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FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

16 CFR Part 410

Deceptive Advertising as to Sizes of Viewable Pictures Shown by Television Receiving Sets

AGENCY: Federal Trade Commission.

ACTION: Request for public comments.

SUMMARY: The Federal Trade Commission (“FTC” or “Commission”) requests public comment on the overall costs, benefits, and regulatory and economic impact of its Rule concerning Deceptive Advertising as to Sizes of Viewable Pictures Shown by Television Receiving Sets (“Rule” or “Picture Tube Rule”), as part of the Commission’s systematic review of all current Commission regulations and guides.

DATES: Written comments will be accepted until Monday, June 6, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Interested parties are invited to submit written comments. Comments should refer to “Picture Tube Rule Regulatory Review, Matter No. P924214” to facilitate the organization of comments. A comment filed in paper form should include this reference both in the text and on the envelope, and should be mailed or delivered to the following address: Federal Trade Commission/Office of the Secretary, Room H-159 (Annex B), 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20580. Comments containing confidential material must be filed in paper form and the first page of the document must be clearly labeled “Confidential.” The FTC is requesting that any comment filed in paper form be sent by courier or overnight service, if possible, because postal mail in the Washington area and at the Commission is subject to delay due to heightened security precautions. Comments filed in electronic form should be submitted by clicking on the following: <https://secure.commentworks.com/ftc-picture> and following the instructions on the Web-based form. To ensure that the Commission considers an electronic comment, you must file it on the Web-based form at <https://secure.commentworks.com/ftc-picture>.

The FTC Act and other laws the Commission administers permit the collection of public comments to

consider and use in this proceeding as appropriate. The Commission will consider all timely and responsive public comments that it receives, whether filed in paper or electronic form. Comments received will be available to the public on the FTC Web site, to the extent practicable, at <http://www.ftc.gov>. As a matter of discretion, the FTC makes every effort to remove home contact information for individuals from the public comments it receives before placing those comments on the FTC Web site. More information, including routine uses permitted by the Privacy Act, may be found in the FTC’s privacy policy, at <http://www.ftc.gov/ftc/privacy.htm>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Neil Blickman, (202) 326-3038, Attorney, Division of Enforcement, Bureau of Consumer Protection, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20580.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The Commission’s Picture Tube Rule, like the other trade regulation rules issued by the Commission, “define[s] with specificity acts or practices which are unfair or deceptive acts or practices in or affecting commerce. Such rules may include requirements prescribed for the purpose of preventing such acts or practices. A violation of a rule shall constitute an unfair or deceptive act or practice in violation of section 5(a)(1) of the [Federal Trade Commission] Act, unless the Commission otherwise expressly provides in its rule.” 16 CFR 1.8.

The Picture Tube Rule, promulgated in 1966, sets forth the appropriate means for disclosing the method by which the dimensions of television screens are measured, when this measurement is included in any advertisement or promotional material for the television set. The purpose of the Rule is to establish uniformity in measuring television screens, and advise consumers of this method, thereby aiding comparison shopping for televisions. Under the Rule, any representation of the screen size must be based on the horizontal dimension of the actual, viewable picture area. Using any other measurement is unfair and deceptive, unless the method of measurement is clearly and conspicuously disclosed in close proximity to the size designation. The Rule notes that the horizontal measurement must not take into account any curvature of the tube. Further, disclosing the method of measurement in a footnote rather than in the body of

the advertisement does not constitute a disclosure in close proximity to the measurement. The Rule includes examples of both proper and improper representations of size descriptions.

In 1994, the Rule was amended to clarify some of the Rule’s compliance illustrations, provide metric equivalents for the measurements stated in inches in the Rule’s examples, and add a new Note 3 to the Rule to explain that the inclusion of metric figures is for information purposes only and does not impose a requirement on the industry to use metric measurements. 59 FR 54809 (Nov. 2, 1994).

Since the Rule was last subject to regulatory review and amended in 1994, broadcasting and television technology have advanced significantly, and an array of new types of televisions are available in the marketplace for consumers. The technological change with the closest nexus to the Rule is the introduction of digital television, including high definition television, and the advent of new wider screen televisions to display these enhanced digital pictures. New television display technologies available today include thin, flat panel televisions with either liquid crystal displays or plasma display panels. In addition, there have been advances in the quality and popularity of front and rear, big screen, projection televisions. Accordingly, the Commission seeks comment on the effect, if any, that advances in television technology have had on the Rule.

II. Regulatory Review Program

The Commission has determined to review all Commission rules and guides periodically. These reviews seek information about the costs and benefits of the Commission’s rules and guides and their regulatory and economic impact. The information obtained assists the Commission in identifying rules and guides that warrant modification or rescission. Therefore, the Commission solicits comment on, among other things, the economic impact of its Picture Tube Rule; possible conflict between the Rule and state, local, or other federal laws; and the effect on the Rule of any technological, economic, or other industry changes.

III. Request for Comment

The Commission solicits written public comment on the following questions:

- (1) Is there a continuing need for the Rule as currently promulgated?
- (2) Has the television industry adopted the Rule’s disclosure requirements as part of its routine business practice? If so, how, and what

effect, if any, does this have on the continuing need for the Rule?

(3) What benefits has the Rule provided to purchasers of the products or services affected by the Rule?

(4) Has the Rule imposed costs on purchasers?

(5) What changes, if any, should be made to the Rule to increase the benefits of the Rule to purchasers? How would these changes affect the costs the Rule imposes on firms subject to its requirements? How would these changes affect the benefits to purchasers?

(6) What significant burdens or costs, including costs of compliance, has the Rule imposed on businesses, whether large or small, subject to its requirements? Has the Rule provided benefits to such businesses? If so, what benefits?

(7) What changes, if any, should be made to the Rule to reduce the burdens or costs imposed on firms subject to its requirements? How would these changes affect the benefits provided by the Rule?

(8) Does the Rule overlap or conflict with other federal, state, or local laws or regulations?

(9) Since the Rule was issued, what effects, if any, have changes in relevant television technology, such as the 16:9 aspect ratio for high definition television displays, marketing methods, such as online sales, or economic conditions had on the Rule?

List of Subjects in 16 CFR Part 410

Advertising, Picture tubes, Television sets, Trade practices.

Authority: 15 U.S.C. 41–58.

By direction of the Commission.

Donald S. Clark,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 05–6960 Filed 4–6–05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives

27 CFR Part 479

[Docket No. ATF 7P; AG Order No. 2761–2005]

RIN 1140–AA23

Machine Guns, Destructive Devices, and Certain Other Firearms; Amended Definition of “Pistol” (2003R–33P)

AGENCY: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), Department of Justice.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: The Department of Justice is proposing to amend the regulations relating to machine guns, destructive devices, and certain other firearms regulated under the National Firearms Act (NFA) for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) to clarify the definition of the term “pistol” and to define more clearly exceptions to the “pistol” definition. The added language is necessary to clarify that certain weapons, including any weapon disguised to look like an item other than a firearm or any gun that fires more than one shot without manual reloading by a single function of the trigger, are not pistols and are classified as “any other weapon” under the NFA.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before May 9, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to: James P. Ficaretta, Program Manager; Room 5250; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; P.O. Box 50221; Washington, DC 20091–0221; *ATTN: ATF 7P*. Written comments must include your mailing address and be signed, and may be of any length.

Comments may also be submitted electronically to ATF at nprm@atf.gov or to <http://www.regulations.gov> by using the electronic comment form provided on that site. You may also view an electronic version of this proposed rule at the <http://www.regulations.gov> site. Comments submitted electronically must contain your name, mailing address and, if submitted by e-mail, your e-mail address. They must also reference this document docket number, as noted above, and be legible when printed on 8½” x 11” paper. ATF will treat comments submitted electronically as originals and ATF will not acknowledge receipt of comments submitted electronically. See the Public Participation section at the end of the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for requirements for submitting written comments by facsimile.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: James P. Ficaretta; Enforcement Programs and Services; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; United States Department of Justice; 650 Massachusetts Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20226; telephone (202) 927–8203 (this is not a toll-free number).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

The regulations in title 27, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), part 479 implement the provisions of the National Firearms Act (NFA), 26 U.S.C. 5801 *et seq.* Part 479 contains the procedural and substantive requirements relative to the importation, manufacture, making, exportation, transfer, taxing, identification and registration of, and the dealing in, machine guns, destructive devices, and certain other firearms. All NFA firearms that are not in possession or control of the United States government must be registered. Possession of an unregistered NFA firearm is a violation of Federal law and subjects the possessor to criminal prosecution and the seizure and forfeiture of the firearm.

For purposes of the NFA, the term “firearm” includes “any other weapon,” which in turn is defined in the law (26 U.S.C. 5845(e)) and its implementing regulation at 27 CFR 479.11 as follows:

Any weapon or device capable of being concealed on the person from which a shot can be discharged through the energy of an explosive, a pistol or revolver having a barrel with a smooth bore designed or redesigned to fire a fixed shotgun shell, weapons with combination shotgun and rifle barrels 12 inches or more, less than 18 inches in length, from which only a single discharge can be made from either barrel without manual reloading, and shall include any such weapon which may be readily restored to fire. Such term shall not include a pistol or a revolver having a rifled bore, or rifled bores, or weapons designed, made, or intended to be fired from the shoulder and not capable of firing fixed ammunition.

As indicated, the definition of “any other weapon” specifically excludes pistols having rifled bores.

The term “pistol” is defined in 27 CFR 479.11 to mean:

A weapon originally designed, made, and intended to fire a projectile (bullet) from one or more barrels when held in one hand, and having (a) a chamber(s) as an integral part(s) of, or permanently aligned with, the bore(s); and (b) a short stock designed to be gripped by one hand and at an angle to and extending below the line of the bore(s).

A weapon that meets the definition of “pistol” with a rifled bore falls outside the definition of “any other weapon” and is therefore not classified as an NFA weapon.

This notice seeks to amend the regulation that defines “pistol” to restore language that was inadvertently removed in 1988 and insert language that more clearly defines exceptions to the “pistol” definition. The language added to the regulation is necessary to clarify that certain weapons, including weapons disguised to look like items