of the sector and pawl teeth. This false engagement condition is transmitted to the opposing recliner mechanism via a mechanical communication cable. According to the petition, the ultimate result is the inability of the recliner mechanism to support the seatback during a collision event. The petitioner concluded that the stop pin bypass that initiated the failure mode is a result of inadequate height of the pin and the resulting inadequate contact between the pin and seatback stop.

The Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 207 "Seating Systems," specifies that seats in passenger cars, multipurpose passenger vehicles, trucks, and buses must meet certain static force test requirements. However, for seats that hinge on folding seatbacks, the restraining device, once engaged, shall not release when a force equal to twenty times the weight of the seatback is applied through the center of gravity for the seat in the direction the seat is facing. It is not uncommon to see

the seatbacks of new vehicles moved from their initial positions after a FMVSS simulated vehicular collision.

The identified failure mode may be the result of progressive wear and tear of the seatback stop pin, the seatback stop, and other seat components in vehicles that are, on average, 17 years old. Available data do not suggest that this has occurred with a notable frequency. ODI reviewed its consumer complaint data received over the last nineteen years and found no complaints of seatback collapse (with or without a vehicle collision) in the subject vehicles.

In view of the foregoing, and considering the advanced age of the subject vehicles, it is unlikely that NHTSA would issue an order for the notification and remedy of the alleged defect as defined by the petitioner at the conclusion of the investigation requested in the petition. The statutory requirement that the manufacturer provide a free remedy does not apply if the vehicle was bought by the first purchaser more than 10 calendar years before an order is issued. Therefore, in view of the need to allocate and prioritize NHTSA's limited resources to best accomplish the agency's safety mission, the petition is denied.

**Authority:** 49 U.S.C. 30162(d); delegations of authority at CFR 1.50 and 501.8.

Issued on: December 4, 2007.

**Daniel C. Smith,**

Associate Administrator for Enforcement.

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-2007-0042; Notice 1]

#### General Motors Corporation, Receipt of Petition for Decision of Inconsequential Noncompliance

General Motors Corporation (GM) has determined that certain model year 2005, 2006 & 2007 Cadillac STS passenger cars equipped with sunroofs do not fully comply with paragraph S4(e) of 49 CFR 571.118, Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 118 Power-Operated Window, Partition, and Roof Panel Systems. GM has filed an appropriate report pursuant to 49 CFR Part 573, Defect and Noncompliance Responsibility and Reports.

Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 30118(d) and 30120(h), GM has petitioned for an exemption from the notification and

remedy requirements of 49 U.S.C. Chapter 301 on the basis that this noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety.

This notice of receipt of GM's petition is published under 49 U.S.C. 30118 and 30120 and does not represent any agency decision or other exercise of judgment concerning the merits of the petition.

Affected are approximately 60,042 model year 2005, 2006 & 2007 Cadillac STS passenger cars.

Paragraph S4(e) of 49 CFR 571.118 requires:

S4. Operating requirements. \* \* \* power operated window, partition, or roof panel systems may be closed only in the following circumstances: \* \* \*

(e) During the interval between the time the locking device which controls the activation of the vehicle's engine is turned off and the opening of either of a two-door vehicle's doors or, in the case of a vehicle with more than two doors, the opening of either of its front doors;

GM explains that for 60 seconds after the vehicles are started, if the engine is turned off and a front door is opened, the sunroof module software allows the sunroof to be closed if someone in the vehicle activates the control switch. If more than 60 seconds elapses from the starting of the vehicle, this condition will not occur.

GM stated that it is not aware of any incidents or injury related to the subject condition.

GM included an analysis of the risk associated with the subject condition and a detailed explanation of the reasons why it believes the noncompliance to be inconsequential to motor vehicle safety.

In summary, GM states that for all of the subject vehicles:

- The subject condition affects only the sunroof, not the power windows.
- The subject condition requires multiple actions that must occur within a 60 second time period. First, the following sequence of actions must occur: Driver starts engine, driver turns off engine, and driver or front passenger opens a front door. After this sequence of actions and still within the 60 second time frame, occupants must take additional actions: Push the sunroof close switch and position an occupant to create the risk of sunroof entrapment. All of these actions must occur within one 60 second time frame.

- If the sunroof switch is pushed steadily and then released, the sunroof promptly stops moving.

- The sunroof incorporates an auto-reverse system. This system will activate whenever the sunroof is closing in the express close mode. Therefore,

sunroof entrapment requires the completion of the initial sequence of engine start/engine stop/front door open actions, and also requires an occupant to press and hold the sunroof closure switch and position an occupant within the sunroof—all within the 60 second window and in such a manner that the auto-reverse is not effective in preventing sunroof entrapment.

- The Agency has granted similar petitions in the past.

- GM is not aware of any injuries or incidents related to the subject condition.

GM states that it believes that because the noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety that no further corrective action is warranted. GM has also informed NHTSA that it has corrected the problem that caused these errors so that they will not be repeated in future production.

Interested persons are invited to submit written data, views, and arguments on this petition. Comments must refer to the docket and notice number cited at the beginning of this notice and be submitted by any of the following methods:

a. By mail addressed to: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590.

b. By hand delivery to U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590. The Docket Section is open on weekdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. except Federal Holidays.

c. Electronically: By logging onto the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) Web site at <http://www.regulations.gov/>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments. Comments may also be faxed to 1-202-493-2251.

The petition, supporting materials, and all comments received before the close of business on the closing date indicated below will be filed and will be considered. All comments and supporting materials received after the closing date will also be filed and will be considered to the extent possible. When the petition is granted or denied, notice of the decision will be published in the **Federal Register** pursuant to the authority indicated below.

*Comment closing date:* January 9, 2008.

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

Issued on: December 4, 2007.

**Claude H. Harris,**

*Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.*  
[FR Doc. E7-23841 Filed 12-7-07; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-59-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Surface Transportation Board

[STB Docket No. AB-364 (Sub-No. 13X)]

#### Mid-Michigan Railroad, Inc.— Abandonment Exemption— Muskegon County, MI

Mid-Michigan Railroad, Inc. (MMRR), has filed a notice of exemption under 49 CFR Part 1152 Subpart F—*Exempt Abandonments* to abandon a 3.35-mile line of railroad between milepost 191.40 and milepost 194.75, at the end of the line, in Muskegon County, MI. The line traverses United States Postal Service Zip Codes 49441, 49442, and 49444.

MMRR has certified that: (1) No local traffic has moved over the line for at least 2 years; (2) any overhead traffic on the line can be rerouted over other lines; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the line (or by a state or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) or with any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of complainant within the 2-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 CFR 1105.7 (environmental reports), 49 CFR 1105.8 (historic reports), 49 CFR 1105.11 (transmittal letter), 49 CFR 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 CFR 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies) have been met.

As a condition to this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under *Oregon Short Line R. Co.—Abandonment—Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial revocation under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) must be filed.

Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) has been received, this exemption will be effective on January 9, 2008, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Service Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any