

3. Requirements for Submissions

In order to facilitate prompt processing of submissions, USTR strongly urges and prefers electronic (e-mail) submissions in response to this notice.

Persons making submissions by e-mail should use the following subject line: "United States—Bahrain FTA Environmental Review" followed by "Written Comments." Documents should be submitted as either WordPerfect, MSWord, or text (.TXT) files. Supporting documentation submitted as spreadsheets are acceptable as Quattro Pro or Excel. For any document containing business confidential information submitted electronically, the file name of the business confidential version should begin with the characters "BC-", and the file name of the public version should begin with the characters "P-". The "P-" or "BC-" should be followed by the name of the submitter. Persons who make submissions by e-mail should not provide separate cover letters; information that might appear in a cover letter should be included in the submission itself. To the extent possible, any attachments to the submission should be included in the same file as the submission itself, and not as separate files.

Written comments submitted in response to this request will be placed in a file open to public inspection pursuant to 15 CFR 2003.5, except business confidential information exempt from public inspection in accordance with 15 CFR 2003.6. Business confidential information submitted in accordance with 15 CFR 2003.6 must be clearly marked "BUSINESS CONFIDENTIAL" at the top of each page, including any cover letter or cover page, and must be accompanied by a nonconfidential summary of the confidential information. All public documents and nonconfidential summaries shall be available for public inspection in the USTR Reading Room. The USTR Reading Room is open to the public, by appointment only, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. An appointment to review the file must be scheduled at least 48 hours in advance and may be made by calling (202) 395-6186.

USTR also welcomes and will take into account the public comments on Bahrain FTA environmental issues submitted in response to a previous notice—the **Federal Register** notice dated August 25, 2003 (68 FR 51062)—requesting comments from the public to assist USTR in formulating positions

and proposals with respect to all aspects of the negotiations, including environmental issues. These comments will also be made available for public inspection.

General information concerning the Office of the United States Trade Representative may be obtained by accessing its Internet Web site <http://www.ustr.gov>.

Carmen Suro-Bredie,

Chair, Trade Policy Staff Committee.

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OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Notice of Re-scheduled Public Hearing Concerning China's Compliance With WTO Commitments

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice of re-scheduled public hearing concerning China's compliance with its WTO commitments.

SUMMARY: The interagency Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC) has re-scheduled the public hearing that was to be held to assist the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) in its preparation of its annual report to the Congress on China's compliance with the commitments that it made in connection with its accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

DATES: The public hearing concerning China's compliance with its WTO commitments will be held on Friday, October 3, 2003 in the Truman Room at the White House Conference Center, 726 Jackson Place NW., Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For procedural questions concerning participation in the public hearing, contact Gloria Blue, (202) 395-3475. All other questions should be directed to Terrence J. McCartin, Director of Monitoring and Enforcement for China, (202) 395-3900, or David L. Weller, Assistant General Counsel, (202) 395-3581.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On July 21, 2003, the TPSC published a Request for Comments and Notice of Public Hearing Concerning China's Compliance With WTO Commitments in the **Federal Register** (68 FR 43247). In that notice, the TPSC scheduled a public hearing for Thursday, September 18, 2003. The TPSC subsequently had to postpone the hearing because Federal Government offices were closed that day due to Hurricane Isabel.

The TPSC will hold the public hearing concerning China's compliance with its WTO commitments on Friday, October 3, 2003, beginning at 10 a.m., in the Truman Room at the White House Conference Center, which is located at 726 Jackson Place, NW., Washington, DC 20006.

Carmen Suro-Bredie,

Chairman, Trade Policy Staff Committee.

[FR Doc. 03-24634 Filed 9-29-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

Petition for Waiver of Compliance

In accordance with part 211 of Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), notice is hereby given that the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has received a request for a waiver of compliance with certain requirements of its safety standards. The individual petition is described below, including the party seeking relief, the regulatory provisions involved, the nature of the relief being requested, and the petitioner's arguments in favor of relief.

San Francisco Municipal Railway Department

[Waiver Petition Docket Number FRA-2003-15988]

San Francisco Municipal Railway Department (MUNI) located in San Francisco, California, seeks a permanent waiver of compliance from Title 49 of the CFR for operation of an extension of an existing light rail line at a "limited connection" with two existing Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) industry lead tracks. *See Statement of Agency Policy Concerning Jurisdiction Over the Safety of Railroad Passenger Operations and Waivers Related to Shared Use of the Tracks of the General Railroad System by Light Rail and Conventional Equipment*, 65 FR 42529 (July 10, 2000). *See also Joint Statement of Agency Policy Concerning Shared Use of the Tracks of the General Railroad System by Conventional Railroads and Light Rail Transit Systems*, 65 FR 42626 (July 10, 2000).

In regards to this, MUNI plans to construct its 5.4 mile double-track Third Street Light Rail Project, which is an extension of the City's existing 35 mile light rail system, crossing two existing single-track freight railroad (UPRR) industry lead tracks via at grade rail-crossings. MUNI is a light rail transit operation and except for these minor crossing connections, will not share

track or any connection to the general system. MUNI has agreed to a long-term lease with UPRR to operate and maintain the respective shared crossings and interlockings in accordance with FRA standards. MUNI is seeking a permanent waiver of compliance from certain CFR parts of title 49, specifically Part 223 Safety Glazing Standards—Locomotives, Passenger Cars and Caboose Part 238 Passenger Equipment Safety Standards, and part 219 Control of Alcohol & Drug Use (as a light rail operation, MUNI adheres to an accepted drug policy established by the FTA).

Since FRA has not yet completed its investigation of MUNI's petition, the agency takes no position at this time on the merits of MUNI's stated justifications. As part of FRA's review of the petition, the Federal Transit Administration will appoint a representative to advise FRA's Safety Board to participate in the board's consideration of MUNI's waiver petition.

Interested parties are invited to participate in these proceedings by submitting written views, data, or comments. FRA does not anticipate scheduling a public hearing in connection with these proceedings since the facts do not appear to warrant a hearing. If any interested party desires an opportunity for oral comment, they should notify FRA, in writing, before the end of the comment period and specify the basis for their request.

All communications concerning these proceedings should identify the appropriate docket number (e.g., Waiver Petition Docket Number FRA-2003-15988) and must be submitted to the Docket Clerk, DOT Docket Management Facility, Room PL-401 (Plaza Level), 400 7th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Communications received within 45 days of the date of this notice will be considered by FRA before final action is taken. Comments received after that date will be considered as far as practicable. All written communications concerning these proceedings are available for examination during regular business hours (9 a.m.—5 p.m.) at the above facility. All documents in the public docket are also available for inspection and copying on the Internet at the docket facility's web site at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Anyone is able to search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register**

published on April 11, 2000 (Volume 65, Number 70; Pages 19477-78). The Statement may also be found at <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Issued in Washington, DC on September 24, 2003.

Grady C. Cothen, Jr.,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety Standards and Program Development.

[FR Doc. 03-24744 Filed 9-29-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-03-14810; Notice 1]

Evenflo Company, Inc.; Receipt of Application for Decision of Inconsequential Noncompliance

Evenflo Company, Inc. ("Evenflo") of Vandalia, Ohio, has determined that as many as 742,736 child restraint systems and 633 accessory tether kits may fail to comply with 49 CFR 571.213, Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 213, "Child Restraint Systems," and has filed an appropriate report pursuant to 49 CFR part 573, "Defects and Noncompliance Reports." Evenflo has also applied to be exempted from the notification and remedy requirements of 49 U.S.C. Chapter 301—"Motor Vehicle Safety" on the basis that the noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety.

This notice of receipt of an application is published under 49 U.S.C. 30118 and 30120, and does not represent any agency decision or other exercise of judgement concerning the merits of the application.

FMVSS No. 213, Paragraph S5.9(b) requires "In the case of each child restraint system manufactured on or after September 1, 1999 and that has components for attaching the system to a tether anchorage, those components shall include a tether hook that conforms to the configuration and geometry specified in Figure 11 of this standard." Figure 11 specifies that the height of the tether hook shall not exceed a maximum of 20 millimeters.

In its Part 573 Report filed with the agency on February 3, 2003, Evenflo stated that "On the afternoon of January 28, 2003, a company seeking to supply Evenflo with tether hooks for child restraints advised Evenflo that it believed some of the tether hooks currently used by Evenflo, as well as other child restraint manufacturers, did not meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213 S.5.9(b). Evenflo undertook an investigation, and on

January 31, 2003 determined that some tether hooks supplied by SX Industries of Canton, Massachusetts did not meet Evenflo's engineering specifications and did not meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213 S.5.9(b). A percentage of the hooks sampled by Evenflo measured between 20.11 and 20.39 millimeters." Evenflo estimates that, based on its sampling of products, between 70 percent and 80 percent of the 742,736 child restraints and 636 accessory tether kits manufactured between June 15, 2002 and January 30, 2003 contain the subject noncompliance.

Evenflo believes that the FMVSS No. 213 noncompliance described above is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety. Evenflo supports its application for inconsequential noncompliance with the following:

Installation Testing Confirms Non-Conformance Will Not Adversely Affect Use of Tethers. In connection with this matter, Evenflo undertook installation testing on 207 different models (after eliminating duplicate tests on the same model performed by different test engineers¹) of vehicles to ensure that the non-compliance would have no adverse affect on the ability of consumers to use their tethers. For this testing, Evenflo chose two of the tether hooks in its possession which exhibited the greatest non-conformance (those that were furthest from the requisite 20 millimeters specified in the Standard). These hooks measured 20.30 mm and 20.38 mm. Although 207 different models of vehicles were examined, where applicable, all three tether attachment points² in each vehicle were separately evaluated (resulting in 586 unique data points). In every one of the 586 unique installation points the non-conforming tethers properly attached to the vehicle's tether attachment point * * * Based upon this testing, it is clear that the non-compliance is transparent to consumers, and will in no way adversely affect the consumer's ability to use his/her tether.

Dynamic Sled Testing Conclusively Demonstrates No Adverse Performance In Child Restraints. Although Evenflo cannot be certain of the number, we estimate that at least one hundred (100) dynamic sled tests were conducted (using the protocol set forth in FMVSS213) on restraints which likely would have been equipped with tether hooks that did not meet the dimensional requirements of S5.9(b) and Figure 11. In

¹ The testing, which was conducted by two different test engineers, resulted in 21 vehicles of the same model and model year being tested by each test engineer. The duplicates of these tests appear in the attached test reports, but were eliminated from the numbers provided herein (to prevent testing conducted on the same model vehicle from being counted twice).

² As can be seen from the attached test reports, some vehicles had less than three tether attachment points, and some vehicles had more than three attachment points. For each vehicle tested, the test engineers tested every tether attachment point in the vehicle which they could locate.