

spectrum of safety standards on the same basis that such jurisdiction is exercised over glazing of such bodies.

11. Consumer information should be available to purchasers of light trucks for personal or recreational uses, as it is to purchasers of passenger cars and motorcycles, yet under present regulations purchasers are denied such protection.

12. The design and construction of many motor home, pickup camper, and travel-trailer bodies are such that they are incapable of maintaining structural integrity in a crash.

13. The fact that it is unlawful in most States to occupy travel trailers in motion on a public highway should not be used as a basis for excluding such vehicles from pertinent vehicle safety standards relating to passenger occupancy or to crashworthiness; NHTSA has already argued that the "capability of use" on a highway is the overriding consideration, and travel trailers are without question capable of being so used.

14. Unrestricted vehicular access to State or Federal mountain, forestry, wilderness, or desert areas poses potential hazards to persons who traverse such areas without adequate driver training or experience or without requisite vehicle capabilities or emergency equipment.

15. Recreational-type vehicles present virtually all the nonoperating hazards of regular passenger cars, plus many of the hazards commonly associated with the home, and additional nonoperating hazards peculiar to such vehicles or related to the environment in which they are used.

16. Resolution of the nonoperating hazards associated with recreational-vehicle occupancy or maintenance should be a governmental/industrial cooperative undertaking.

17. Snowmobiles are probably the fastest growing segment of the recreational vehicle field, yet their design, performance and use are but minimally covered by regulation.

18. On the same basis that NHTSA applies the motor vehicle safety standards to "mini" and "trail" bikes, it should extend its jurisdiction over snowmobiles to the extent necessary

to eliminate or control vehicle-related hazards.

19. Snowmobile deaths for the 1970-71 winter season were well over 100, and snowmobile-accident injuries probably totalled some 6,000; factual circumstances surrounding such accidents have not been compiled or analyzed, and causes are not identified and appropriate remedies cannot be undertaken.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Transportation Safety Board recommends that:

1. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) extend the scope of its information-gathering programs to include accident-frequency, accident circumstances, and cause-analysis data of various recreational vehicle categories identified by their accepted generic types, namely, motor homes, pickup truck campers (three types—box cover, slide-in and chassis-mount), travel trailers, camper trailers, snowmobiles, dune buggies, and any other vehicle types as appropriate.
2. The NHTSA add a specific category of "light trucks" (under 10,000 pounds GVW) to separate these from the general "truck" heading for applicability of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards, and take cognizance of the extensive use of light trucks as personal or recreational vehicles in the promulgation of vehicle safety standards.¹⁴
3. The NHTSA undertake the extension of vehicle safety standards¹⁴, as applicable, to pickup truck camper bodies and travel trailers as expeditiously as the availability of pertinent accident frequency and causation data will permit.
4. The NHTSA undertake a pilot program, in cooperation with such industry-wide associations as the Recreational Vehicle Institute and the International Snowmobile Industry Association (but not limited thereto), to inform and educate purchasers of recreational-type vehicles

¹⁴This recommendation is intended to include appropriate certification and consumer-information requirements.

regarding the hazards and potential hazards attending the use of such vehicles, and to provide positive guides to improving all aspects of safety in the use of such vehicles, through such means as organized public information programs, pamphlets and manuals.

5. The United States Department of Interior, with the cooperation and assistance of responsible State agencies, institute programs and procedures to:

(A) require persons seeking vehicular access to certain publicly owned wilderness, forestry, mountain or desert areas to:

(1) show evidence of competency in the operation of the type of vehicle (or vehicle combination) in question for the type of terrain involved;

(2) submit such vehicle (or vehicle combination) to a safety inspection; and

(3) have in their possession in good working order certain prescribed radio and emergency equipment, prior to being permitted access to such land areas, and

(B) post all such areas regarding the hazards to vehicular travel therein.

BY THE NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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June 14, 1972.