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Dated: August 10, 1998.

Michael J. Armstrong,

Associate Director for Mitigation.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

49 CFR Part 393

[FHWA Docket No. MC-96-41; FHWA-97-2289]

RIN 2125-AE05

Public Meeting to Discuss the Development of the North American Standard for Protection Against Shifting or Falling Cargo

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The FHWA is announcing a public meeting concerning the development of the North American Standard for Protection Against Shifting or Falling Cargo. The meeting will include a review of the most recent version of the North American Standard for Protection Against Shifting or Falling Cargo and a discussion of issues related to the adoption of the guidelines by jurisdictions throughout North America.

DATES: The meeting will be held on October 1, 1998. The meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 5:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Hyatt Regency Rochester Hotel, 125 East Main Street in Rochester, New York.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Larry W. Minor, Office of Motor Carrier Research and Standards, HCS-10, (202) 366-4009; or Mr. Charles E. Medalen, Office of the Chief Counsel, HCC-20, (202) 366-1354, Federal Highway Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, D. C. 20590. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Electronic Access

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Internet users may reach the Federal Register's home page at: <http://www.nara.gov/nara/fedreg> and the Government Printing Office's database at: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su-docs>.

Background

On October 17, 1996, the FHWA published an advance notice of proposed rulemaking (ANPRM) concerning the development of the North American Standard for Protection Against Shifting or Falling Cargo (61 FR 54142). The ANPRM indicated that the FHWA is considering proposing amendments to its regulations concerning cargo securement requirements for commercial motor vehicles engaged in interstate commerce. Specifically, the agency is considering adopting new cargo securement rules that will be based upon the results of a multi-year comprehensive research program to evaluate current regulations and industry practices. The FHWA requested comments on the process to be used in developing the cargo securement guidelines.

Standard Development Process

The preliminary efforts at developing the North American Standard for Protection Against Shifting or Falling Cargo are currently being managed by a drafting group. The drafting group is developing a model set of cargo securement guidelines based upon the results from the multi-year research program. Membership in the drafting group includes representatives from the FHWA, Transport Canada, the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA), the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, the Quebec Ministry of Transportation—Ontario and Quebec are conducting most of the research—and the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA).

The meeting on October 1 is the last in a series of public meetings and is intended to serve as part of a process for completing the guidelines. The meeting will involve a review of the work completed to date by the drafting group and discussions concerning the process for each of the jurisdictions in North America to adopt the guidelines. The meeting is open to all interested parties. This process is intended to ensure that all interested parties have an opportunity to participate in the development of the guidelines, and to identify and consider the concerns of the Federal, State, and Provincial governments, carriers, shippers, industry groups, and associations as

well as safety advocacy groups and the general public.

For individuals and groups unable to attend the meeting, copies of the draft standard may be obtained, free of charge, by contacting Mr. Larry W. Minor at the address and telephone number listed at the beginning of this notice. Further, the CCMTA has posted the complete draft standard and related information (e.g., minutes of the previous public meetings, information about ordering copies of the cargo securement research reports, etc.) on the INTERNET. The website is:

<http://www.ab.org/ccmta/ccmta.html>.

The FHWA will discuss the comments submitted to the docket in response to the 1996 ANPRM when it publishes a notice of proposed rulemaking.

Meeting Information

The meeting will be held on October 1, 1998, at the Hyatt Regency Rochester Hotel, 125 East Main Street in Rochester, New York. The meeting is scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is being held in connection with the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance's 1998 Fall Conference. Attendance for the cargo securement meeting is free of charge and open to all interested parties. However, anyone interested in attending the sessions and committee meetings of the CVSA's 1998 Fall Conference must register with the CVSA and pay the appropriate registration fee. For further information about registration for other sessions or meetings of the CVSA's 1998 Fall Conference please contact the CVSA at (301) 564-1623.

The FHWA notes that since the CVSA's 1998 Fall Conference is being held at the Hyatt Regency Rochester Hotel, the availability of guest rooms at the hotel is very unlikely. Therefore, those needing hotel accommodations should attempt to make reservations at other hotels in the vicinity.

List of Subjects in 49 CFR Part 393

Highway safety, Motor carriers, Motor vehicle safety.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 31136, 31502; 49 CFR 1.48.

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Jill L. Hochman,

Acting Associate Administrator for Motor Carriers.

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