vessels which are not to be included in the program for the first time.'' Therefore, Congress ''amended this section to authorize the Secretary of Commerce to promulgate regulations to include sufficient flexibility to make the new bulk cargo vessels competitive.'' Senate Rept. 91–1080, 91st Cong. 2d Sess., reprinted in 1970 USCCAAN, p. 4194. Similar considerations require a nonspecific definition of the ''trade'' of liquid bulk vessels under the Maritime Security Act.

OSG asserts that the vessels ''provided'' in that ''trade'' are all the U.S.-flag tankers of OSG's affiliates. The service ''provided'' is construed to include periods of lay-up because the failure to operate was due to conditions beyond the control of OSG's affiliates. Compare Section 805 of the Merchant Marine Act, 1936. 46 U.S.C. 1223, which includes in grandfathered service ''interruptions of service over which the applicant or its predecessor in interest had no control.''

Any person, firm or corporation having any interest in the application for section 656 consent and desiring to submit comments concerning OSG's request must by 5:00 PM December 16, 1996 file comments in triplicate to the Secretary, Maritime Administration, Room 7210, Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590.

By Order of the Maritime Administrator.

Dated: November 13, 1996.

Joel C. Richard,

Secretary, Maritime Administration.

[FR Doc. 96–29458 Filed 11–14–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–81–P

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Safety Performance Standards, Research and Safety Assurance Programs Meetings

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of NHTSA Industry Meetings.

SUMMARY: This notice announces a public meeting at which NHTSA will answer questions from the public and the automobile industry regarding the agency's vehicle regulatory, safety assurance and other programs. In addition, NHTSA will hold a separate public meeting to describe and discuss specific research and development projects.

DATES: The Agency's regular, quarterly public meeting relating to its vehicle regulatory, safety assurance and other programs will be held on December 12, 1996, beginning at 9:45 a.m. and ending at approximately 12:30 p.m. Questions relating to the above programs must be submitted in writing by December 3, 1996, to the address shown below. If sufficient time is available, questions received after December 3 may be answered at the meeting. The individual, group or company submitting a question(s) does not have to be present for the question(s) to be answered. A consolidated list of the questions submitted by December 3, 1996, and the issues to be discussed will be transmitted to interested persons by December 6, 1996, and will be available at the meeting. Also, the agency will hold a second public meeting on December 11, devoted exclusively to a presentation of research and development programs. This meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m. and end at approximately 5:00 p.m. That meeting is described more fully in a separate announcement. The next NHTSA Industry Meeting will take place in March. More details on the date and its location will be announced at the December 12, Industry Meeting.

ADDRESSES: Questions for the December 12, NHTSA Technical Industry Meeting, relating to the agency's vehicle regulatory and safety assurance programs, should be submitted to Delia Gage, NPS–01, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590, Fax Number 202–366–4329. The meeting will be held at the Royce Hotel, 315000 Wick Road, Romulus, Michigan.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Steven Kratzke, (202) 336–4931.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NHTSA will hold this regular, quarterly meeting to answer questions from the public and the regulated industries regarding the agency's vehicle regulatory, safety assurance and other programs. Questions on aspects of the agency's research and development activities that relate to ongoing regulatory actions should be submitted, as in the past, to the agency's Safety Performance Standards Office. The purpose of this meeting is to focus on those phases of NHTSA activities which are technical, interpretative or procedural in nature. Transcripts of these meetings will be available for public inspection in the NHTSA Technical Reference Section in Washington, DC, within four weeks after the meeting. Copies of the transcript will then be available at ten cents a page, (length has varied from 100 to 150 pages) upon request to NHTSA Technical Reference Section, Room 5108, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. The Technical Reference Section is open to the public from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. We would appreciate the questions you send us to be organized by categories to help us to process the questions into agenda form more efficiently. Sample format as follows:

I. Rulemaking
  A. Crash avoidance
  B. Crashworthiness
  C. Other Rulemakings
II. Consumer Information
III. Miscellaneous

NHTSA will provide auxiliary aids to participants as necessary. Any person desiring assistance of ''auxiliary aids'' (e.g., sign-language interpreter, telecommunications devices for deaf persons (TDDs), readers, taped texts, Brailled materials, or large print materials and/or a magnifying device), Please contact Delia Gage on (202) 366–1810, by COB December 3, 1996.

Issued November 12, 1996.

L. Robert Shelton,

Associate Administrator for Safety Performance Standards.

[FR Doc. 96–29363 Filed 11–14–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–M

[Docket No. 96–116, Notice 1]

Capacity of Texas, Inc.; Receipt of Application for Temporary Exemption From Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 121

Collins Industries of Hutchinson, Kansas, on behalf of its subsidiary, Capacity of Texas, Inc., of Longview, Texas, has applied for a temporary exemption from paragraph S5.1.6 of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 121 *Air Brake Systems.* The basis of the application is that compliance will cause substantial economic hardship to a manufacturer that has tried to comply with the standard in good faith.

This notice of receipt of the application is published in accordance with the requirements of 49 U.S.C. 30113(b)(2) and does not represent any judgment of the agency on the merits of the application.

Paragraph S5.1.6 (which includes S5.1.6.1–S5.1.6.3) of Standard No. 121 requires in pertinent part that each truck tractor manufactured on and after March 1, 1997, be equipped with an antilock brake system. Capacity of Texas (''Capacity'') has asked that one of its truck tractors be exempted for three months from the provisions of S5.1.6 that will apply to it effective March 1, 1997. Capacity manufactures the Trailer Jockey ''Model TJ–5000 (Off Highway)'' truck tractor. Terming it a ''yard

tractor'', Capacity states that ''this type of truck is designed to operate in a freight yard moving trailers from one terminal entrance to another * * * geared to limited speed [45 mph maximum] and to provide start-up torque for repeated stopping and starting.'' The tractors generally operate at 25 mph.

Because these terminal tractors do not appear manufactured primarily for use on the public roads, ordinarily NHTSA would not consider them to be ''motor vehicles'' to which Standard No. 121 applies. However, Capacity is currently working to fill its third contract with the U.S. Postal Service. Unlike the other two contracts, the present Postal Service contract specifies that the truck tractors be certified to comply with all Federal motor vehicle safety standards applicable to on-road truck tractors, even though Capacity estimates that the tractors will spend ''approximately 5% or less of their life in operation on the public highways.'' Capacity's contract is for 210 vehicles, to be produced between September 1996 and June 1997, and it estimates that the final 60 under the order will be completed by the end of May 1997. It thus seeks an exemption until June 1, 1997, from the antilock brake requirements for the 60 tractors.

One option that it has examined is acceleration of its production schedule so that manufacture of all vehicles could be completed by March 1, 1997. However, this would require an increase in production rates ''by at least 33% two months prior to the March 1, 1997 date.'' The work in part would have to be performed by newly hired and trained employes, increasing its overtime costs by 100%. It estimates that total costs would be greater by far than its net income for the fiscal year ending October 31, 1996. In addition, it would have to lessen its efforts to fill other orders, with a consequent loss of business. This means that, at the completion of the order as of March 1, 1997, it would have to lay off 50% of its work force until more orders were received and an orderly production schedule established. For these reasons, acceleration of the production schedule would cause it substantial economic hardship.

A further option is to delay production of the 60 vehicles until compliance with Standard No. 121 is achieved. Capacity states that ''it will be possible to delay delivery of other customer trucks until testing of ABS truck systems is complete.'' However, delay for conformance is not acceptable to the Postal Service because it would result in a fleet of dissimilar vehicles requiring different spare parts. As Capacity further argues, identical vehicles are desired by the Postal Service because ''all drivers in the fleet can be trained to the same operating procedures'' and ''Fleet maintenance people will be working on these trucks and will be able to maintain all 270 using the same procedures.'' Even if a delay were acceptable to the Postal Service, Capacity would have to absorb the increase in costs since ''the price is fixed by contract and no upward price relief is available.''

In the year preceding the filing of its petition, Capacity produced and certified 47 vehicles for on-road use other than those produced under the postal contract. It also produced less than 500 off-road vehicles. In the same period, its parent corporation, Collins, Inc., manufactured less than 2,000 school buses and less than 2,000 ambulance conversions. Capacity's net income has declined over the past three fiscal years and, in its fiscal year ending October 31, 1996, is far less than $1,000,000.

Capacity argues that a temporary exemption would be in the public interest because the vehicles are produced for the U.S. Postal Service. It believes that an exemption is also consistent with motor vehicle safety because ''NHTSA is using a staggered effectivity date for addition of antilock brakes to tractors, trucks, and buses.'' It points out that ''[t]here will be many vehicles built during the 3 months of this petition that are built under the old standard * * *. The only reason tractors are involved is because they got the first effectivity date instead of buses.''

Interested persons are invited to submit comments on the application described above. Comments should refer to the docket number and notice number, and be submitted to: Docket Section, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, room 5109, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC, 20590. It is requested but not required that 10 copies be submitted.

All comments received before the close of business on the comment closing date indicated below will be considered, and will be available for examination in the docket at the above address both before and after that date. To the extent possible, comments filed after the closing date will also be considered. Notice of final action on the application will be published in the Federal Register pursuant to the authority indicated below.

Comment closing date: December 16, 1996.

(49 U.S.C. 30113; delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50, 501.8)

Issued on November 8, 1996.

L. Robert Shelton,

Associate Administrator for Safety Performance Standards.

[FR Doc. 96–29362 Filed 11–14–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), DOT

[Docket No. PS–142; Notice 3]

Program Framework for Risk Management Demonstrations

AGENCY: Office of Pipeline Safety, DOT.

ACTION: Notice and announcement of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Research and Special Programs Administration's (RSPA) Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) is considering a program framework for its Pipeline Risk Management Demonstration Program required by the Accountable Pipeline Safety and Partnership Act of 1996. The Demonstration Program will invite pipeline operators to propose risk management projects for one or more parts of their pipeline systems that, upon approval by OPS, will substitute for the existing Federal safety standards in providing the basis for Federal oversight of pipeline safety and environmental protection. This document describes the Demonstration Program, the activities already underway to prepare for it, and the next steps in the process; describes the objectives to be achieved by the demonstration projects; provides needed guidance for pipeline operators who may wish to participate; and invites public involvement in the process through various opportunities for public comment and public meetings. A separate document, the Interim Risk Management Program Standard, provides specific direction to interested operators on developing risk management programs, including the projects in this Demonstration Program.

DATES: *Meetings.* (1) January 28, 1997, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in New Orleans, Louisiana—public meeting. For more information, contact Janice Morgan at (202) 366–2392.

(2) Through approximately March 31, 1997, at individual pipeline operators' sites—informational meetings with OPS. For more information, contact Bruce Hansen at (202) 366–8053.

Written comments. (3) Written comments on this notice should be submitted on or before (Insert 60 days from publication date).

(4) Written comments on the Interim Risk Management Program Standard