results in a more favorable aspect than intended or other condition hazardous to the movement of a train. Section 233.7 sets forth the specific requirements for reporting signal failures within 15 days in accordance with the instructions printed on Form FRA F 6180.14. Finally, Section 233.9 sets forth the specific requirements for the ''Signal System Five Year Report.'' It requires that every five years each railroad must file a signal system status report. The report is to be prepared on a form issued by FRA in accordance with the instructions and definitions provided.

Title 49, part 235 of the Code of Federal Regulations, sets forth the specific conditions under which FRA approval of modification or discontinuance of railroad signal systems is required and prescribes the methods available to seek such approval. The application process prescribed under Part 235 provides a vehicle enabling FRA to obtain the necessary information to make logical and informed decisions concerning carrier requests to modify or discontinue signaling systems. Section 235.5 requires railroads to apply for FRA approval to discontinue or materially modify signaling systems. Section 235.7 defines ''material modification'' and identifies those changes that do not require agency approval. Section 235.8 provides that any railroad may petition FRA to seek relief from the requirements provided under 49 CFR Part 236.

Sections 236.10, 235.12, and 235.13 describe where the petition must be submitted, what information must be included, the organizational format, and the official authorized to sign the application. Section 235.20 sets forth the process for protesting the granting of a carrier application for signal changes or relief from the rules, standards, and instructions. This section provides the information that must be included in the protest, the address for filing the protest, the time limit for filing the protest, and the requirement that a person requesting a public hearing explain the need for such a forum. Section 236.110 required that the test results of certain signaling apparatus be recorded and specifically identify the tests required under §§ 236.102-109; §§ 236.376 to 236.387; §§ 236.576, 236.577; and §§ 236.586–236.589. Section 236.110 further provides that the test results must be recorded on pre-printed or computerized forms provided by the carrier and that the forms show the name of the railroad; place and date of the test conducted; equipment tested; tests results; repairs, replacements, and adjustments made; and the condition of the apparatus. This section also requires that the employee conducting the test must sign the form and the record be retained at the office of the supervisory official having proper authority. Results of tests made in compliance with § 236.587 must be retained for 92 days, and results of all other tests must be retained until the next record is filed, but in no case less than one year. Additionally, § 236.587 requires each railroad to make a departure test of cab signal, train stop, or train control devices on locomotives before that locomotive enters the equipped territory. This section further requires that whoever performs the test must certify in writing that the test was properly performed. The certification and the test results must be posted in the locomotive cab with a coy of the certification and test results retained at the office of a supervisory official having proper authority. However, if it is impractical to leave a copy of the certification and test results at the location of the test, the test results must be transmitted to either the dispatcher or one other designated official at each location, who must keep a written record of the test results and the name of the person performing the test. All records prepared under this section are required to be retained for 92 days. Finally, Section 236.590 requires the carrier to clean and inspect the pneumatic apparatus of automatic train stop, train control, or cab signal devices on locomotives every 736 days, and to stencil, tag, or otherwise mark the pneumatic apparatus indicating the last cleaning date.

Annual Estimated Burden Hours: 480,326 hours.

Title: Locomotive Certification (Noise Compliance Regulations).

OMB Control Number: 2130–0527.

Type of Request: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Affected Public: Businesses.

Form(s): N/A.

Abstract: On January 14, 1976, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued noise emission standards pursuant to the Noise Control Act of 1972. The standards, 40 CFR Part 201, establish limits on the noise emissions generated by railroad locomotives under both stationary and moving conditions. Section 17 of the Noise Control Act also requires the Secretary of Transportation to enforce these regulations and promulgate separate regulations to ensure compliance with the same. On December 23, 1983, FRA published 49 CFR Part 210 to ensure compliance with the EPA standards. The certification and testing data ensure that locomotives built after December 31, 1979 have passed prescribed decibel standards for noise emissions under EPA regulations.

Addressee: Send comments regarding these information collections to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, 725 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20503; Attention: FRA Desk Officer.

Comments are invited on the following: Whether the proposed collections of information are necessary for the proper performance of the functions of FRA, including whether the information will have practical utility; the accuracy of FRA's estimates of the burden of the proposed information collections; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and ways to minimize the burden of the collections of information on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

A comment to OMB is best assured of having its full effect if OMB receives it within 30 days of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**.

Authority: 44 U.S.C. 3501–3520.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on May 24, 2000.

Margaret B. Reid,

Acting Director, Office of Information Technology and Support Systems, Federal Railroad Administration.

[FR Doc. 00–13534 Filed 5–30–00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–06–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA–99–6270]

Notice of Public Meeting and Internet Forum on the Safety Implications of Driver Distraction When Using In-Vehicle Technologies

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting and internet forum.

SUMMARY: NHTSA is holding two public events that focus on the potential safety implications associated with driver distraction while using advanced in-vehicle technologies that receive, transmit, or display various types of information. The devices of interest include those that allow drivers to phone, fax, obtain route guidance, view infrared images on a head-up display, and use the Internet and other such devices.

One event is an international Internet Forum which is expected to begin on July 5, 2000, and end on August 11, 2000. The Internet Forum will provide an opportunity for technical experts as well as the general public to download technical papers, ask questions about the papers, relate their experiences regarding the use of in-vehicle devices and their impact on safety in general and driving performance in particular, and participate in exchange of views on related technical issues. Researchers and technical experts are invited to submit papers for inclusion in the Internet Forum that focus on characterizing the current and future safety impact of driver distraction when using in-vehicle technologies, evaluating how device characteristics affect vehicle safety and determine the impact of driver distraction on safe operation of vehicles, identifying and evaluating approaches to minimize driver distraction, and recommending needed research and other safety initiatives. Overviews of ongoing research programs and descriptions of industry practices are also welcome.

NHTSA will also hold a public meeting on Tuesday, July 18, 2000, at which representatives of the public, industry, government, and safety groups are invited to share viewpoints, information, and recommendations regarding strategies to minimize potential adverse effects of driver distraction on safety when using such telematic devices. In particular, NHTSA is interested in hearing about different technologies and devices being proposed for use in vehicles which may have a bearing on safe driving, viewpoints regarding the roles of various entities in promoting best practices in the design of those devices and their use, approaches for evaluating the safety impacts of such systems, and what new research and other safety initiatives are needed. NHTSA will utilize the information from the public meeting and Internet Forum as a basis for discussions at a Technical Workshop of invited researchers and technology developers to be scheduled at a later date. The goal of the Technical Workshop is to generate recommendations for distraction reducing strategies, data needs, and research methodologies.

Persons interested in attending the public meeting might also be interested in attending the National Intelligent Vehicle Initiative Meeting, July 19–20, 2000, which will be held at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, DC. This meeting, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation and administered by SAE International, will promote public/stakeholder awareness of efforts to improve traffic safety using intelligent vehicle technologies, showcase accomplishments, and validate research and development efforts. Further information on this meeting can be found at http://www.its.dot.gov.

DATES: *Internet Forum:* The Internet Forum will be open for registration on June 23, 2000, while the technical papers will be posted on July 5, 2000. The Forum will remain active until August 11, 2000. Thereafter, the information will remain available through NHTSA's Web site for viewing only.

Public Meeting: NHTSA will hold the public meeting on Tuesday, July 18, 2000, starting at 8:30 a.m. and ending at about 5:00 p.m. or earlier as determined by the number of presenters. A preliminary agenda will be posted on NHTSA's Web site at URL http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/nhtsa/announcements/meetings/, by June 30, 2000.

ADDRESSES: *Internet Forum:* The Internet Forum Web site address will be www.driverdistraction.org.

Public Meeting: The public meeting will be held in Room 2230, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590.

Written Comments: If you wish to submit written comments on the issues related to distraction or any topics discussed at the public meeting, those comments should be submitted to Docket No. NHTSA–99–6270 at the following address: Docket Management Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, Room PL–401, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590. Docket hours for hand delivery are from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. Comments can be sent by fax to 202–493–2251 or by electronic submission. The electronic submission procedure is described in the Docket Management section of NHTSA's Web site.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

For technical questions: Michael Perel, Office of Vehicle Safety Research, NRD–13, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590 (telephone 202–366–5675, fax 202–366–7237, E-mail: mike.perel@nhtsa.dot.gov).

To participate in the public meeting: Rita Gibbons (telephone: 202–366–4862, fax: 202–366–5930, E-mail: rita.gibbons@nhtsa.dot.gov). E-mail or fax is preferred.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Background

The increasing utilization of certain advanced technologies in automobiles brings both the promise of enhanced safety, comfort, security, and convenience as well as concerns about possible impact on safety if they distract driver attention from the driving task. Technologies which transmit, receive, or display information from a motor vehicle include devices such as wireless phones and Internet connections, navigation/route guidance systems, and fax capability collectively known as telematics, as well as night vision systems and others. Some in-vehicle technologies provide direct safety benefits, such as automatic crash notification to emergency medical services and hazard alerts to inform drivers of dangerous traffic and roadway conditions. However, any devices which require drivers to look at displays and/or process information, or which require drivers to perform various tasks in order to operate controls of in-vehicle devices, will also distract them and thus increase their crash risk. Distraction occurs from looking away from the road and from being mentally distracted while attending to traffic. Sometimes the activities required to operate these devices lead to drivers occasionally taking their hands off the steering wheel even for a short while. If the distraction coincides with any of such events as the sudden braking of a lead vehicle, a lead vehicle in an adjacent lane cutting in front, a pedestrian crossing the road, or an unanticipated obstacle or curve in the road simultaneously occurring, the likelihood of a crash increases substantially.

NHTSA has been concerned about the potential safety impact of driver distraction from using advanced, in-vehicle technologies for a number of years. In 1998, NHTSA published available information on the potential effects of wireless phones on traffic safety. In conjunction with the DOT Intelligent Vehicle Initiative, NHTSA completed several research studies that focused on measuring the effect of driver distraction from navigation systems on driving performance. Additional research is currently underway that focuses on drivers' use of wireless phones in naturalistic driving situations. In 1998, NHTSA sent a letter (available in Docket NHTSA–99–5098–01) to vehicle manufacturer executives urging them to personally ensure that the application of advanced technologies does not pose safety risks and to ''maintain or establish rigorous internal design protocols to address this possibility.'' While the primary focus of

that letter was inflatable restraints, the letter pointed out that the ''introduction of all new technologies, such as navigation and warning systems, head-up displays, and other intelligent systems'' must be accomplished in a way that is safe for drivers. In a February 10, 1999, public statement, the agency said that, ''Manufacturers have an obligation to thoroughly and adequately test the safety of any new technology under real world conditions prior to introduction into the marketplace.''

B. Internet Forum on the Safety Implications of Driver Distraction When Using In-Vehicle Technologies

To provide an opportunity for further technical discussions among a wider range of participants than is possible at the public meeting, NHTSA is initiating an international Internet Forum devoted to presentations of research studies and other initiatives related to the safety impact of driver distraction when using in-vehicle devices. It will also provide a forum for discussions of research and related issues by interested parties, technical professionals, and the public, both in the United States and internationally. NHTSA will also post on the Internet information on past and present research on driver distraction.

The key topics to be addressed in the Internet Forum are:

1. How do in-vehicle technologies influence driver distractions? What are the effects of distraction on safety and safe driving performance? How does distraction from in-vehicle technologies differ from and compare to distraction due to other sources?

2. Methodological challenges in measuring the influence of design features of devices, their operation, and their impact on distraction and safe driving performance.

3. Effective government, industry, and consumer actions to minimize distraction.

4. Current and future research necessary to support actions to minimize distraction.

Participation in the Internet Forum: Persons interested in submitting technical papers on current or past research or activities related to the above topics should send an electronic copy to Michael Perel by June 15, 2000. Technical papers should include an abstract, be in English, modeled after conference style proceedings, and should be about 4–5 pages in length (not including graphics). Overviews of ongoing research programs and discussions of industry practices are also welcome. NHTSA will review submissions and notify authors of acceptance within 2 weeks of receipt. Submissions will be reviewed according to the relevance of the paper to the Forum, the clarity of the writing, the validity of experimental methodology used, if any, the degree to which conclusions are supported by data, and the usefulness of the paper to decision makers in the government, practitioners, researchers, and others. Due to the relatively short time for preparation and review, persons interested in submitting material are strongly encouraged to contact Michael Perel in advance of submitting such material. The documents should be in Microsoft WORD, Corel Wordperfect, Adobe pdf, or ASCII text format. If authors have previously published studies and wish to have the studies included on the Internet Forum Web site as a resource for others interested in the topic, they should send the studies in electronic format or submit a Web site link to the material if it is already on line.

Persons not submitting a technical paper, may register to join the Forum to view technical papers, post questions to authors, join discussion groups on related topics, or answer questions about their experience using in-vehicle technologies. The Web site for registering for the conference will be www.driverdistraction.org.

Procedural matters: The Internet Forum will be open for registration on June 23, 2000. Technical papers will be posted on July 5, 2000. The Forum will be active until August 11, 2000. After that date, the material presented will be archived and remain available for viewing on NHTSA's Web site. Also, a summary of the Forum will be prepared and posted on this Web site.

C. Public Meeting

On July 18, 2000, NHTSA will conduct a public meeting, providing a forum for industry, safety, research groups, and the general public to discuss strategies for realizing the benefits of in-vehicle technologies without increasing the risk of crashes due to driver distraction. The objective of this meeting is to share viewpoints and information on the following general topics:

1. What new technologies and features are being planned for use by drivers

2. The role of various entities in promoting best practices in the design and use of these devices

3. How to evaluate the safety impacts of such systems and what are safety-relevant ways to measure driver distraction

4. Ongoing activities to promote safe use of in-vehicle technologies

5. Additional activities and research needed.

1. *Written Statements, Presentations, and Comments:* The agency has established Docket No. NHTSA–99–6270 as a repository for presentations, statements, and comments on issues related to the safety of in-vehicle technologies. Written or electronic submissions may be made to this docket at any time. For written materials, two copies should be submitted to Docket Management at the address given at the beginning of this document. The materials must not exceed 15 pages in length (49 CFR 553.21). Necessary attachments may be appended to the submissions without regard to the 15-page limit. This limitation is intended to encourage commenters to detail their primary arguments in a concise fashion. Presentations made at the public meeting will also be posted in a separate section of the Internet Forum Web site if the presenter submits an electronic version of the presentation including a separate brief abstract or overview by July 5, 2000. Any comments made at the public meeting and a summary of the discussions that take place will be posted on the Internet after the meeting. The electronic submissions for the Internet Forum should be sent by E-mail (5 mb max), floppy disk, or CD ROM to Michael Perel at the address given above.

If a commenter wishes to submit certain information under a claim of confidentiality, three copies of the complete submission, including purportedly confidential business information, should be submitted to the Chief Counsel, NHTSA, at 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Additionally, two copies of the above document from which the purportedly confidential information has been deleted should be submitted to Docket Management. A request for confidentiality should be accompanied by a cover letter setting forth the information specified in the agency's confidential business information regulation, 49 CFR Part 512.

2. *Meeting Participation:* This is a public meeting, and attendance is open to all members of the public. You may attend as a participant or an observer. If you plan to attend the meeting, contact Rita Gibbons at the address, telephone, fax, or the E-mail listed above before July 5, 2000. E-mail or Fax is preferred. If you wish to present a prepared oral statement during the meeting, please send a copy of your statement to Mr. Perel by July 5, 2000.

3. *Procedural Matters:* A written transcript of the meeting will be made. Speakers will have a maximum of 15–

20 minutes. Presenters may be questioned by a panel of government officials. Time permitting, audience members may submit written questions for the panel to ask the presenters.

Issued on: May 25, 2000.

Raymond P. Owings,

Associate Administrator for Research and Development.

[FR Doc. 00–13535 Filed 5–30–00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA–2000–7361; Notice 1]

Freightliner Corporation; Receipt of Application for Decision of Inconsequential Noncompliance

Freightliner Corporation (Freightliner) of Portland, Oregon, has determined that some of its vehicles fail to meet the brake release time requirements of paragraph S5.3.4.1(b) of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 121, *Air Brake Systems.* On May 8, 1997, Freightliner filed a noncompliance information report pursuant to 49 CFR Part 573.5. In that report, Freightliner indicated that it would file a petition for inconsequential noncompliance at a future date. Freightliner states that a Petition for Inconsequential Noncompliance dated October 10, 1997 was submitted to the agency but we have no record of it. Subsequently, on February 29, 2000, Freightliner resubmitted its Petition dated October 10, 1997.

This notice of receipt of the application is published under 49 U.S.C. 30118 and 30120, and does not represent an agency decision or other exercise of judgement concerning the merits of the application.

Under the requirements of S5.3.4.1(a) of FMVSS No. 121, each truck equipped with air brakes is required to have a pressure reduction from 95 psi to 5 psi, measured at each brake chamber of the truck, in not more than 0.55 second from the initial movement (release) of the service brake control. In addition, S5.3.4.1(b) requires that a truck which is equipped to tow another air-braked vehicle is required to have a pressure reduction from the initial test pressure equivalent to 95 psi in the truck's brake chambers, to 5 psi in not more than 0.75 second, measured in a 50-cubic-inch test reservoir attached to the control line coupling, upon initial movement (release) of the service brake control. Thus the pressure in the test reservoir is required to drop from approximately 95 psi to 5 psi in not more than 0.75 second upon release of the service brake control.

Number of Non-Complying Trucks

From January 1994 through April 1996, Freightliner produced approximately 3,145 Model FLD trucks that may not have had a quick-release valve installed at the control line coupling and therefore may not meet the release timing requirements in FMVSS No. 121. Data on the number of vehicles of the 3,145 affected truck population that were built without the quick release valve are as follows. According to Freightliner's noncompliance information report, a field inspection of 34 subject vehicles indicated that 5.9 percent (two trucks) did not have the quick release valves. According to Freightliner's petition for inconsequential noncompliance, an inspection (of an unspecified number) of trucks at the St. Thomas Manufacturing Plant where these vehicles were manufactured indicated that 69 percent were manufactured without the quick release valve. Freightliner also said in its petition that a field inspection of 38 subject trucks indicated that 9 percent did not have the quick release valve installed.

We telephoned Mr. Tony Moore of Freightliner's engineering department and Mr. Larry Winslow of Freightliner's compliance department on April 4, 2000, to clarify the numbers of non-compliant vehicles and two other subjects that are discussed below. The field inspection of 38 trucks indicated in the petition included the 34 trucks identified in the noncompliance information report. When asked about the number of vehicles inspected at the St. Thomas plant, Freightliner indicated that it has documentation showing that 303 trucks were inspected, and 70 trucks or 23 percent did not have quick release valves installed. Freightliner could not locate documentation regarding how the 69 percent number in the petition was derived and believes that this number is incorrect per the documentation it now has.

Brake Release Times of Non-Complying Trucks

FMVSS No. 121, paragraph S5.3.4.1(b), requires that the release timing measured in the test reservoir from initial pressure to 5 psi shall be 0.75 second. In its petition, Freightliner states that it conducted a test program to predict the actual release timing of the subject vehicles. The results are as indicated in the table below:

[Predicted] release timing (seconds)	Vehicle population	Percent of population
0.76–0.80	773	24.5
0.81–0.85	1759	55.9
0.86–0.90	602	19.1
0.91–0.95	1	0.03
0.96–1.00	10	0.3
over 1.00	0	0

In the April 4, 2000 telephone conversation, Freightliner indicated that this prediction of release timing is based upon the length of the air tubing from the treadle valve to the trailer service air line glad hand coupling. The overall length of the air tubing varies with tractor wheelbase and the resulting vehicle population numbers in the table were derived on this basis. Without the quick release valve, the air is released through the treadle valve. As indicated in Freightliner's petition, the installation of the quick release valve releases the air at the tractor end of the trailer service air line.

Freightliner Rationale for Inconsequentiality to Safety

Freightliner does not believe that tractor glad hand timing between 0.75 and 1.00 second poses any risk or compromises highway safety. It states that brake application pressures at a highway speed of 55 mph rarely exceed 20 psi, and that when comparing the release timing from 20 psi on vehicles that would have 0.90 and 0.75 second release timing when tested according to FMVSS No. 121, the actual time differential drops to less than 0.10 second. In the April 4, 2000, telephone conversation, Freightliner clarified that the 0.10 second timing is the time for the pressure to be reduced at the glad hand coupling from 20 psi to 5 psi on trucks with no quick release valve installed. Freightliner also indicated that it did not do a comparable analysis of release timing from 20 psi with the quick release valve installed.

Freightliner believes that glad hand timing requirements were established primarily for the purpose of improving the application timing balance of combination vehicles, not the release timing. Freightliner cites the summary in Docket No. 85–07, Notice 3, as follows:

> The purpose of the glad hand timing requirements is to ensure that the air delivery from towing vehicles to towed vehicles is fast enough to apply the brakes of all vehicles in the combination at approximately the same time, thereby avoiding a reduction in the combination stability (*e.g.*, trailer bumping) caused by a slow glad hand.

Freightliner states that release timing is not mentioned, and that some