

NHTSA Vehicle Safety Rulemaking and Research Priority Plan

Truck Tractor and Motorcoach Stability Control

Develop performance criteria and objective test(s) for a standard on electronic stability control for truck tractors and motorcoaches. The stability control system is aimed at addressing rollover and loss-of-control crashes. NHTSA has forwarded the NPRM proposal to OST for review.

Next Step: Publish NPRM in the Federal Register by the end of 2011

Motorcoach Fire Safety

Agency is considering upgrading the fire standards that apply to motorcoaches.

- Two year research program with NIST completed in 2010.
 - Research focus on wheel-well fires in motorcoaches.
 - NIST study designed to:
 - Review existing flammability standards and procedures.
 - Research fire propagation and penetration of motorcoach wheel well fires.
 - Evaluate flammability of interior motorcoach material using standards and procedures from different countries and different transportation modes.
 - Evaluate countermeasures for mitigating propagation of wheel well fires.
- In 2012, the agency is planning follow-up research for:
 - Developing candidate test procedures and performance requirements for flammability of exterior motorcoach material and fire detection systems on motorcoaches, and evaluating the performance of fire detection and fire suppression systems for motorcoaches.

Next Step: Follow-up research in 2012

Motorcoach Roof Strength

Agency to propose new motorcoach roof strength requirements, and has tested two new procedures with motorcoaches.

- In 2008, NHTSA conducted roof crush/rollover tests on two older motorcoach models to evaluate two existing roof crush/rollover test procedures: one for school buses and the other specified in the European regulations. The objective of these tests was to determine the feasibility of their application to motorcoaches sold in the United States.
- In 2009, NHTSA tested a newer motorcoach using the European test protocol and determined appropriate performance requirements for rollover structural integrity to maintain the occupant survival space.

Next Step: NPRM is expected to be issued in 2012

Motorcoach Emergency Evacuation

Agency is considering upgrading the motorcoach evacuation standards.

- NHTSA's emergency evacuation research program at the Volpe Center was completed in 2010. The objectives of this research were to:
 - Evaluate various egress strategies from a motorcoach and determine factors affecting egress rates.
 - Research ergonomics of operating and using emergency exits in a motorcoach.

- Evaluate current motorcoach emergency signage and markings against those in other vehicles and transportation modes.
- Evaluate the need for improved emergency lighting and illumination in motorcoaches.
- The agency is evaluating the results and developing candidate motorcoach emergency egress requirements to ensure evacuation in adequate time under different emergency situations for various occupant groups, including children and the elderly.

Next Step: Agency Regulatory Decision in 2011

Improve Glazing and Window Retention in Motorcoaches

- In 2006, NHTSA completed a joint research program on advanced glazing and window retention with Canada from 2003-2006.
 - Preliminary results indicated that preventing ejection would involve not only glazing but also the structural integrity to ensure that the glazing doesn't pop out when the bus structure twists (Similar to ice cubes popping out when the tray is twisted).
- Now that the agency is planning to issue an NPRM for improving motorcoach rollover structural integrity, the agency resumed its study of advanced glazing and window retention.
 - The agency is developing candidate test procedures to evaluate glazing and window retention.

Next Step: Agency decision is scheduled in 2012.

Heavy Vehicle Electronic Data Recorders

Develop performance requirements for heavy vehicle electronic data recorders.

- NHTSA is currently in the process of identifying appropriate performance requirements implementation issues, economic impacts, and data collection needs to be considered for Heavy Vehicle Event Data Recorders before a decision can be made on proposing a standard.
- We are conducting a research program (awarded September 2011) to assess the current state-of-the-art in HVEDR technologies, potential updates to these technologies, survival factors, and installation costs as well as the vehicle manufacturers' future plans for installation of HVEDRs. This research program will be completed by September 2012.

We note that the crash characteristics and relevant measurements that HVEDRs would need to capture for heavy vehicles would be considerably different from those of light vehicles.

Next Step: Agency decision on regulatory decision in 2012.

Motorcoach Lap/Shoulder Belts

Develop proposal to amend FMVSS 208 to require lap/shoulder belts for each passenger seating position in new motorcoaches. NPRM was published on August 18, 2010 and Comment period closed on October 18, 2010.

Docket (www.regulations.gov): NHTSA-2010-0112

The agency received more than 100 comments on the NPRM. Some of the major areas of comment were:

- Definition of motorcoach
- Retrofitting older motorcoaches
- Performance requirements
- FMVSS No. 210 vs. ECE R.14 and R80 standards

- Need for Energy Absorption Requirement
- Concerns about seat belt use
- Cost
- Market forces on smaller operators
- Lead time

Next Step: The agency expects to issue the final rule in 2012

Federal Register Notices

Heavy Truck Tires

Proposal to upgrade heavy vehicle tire standard, FMVSS 119, to upgrade Endurance test, add a new High Speed test and new labeling requirements for the speed rating of the tire. NPRM published on September 29, 2010 in Federal Register. Comment period closed on December 29, 2010. Tire manufacturers provided substantial comments and test data on a variety of truck tires. In response to comments, additional endurance testing is being conducted and will be completed in December 2011. An Agency Decision on the test conditions and labeling requirements will be made in 2012.

Docket (www.regulations.gov): NHTSA-2010-0132

Next Step: Test data analysis and agency decision by end of 2012

Truck Tractor Stopping Distance

The new, 30-percent shorter stopping distance requirements in FMVSS No. 121 for most typical, three-axle truck tractors became effective on August 1, 2011. New requirements for the remaining non-typical tractors will become effective August 1, 2013. We issued a final rule on July 27, 2011 to address petitions for reconsideration on stopping distance requirements at reduced initial test speeds. However, we have since received another petition for reconsideration on this issue that we are now addressing.

Docket (www.regulations.gov): NHTSA-2009-0175

Next Step: Issue Final Rule, Response to Petition for Reconsideration