

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Research and Special Programs Administration****49 CFR Part 192**

[Docket No. PS-81; Notice No. 1]

Transportation of Natural and Other Gas by Pipeline; Ovality of Field Bends in Steel Pipe

AGENCY: Materials Transportation Bureau (MTB), Research and Special Programs Administration, Transportation.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: Part 192 limits the ovality of field bends in steel pipe more than 4 inches in diameter by specifying that the maximum outside diameter may not exceed the minimum outside diameter by more than 2½ percent of the nominal diameter. This rule in § 192.313(a)(2) has been reviewed along with other pipe bending requirements and has been found to be unnecessary for safety. Therefore, MTB proposes to remove the ovality limitation requirement.

DATE: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments on this proposal. All comments must be filed December 31, 1984, although late filed comments will be considered as far as is practicable. Persons should submit as a part of their written comments all material that is considered relevant to any statement of fact or argument made.

ADDRESS: Comments should be sent to the Dockets Branch, Room 8426, Materials Transportation Bureau, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, D.C. 20590, and identify the docket and notice numbers. All comments and other docket material are available in Room 8426 for inspection and copying between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. each working day.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: William A. Gloe, 202-426-2082, regarding the content of this proposal, or the Dockets Branch, 202-426-3148, regarding copies of the proposal or other information in the docket.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: As part of its program to review existing regulations and to eliminate those that are unnecessary for safety, MTB has reviewed § 192.313. Section 192.313(a)(2) requires that each field bend in steel pipe, other than a wrinkle bend made in accordance with § 192.315, must comply with the following:

For pipe more than 4 inches in nominal diameter, the difference between the

maximum and minimum diameter at a bend must not be more than 2½ percent of the nominal diameter.

In a previous rulemaking on bending limitations (Docket No. OPS-23, Amdt. 192-26, 41 FR 26106, June 24, 1976), it was stated that MTB intends to propose that the ovality restriction in § 192.313 be deleted. MTB averred in the preamble of the final rule that the deletion could not be made in that proceeding because it had not been proposed in the Advance Notice or the NPRM. Comments were occasioned on the ovality restriction for the reason that MTB had proposed amending § 195.212 of the hazardous liquid pipeline regulations to include the limitation then existing only in Part 192 as § 192.313(a)(4). The following excerpt from the preamble describes evaluation of the comments and the decision to exclude the limitation from Part 192:

Ovality—For pipe more than 4 inches in nominal diameter, § 192.313(a)(4) provides a numerical restriction on ovality due to bending. The liquid pipeline bending regulations do not contain a similar requirement. Because the ovality restriction limits wall thinning and excessive strain due to bending, MTB proposed that § 195.212 be amended to include the ovality limitation now existing in § 192.313(a)(4). This proposal resulted in a considerable amount of negative comment. Commenters pointed out that the proposed ovality requirement is twice as restrictive as the current industry practice and more stringent than the ovality limitation in pipe manufacturing specifications. In the latter case, if the proposal were adopted, pipe from a manufacture could exceed the ovality restriction before being bent. Another commenter pointed out that liquid pipeline carriers have not filed with the Department any reports of failures caused by bends with excessive ovality.

Based on all the comments to Notice 75-7, MTB now believes that a numerical restriction on ovality is not necessary to provide for the safety of a steel pipeline subjected to field bending. Rather, MTB believes that the performance standards involving smoothness, mechanical damage, and serviceability are sufficient to protect against material damage due to bending. In effect, these standards also limit ovality because excessive ovality would impair the serviceability of a pipeline or cause mechanical damage. It further appears that the ovality restriction now existing in 192.313(a)(4) is derived from a provision of the 1968 addition [sic] of the ANSI B31.8 Code which was based on an operating consideration, e.g., passage of internal cleaning and inspection equipment, rather than a strength of materials consideration. Consequently, the proposed ovality amendment to § 195.212 is not adopted.

Although a numerical restriction on ovality of field bends was shown to be unnecessary, further action was not taken due to the apparent absence of

problems in meeting the requirement. Thus, the file remained inactive until receipt of a January 25, 1984, petition (P-25) from the Interstate Natural Gas Association of America (INGAA) for deletion of § 192.313(a)(2) (as the requirement has since been designated). The petition states that "The INGAA member companies request MTB amend Section 192.313, Part 192, Title 49 CFR to remove the numerical restriction on ovality in pipe due to bending." INGAA membership is described by the petitioning letters comprising most of the major interstate natural gas transmission companies in the United States. The letter provides the following summary:

INGAA is not aware of ovality being a problem in construction, operation or safety; in fact, to the best of our knowledge ovality has not been connected with the cause of a single pipeline failure. Furthermore, with the retention of the requirements in Section 192.313(a)(1) and (a)(3), and we are not suggesting their elimination, it is our opinion the specific ovality limits contained in (a)(2) are unnecessary and do not contribute toward improving public safety.

Deletion is further supported by removal of the ovality limitation from the 1982 edition of the industry standard, ANSI B31.8. Although that edition contains new requirements on the maximum degree of bending on cold field bends. Whether or not the ovality limitation should be replaced by new bending requirements is not indicated to be a safety question for this rulemaking as far as MTB can determine. To the best of our knowledge, pipeline accident reports submitted to MTB over the past 14 years reveal no accident that might have been avoided by closer regulation of field pipe bends, whether by ovality limitation or by control of bending radius. MTB agrees with INGAA and believes that the ovality limitation does not enhance safety beyond that provided by the performance standards of § 192.313(a)(1) and (a)(3). Therefore, MTB proposes to delete the limitation.

Classification: Since this proposal will have a minimal effect on the economy by removal of an unnecessary but noncostly restriction on the industry, the economic impact has been found to be such that further evaluation is not needed. The proposal is considered to be nonmajor under Executive Order 12291 and not significant under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034; February 26, 1979).

Regulatory Flexibility Act

The agency certifies that this proposal will not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small

entities. Operators who are small entities normally do not engage in field bending of steel pipe and, therefore, would not be significantly affected by this rulemaking proposal.

List of Subjects in 49 CFR Part 192

Pipeline safety.

PART 192—[AMENDED]

In view of the foregoing, MTB proposes to amend 49 CFR 192.313(a) by removing paragraph (a)(2) and redesignating paragraphs (a)(3) and (a)(4) as (a)(2) and (a)(3), respectively.

(49 U.S.C. 1672 and 1804; 49 CFR 1.53; Appendix A of Part 1, and Appendix A of Part 106)

Issued in Washington, D.C., on October 26, 1984.

Richard L. Bean,

*Associate Director for Pipeline Safety
Regulation, Materials Transportation Bureau.*

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