

INSURANCE INSTITUTE FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY

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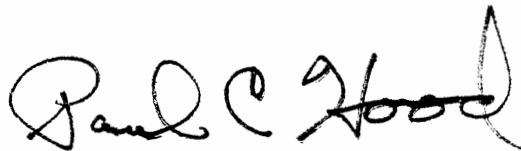
October 30, 1978

I would like to call special attention to several articles in the attached Status Report:

On Page 1 you will find two stories dealing with a new proposal to permit weaker standards for highway "resurfacing, restoration, and rehabilitation (R-R-R)" projects. One such effort proposed a year ago was shelved in the face of many protests. As you will see, IIHS believes the new proposal is without foundation and should be killed.

New reports from the Highway Loss Data Institute show the relationship of the frequency of injury claims to vehicle size and body style. (Page 3)

An IIHS-supported research project at the University of Michigan has found the correct use of child restraint systems effective in real-world crashes. (Page 6)



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Paul C. Hood
Editor, Status Report

IIHS MASTER FILE COPY

FHWA Again Offers Lowered R-R-R Standards

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) again has proposed the adoption of lowered design standards for highway restoration projects, and this time reduced standards were prepared by an agency task force. The agency last January rejected lowered standards proposed by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), noting the "severely adverse comments" received about them (see *Status Report*, Vol. 13, No. 2, Feb. 7, 1978).

The type of projects which would be affected by the lowered standards are so-called "resurfacing, restoration, and rehabilitation (R-R-R)" projects, which first became eligible for federal funding in 1976.

Such projects were expected to constitute the majority of highway work in the future, since few new highways are due to be built.

Institute Protests Special Standards For R-R-R Work

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has urged the FHWA not to adopt special R-R-R standards but to apply current minimum standards for new construction to restoration projects. In comments filed in the docket, the Institute pointed out:

"As FHWA itself has often stated, highways constructed to current minimum standards have been shown to have crash rates substantially lower than older highways. There is no evidence to suggest that lowering these standards for R-R-R projects will not degrade the safety of the affected sections of highways.

"Nonetheless, FHWA now proposes to abandon this approach and substitute special standards, this time developed by the agency, for R-R-R projects — standards which, similar to the earlier-proposed AASHTO standards, are substantially weaker and much less specific than current minimum standards for new construction.

(Cont'd on page 4)

When FHWA rejected AASHTO's proposal last January, the agency announced that R-R-R projects would continue to be handled under normal procedures for new construction projects, saying "these existing procedures permit the needed flexibility in the geometric design of R-R-R projects through approval of exceptions [to full design standards] on a project-by-project basis." The latest proposal does not discuss why the normal procedures no longer provide "needed flexibility"; they simply would replace the higher, new-construction standards currently applied to R-R-R work.

The proposed standards are not backed by any research demonstrating their cost-effectiveness or safety. The preamble to the *Federal Register* notice says that "existing research does not provide reliable information on the full impact of variances in individual design criteria." The agency says it hopes to determine "the systemwide impacts of the R-R-R program and the specific criteria in the proposed standards" through after-the-fact "individual evaluations and research studies."

(Cont'd on page 2)

The latest proposal includes some modifications of the reduced criteria contained in the AASHTO version, bringing them closer to full new-construction standards. However, few of the improved criteria are mandatory. For example, the latest proposal says that full new-construction standards for superelevation (“banking”) of curves “should” be used; however, FHWA would still permit the use of substandard superelevation on R-R-R projects when “constraints” make it “infeasible or impractical” to use full standards. In such cases, the proposal says, the substandard curves should have signs warning drivers of the maximum safe speed. (Similar recommendations in the AASHTO proposal were criticized heavily; AASHTO’s own 1974 publication, *Highway Design and Operational Practices Related to Highway Safety*, points out that “a warning sign is a poor substitute for adequate geometric design.”)

HOW CRITICAL ISSUES ARE HANDLED

In regard to the areas criticized in the AASHTO proposal last year, here is how FHWA has responded in the recently proposed standards:

- The FHWA proposal also bases such geometric requirements as safe stopping and passing sight distances and horizontal and vertical alignment on “running speed” rather than the higher – and traditionally used – “design speed.” (The safety implications of this change are discussed in *Status Report*, Vol. 12, No. 15, Oct. 13, 1977.)

- Whereas the AASHTO proposal stated that the design of many R-R-R projects would not need to take into account truck use or future increases in traffic volumes and speed, the FHWA proposal would require collection of information on truck and bus volume and “any known near-future traffic impact.” However, no guidance is provided as to how such information should be evaluated in designing R-R-R projects.

- The FHWA proposal would, like the earlier AASHTO proposal, permit shoulders as narrow as two feet on rural highways; the greatest width called for is four feet. Current standards call for a minimum of four feet on low-volume roads to 10 feet on high-volume roads. There is no requirement at all for shoulders on urban arterials in the new proposal; nor are shoulders on rural highway required to be paved or even stabilized.

- The FHWA proposal for urban arterials calls for 10-foot through lanes (increased from nine feet in the earlier AASHTO R-R-R proposal). Current standards for urban arterials call for 12-foot through lanes, with any width less than 11 feet “considered unsatisfactory.”

- The current standards for urban arterials call for parking lanes “at least 8 feet and desirably 10 feet” wide in residential areas; in commercial areas, these should be “at least 10 feet and desirably 12 feet wide.” The FHWA-proposed R-R-R standards suggest 8-foot parking lanes for all arterials.

OTHER WEAKNESSES

Under the FHWA proposal, currently substandard bridge railings must be corrected only “to the extent practical”; what level of protection they should be required to provide is unspecified. On the question of clear roadside recovery areas, the only requirement is that fixed objects may not be placed in the paved shoulder of urban roads or closer than two feet from the curb. Substandard roadside devices, such as signposts, guardrails, and median barriers, need be improved only if they are already high on the state’s priority list for safety improvement. There are no criteria for skid-resistance levels for resurfacing projects.

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking appeared in the *Federal Register* on Aug. 23, 1978, beginning at page 37556. Although the notice said comments on the proposal must be received by October 23, the agency says it plans to extend this deadline to Jan. 4, 1979.

HLDI Studies Again Show Small-Car Risks

Two new Highway Loss Data Institute reports on 1974-1977 model year passenger cars again show that frequencies of injury coverages insurance claims are strongly related to vehicle size and body style.

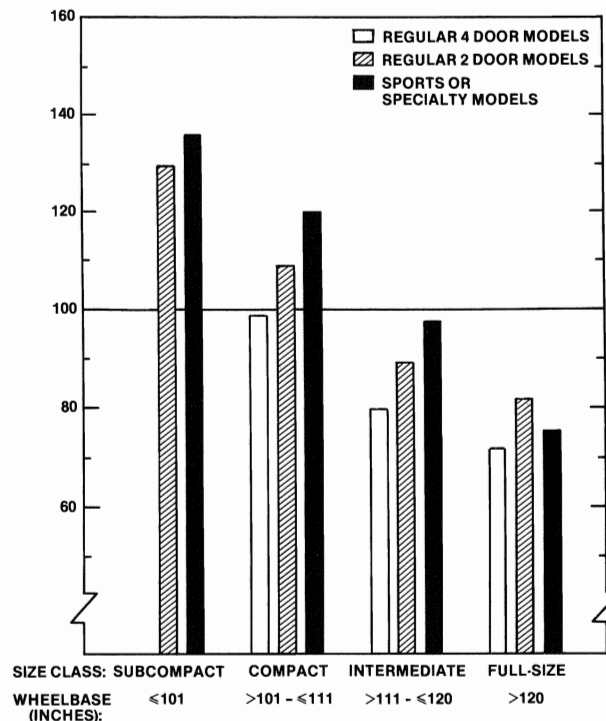
Generally, under both medical payments (Medpay) and "no-fault" personal injury protection (PIP) coverages, cars with smaller wheelbases had higher claim frequencies than cars with larger wheelbases. For all four model years when results were available for body style subgroups, injury claim frequencies were highest for sports or specialty models in each car size class, with the exception of 1976 and 1977 full-size models.

Regular two-door models consistently had higher Medpay and PIP claim frequencies than corresponding four-door models; the single exception to this pattern was for the 1977 full-size models.

The reports also show that injury claims frequencies varied considerably between different cars within the same model year but only slightly between different model years. For example, among the 1974 model regular two-door compacts, the medical payments coverage relative claim frequencies ranged from a low of 90 for the Oldsmobile Omega to a high of 138 for the Ford Maverick. Among 1977 models, the two-door Toyota Corolla and the Datsun B-210, the cars with the highest PIP claim frequencies, each had more than twice the number of claims per insured vehicle year for injuries to occupants than the four-door Chevrolet Caprice Classic, the car with the lowest PIP claim frequency.

Detailed findings are contained in: *Automobile Insurance Losses, Injury Coverages: Claim Frequency Results for 1974, 1975, and 1976 Models* (HLDI I 76-2); *Automobile Insurance Losses, Injury Coverages: Claim Frequency Results for 1977 Models* (HLDI I 77-1).

**Medical payments coverages
relative claim frequencies
1976 models**



Institute Protests Special Standards (Cont'd from page 1)

“The agency admits that ‘existing research does not provide reliable information on the full impact’ of such reductions in standards. Nor has the agency presented any evidence that its traditional procedures for R-R-R projects can no longer provide ‘the needed flexibility in the geometric design of R-R-R projects.’ In the absence of such evidence, and in the absence of reliable information on the adverse safety impact of the proposed design standard reductions, FHWA should not adopt special R-R-R standards but should continue to apply its current policies on all R-R-R projects. If FHWA insists on weakening its R-R-R standards without evidence of the effect of such a step, it literally will be gambling with the lives of countless Americans.”

NHTSA Proposes Moped Regulations To States

By the end of the year, there will probably be half a million mopeds on the U.S. roads, ten times as many as only three years ago. The Moped Association of America, a manufacturer-sponsored group, envisions the moped as “fully ubiquitous by the early mid-eighties, when as many as five million mopeds could be operational throughout the United States.”

This proliferation, and the lack of consistent policy in dealing with mopeds, has caused the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to propose a series of recommended regulations for state adoption. The recommendations, published in the *Federal Register* on Oct. 12, 1978, will become effective Nov. 13, 1978, after public comments.

NHTSA defines a moped as “a motor-driven cycle with mechanical linkage to permit muscular propulsion and a power source that provides a maximum of 2 brake horsepower.” It is proposed that mopeds be registered and licensed so that they are clearly distinguished from bicycles and motorcycles. In accident reports, data on moped crashes should be separated from data concerning bicycles and motorcycles. Currently, 24 states define mopeds as bicycles, 14 as simply mopeds, and only one (New York) refers to them as motorcycles. Twelve states have yet to pass moped legislation.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS PROPOSED

NHTSA proposes that moped operators have the same insurance requirements and financial liability as drivers of other motor vehicles. Only four states require that moped operators carry insurance, and only 14 have laws which specifically state that such drivers are financially liable.

Moped drivers should be required to hold operators’ licenses and meet the same age and testing requirements as operators of other motor vehicles, NHTSA recommends. When that agency opened a docket to receive comments on the operational safety of mopeds in 1975, it stated that “the skill needed to coordinate the throttle and the front and rear brakes of a moped are considerably more complex than those needed to operate a bicycle.” (See *Status Report*, Vol. 10, No. 20, Dec. 10, 1975.) In four states, no license at all is required; South Carolina lets 12-year-olds drive mopeds, and, in New Mexico, the minimum age is 13.

NHTSA recommends that a handbook on moped legal requirements and on safe-driving practices be prepared. Motorcycle safety education programs should include information on moped operation, and this information should also be incorporated into high school and adult driver education courses, the safety agency urged.

(Cont'd on page 5)

NHTSA Believes Very Young Will Not Ride Mopeds

In granting a recent equipment exemption to a moped manufacturer, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) explained one reason for its decision: "Most jurisdictions in the United States require the operator of such a vehicle to be not less than 15 or 16 years old. This assures NHTSA that the mopeds are unlikely to be used by children on city streets."

An overview of state moped laws indicates that NHTSA's confidence that the very young will not be likely to use these vehicles may be unfounded. As of July 1978, 12 states have no specific moped laws. Of the 38 remaining states and the District of Columbia, 18 permit persons 15 years old and younger to drive mopeds. Some of the most populous states are in this category, such as California, Ohio, and Michigan. South Carolina allows 12-year-olds to drive mopeds. Sixteen of those states with specific moped laws have no registration requirements, and four do not require driver's licenses to drive mopeds. (The statistics on state laws come from the Moped Association of America.)

(Cont'd from page 4)

Passengers should be prohibited on mopeds unless the vehicles are specifically designed to carry passengers, NHTSA says. All moped drivers would be encouraged to make themselves as visible as possible to other drivers, and they would be required to wear safety helmets. Only one state, Georgia, requires all moped operators to wear helmets, and only two others have restricted helmet laws. According to NHTSA, the pattern of moped crashes is much more similar to that of motorcycles than to that of bicycles, and moped riders need helmets as much as motorcyclists do.

HIGHWAY USE WOULD BE RESTRICTED

NHTSA recommends that mopeds not be permitted on high-speed, limited-access highways. A moped's top speed is about 30 mph, and, in any but the slowest-moving traffic streams, these vehicles are unable to keep up the pace, and thus create hazards. Mopeds could be operated on on-road bicycle lanes or bicycle paths in some cases, the proposed rules explain. Every attempt should be made to provide low-speed alternate routes for mopeds, but NHTSA feels it may not be practical to provide direct access to all places a moped rider may wish to go.

NHTSA emphasized that the recommendations are not proposed highway safety standards, and that the public will be notified should the agency later decide on formal rulemaking. Earlier this year the Federation of Insurance Counsel had urged NHTSA to take steps to resolve some of the questions produced by popularity of mopeds. Late last year the Vehicle Equipment Safety Commission published a set of minimum requirements for moped construction and equipment in an effort to bring uniformity to state regulation (see *Status Report*, Vol. 12, No. 17, Nov. 30, 1977).

Comments on the proposal should refer to Docket Number 75-29; Notice 31 and be submitted to: Room 5108, Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590.

Firestone Agrees To A Record Tire Recall

After months of negotiations with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Firestone Tire and Rubber Co. has agreed to a limited recall covering some 10 million of its steel-belted radial tires, of which an estimated 7.5 million are still in use.

The agreement, termed by NHTSA the largest tire recall in history, covers the following tires sold after Sept. 1, 1975, and before May 1, 1976: Firestone Steel Belted Radial 500's; similarly constructed Firestone tires sold under brand names such as Montgomery Ward's Grappler 8000 and Shell Oil's Super Shell Steel Radials; and TPC Steel Radial tires which NHTSA said were sold as original equipment on new General Motors cars. Firestone 500's made with a five-rib tread design and manufactured before Jan. 1, 1977, also are included in the recall.

In announcing the agreement, NHTSA reported that 41 deaths and 65 injuries have been linked to the failure of the tires. In a preliminary defect finding announced in July, the agency said it had received reports from consumers alleging blowouts, tread separations and chunking, sidewall blisters and cracks, and shape distortion of the 500's. (See *Status Report*, Vol. 13, No. 11, Aug. 3, 1978.) More than 14,000 tire failures were alleged, NHTSA announced at the time.

LIABILITY DENIED FOR OLDER TIRES

The recalled tires will be replaced without charge with Firestone 721 Steel Belted Radials, unless the owner requests another Firestone tire. According to NHTSA, Firestone refused to recall and replace without charge 500's sold on or before Sept. 1, 1975, because they do not fall within the three-year statute of limitations on recalls. But NHTSA said the manufacturer is required to warn the owners of 500's and TPC tires made earlier that their tires have been found defective.

In addition, Firestone will make a consumer adjustment for 50 percent of the cost of a new 721 Steel Belted Radial for the defective tires made before the recall period, NHTSA reported.

The cutoff dates of May 1, 1976, and Jan. 1, 1977, were set after NHTSA investigators determined by studying adjustment rates that changes in the internal construction of the 500's subsequently improved their quality and performance, the agency said.

Child Restraints Effective In Crashes

A survey of real-world crashes during which children were restrained correctly by child restraint systems has found them "to be effective in reducing injuries in crashes." The study, conducted by the University of Michigan's Highway Safety Research Institute, also found that head and facial injuries are the "most common form" of crash injuries among children.

According to the Fatal Accident Reporting System, which is maintained by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, vehicle crashes are the nation's leading killer of children over the age of one. The study was sponsored by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety to review the injury patterns of both restrained and unrestrained children and to assess child restraint performance in real-world crashes.

The researchers said that out of 348 crashes involving 494 children under the age of 10, only 4.7 percent were reported to be using either vehicle lap belts or placed in child restraint devices. (See accompanying box for child restraint devices and how to use them.) Only one-third of the devices in use during

crashes were used properly, the surveyors found. (An earlier Institute study found that only 7 percent of children under the age of 15 were effectively restrained. See *Status Report*, Vol. 13, No. 5, April 12, 1978.)

IMPROPER USE INCREASES INJURIES

Incorrect usage of children's restraint systems increased injury potential, the study said, although the risk for injury among unrestrained children was substantially higher. Among the properly restrained children, there was only one minor injury.



The lap belt must fit over the hips; the shoulder belt must cross the chest—not the face or neck.

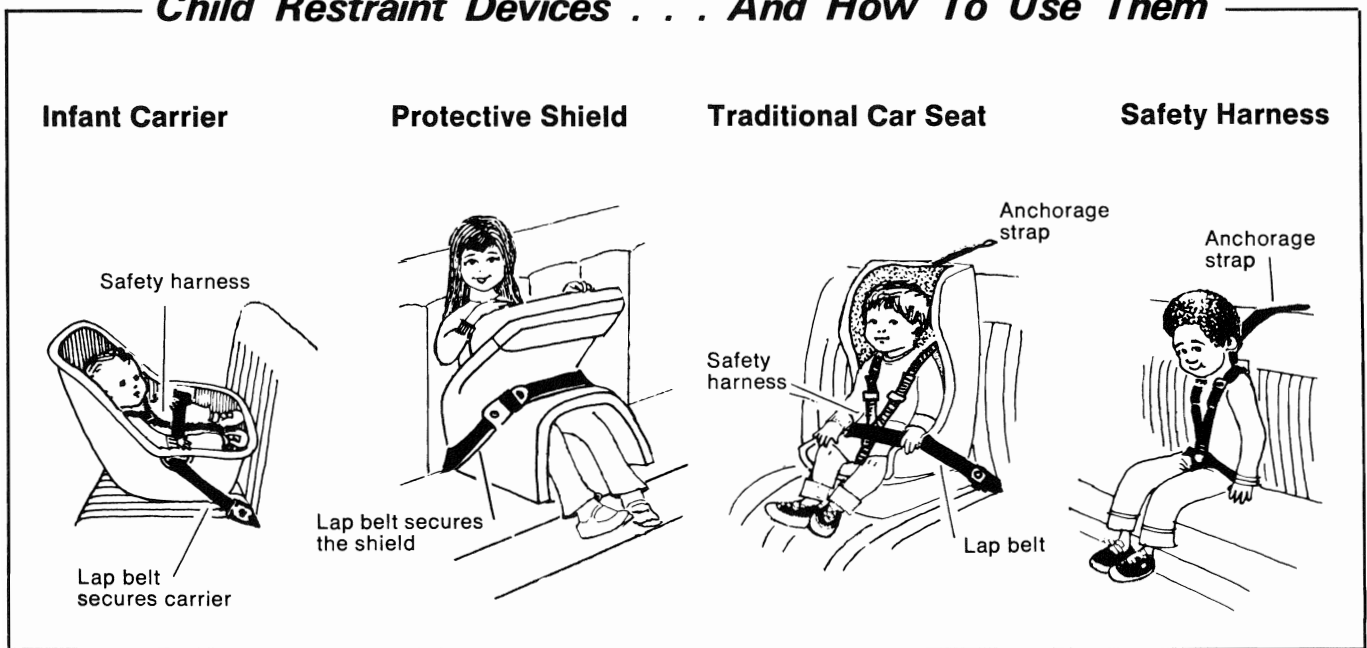
Experts emphasize that it is essential to fasten both the vehicle lap belt around the infant carrier or child seat, as well as the safety harness present in the device itself. Fastening of the car's lap belt stops the device from catapulting forward in a frontal crash. Fastening the harness keeps the child in it.

The researchers also found that children involved in crashes were most commonly seated in the right front passenger seat, the "most dangerous" spot in the car. The safest location for children, they said, is in the middle of the rear seat. The researchers also found that children between the ages of 3 and 9 who were restrained by vehicle lap belts alone, were "effectively restrained," although there was still potential for injuries from contact with dashboards or the backs of front seats.

Because the 9-month survey was conducted in urban Michigan, the researchers said most of the crashes were at low speeds. To assess the "outer limits" of restraint capabilities, the authors urged further studies.

For further information on "Protection of Child Occupants in Automobile Crashes," by John Melvin, Richard Stalnaker, and Dinesh Mohan, write the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Watergate 600, Washington, D.C. 20037.

Child Restraint Devices . . . And How To Use Them



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Long-Distance Truckers Studied In Australia

The typical Australian long-distance trucker is more likely than the average motorist to smoke heavily, have more financial worries despite his relatively higher income, and express his frustration by openly aggressive behavior, a New South Wales survey concludes.

In the first of a two-part series by Dawn Linklater of the Department of Motor Transport in Sydney, data gathered in interviews with truckers and other motorists have given researchers revealing glimpses of the behavior, attitudes, and lifestyle of the average hauler. The possible effects of these behavioral characteristics on crash frequency will be analyzed in a forthcoming report sometime this year.

Possibly because of their greater exposure, Australian truckers have more crashes than the average motorist, the report said. (Observers put the highway death toll for American truckers at 4.8 occupant deaths per 10,000 heavy trucks compared to 2.4 deaths for all other vehicles except motorcycles. See *Status Report*, Vol. 13, No. 12, Aug. 21, 1978.)

The Australians are similar to their American counterparts, in that they have fewer holidays and work an average of more than 70 hours a week, far above the 40-hour week enjoyed by most workers, according to Dr. Linklater. Truckers reported that fatigue is a significant factor involved in crashes and 40 percent admitted to at least occasional use of stimulant drugs.

HALLUCINATIONS REPORTED

The truck drivers also reported that they experienced hallucinations at a rate far higher than the average motorist. Such experiences are "thought to occur during extreme tiredness, although there is some indication that drugs, including alcohol [a depressant], may contribute to the occurrence of hallucinations while driving," the report stated. There are also indications that aggressive behavior may be tied to sleep deprivation and drug use, it said.

Citing an economic incentive for violating hours-of-work rules, 73 percent of the truckers said that log books are an inadequate device for policing hours-of-service regulations, while 55 percent said it was "too easy to cheat under the present system."

Fatigue was considered by the researcher to result not only from excessive working hours, but from
(Cont'd on page 9)

UPDATE . . .

MULTIPIECE WHEEL WARNING: The Department of Transportation (DOT) has warned truck and bus drivers and maintenance personnel that servicing multipiece wheels poses a lethal hazard. The warning follows the release by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety of research documenting deaths and injuries caused by explosions of the wheels. (See *Status Report*, Vol. 13, No. 14, Oct. 11, 1978.) Saying that many of the explosions are caused by the failure to follow proper safety procedures during servicing, the DOT announced the availability of two revised safety charts illustrating precautions that should be observed. The agency also asked the public for information on any accidents involving the wheels, to aid in its rulemaking and in its recently reopened investigation into several types of multipiece wheels.

economic pressures, driving discomfort, and monotonous road conditions. Linklater suggested various countermeasures such as:

- Off-road parking at frequent intervals on major arteries.
- Periodic changes in road alignment and surfacing to help alleviate long, monotonous stretches.
- Raised pavement markers at road edges and centers to alert drowsing drivers that their vehicles are straying off the road.
- Controls and comfort items placed within easy reach of the belted driver.
- Control of temperature, noise, and vibration levels to produce a comfortable work environment within the cab.
- An upgrading of training and licensing requirements for heavy-truck operators.
- A “review” of current hours-of-work regulations.

Whatever the authorities do, Linklater warned, they should involve truckers in the decision-making process, not only to sensitize themselves to the peculiar needs of truckers, but to encourage the truckers’ active cooperation with regulations once they are adopted.

Further information concerning “A Profile of Long-Distance Truck Drivers,” by Dawn R. Linklater, Ph.D., may be obtained by writing the Department of Motor Transport, Box 28, G.P.O. Sydney, Australia 2001.

New Vehicle Identification Number Rule Protested

In vigorous protests filed with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), state motor vehicle administrations, insurers, truck/trailer body-builders, and the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety have asked the agency to reconsider its final rule on vehicle identification numbers (VINs).

Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company said the new VIN rule would “impose on VIN users an unnecessary and expensive audit procedure when more reasonable and practical methods are available.” State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company commented that the new rule would “do little to reduce the number of errors which are made in the transcription of VINs,” particularly since there would be no fixed format.

NHTSA’s final rule, scheduled to become effective in 1980, specifies a 17-character, variable-format numbering system. A “check digit” in the sequence would be derived from the other characters by a four-step formula, to verify the VIN’s accuracy. (See *Status Report*, Vol. 13, No. 12, Aug. 21, 1978.)

Ejner Johnson, administrator of the Maryland Department of Transportation, said it is unlikely that on-duty policemen would be able to verify VINs since “the probability of their being equipped with calculators is remote and their familiarization with the check digit routine even more so.”

Truck/trailer builders charged that the new regulation could have disastrous economic effects on small businesses since the hiring of even one additional clerk to handle the paperwork would represent a major expense.

NHTSA Interprets Court Ruling On 121 Brakes

With the exception of two requirements invalidated by the courts, the controversial Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 121 for truck and bus braking performance remains in effect, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has declared.

The agency offered this opinion in an interpretation of the decision of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which the Supreme Court recently refused for review. (See *Status Report*, Vol. 13, No. 14, Oct. 11, 1978.) According to NHTSA (Docket No. 75-16; Notice 24), the standard remains in effect except:

- The “no lockup” requirement for trucks and trailers is invalid. (This requirement ensured that skidding due to wheel lockup and loss of lateral stability was minimized.)
- The requirement that trucks and trailers be capable of stopping at 60 mph within 293 feet using normal brakes, and 613 feet using backup emergency brakes, is invalid.

The court decision has no effect on the requirement of a stopping test sequence in which the truck or trailer must remain within a 12-foot lane when braking from 60 mph (or top speed). Further, the dynamometer lab tests which measure how well brakes perform under sustained use can still be required. No Standard 121 requirements for buses are invalidated by the court’s ruling.

Shuster Amendment Won’t Block Air Bag Use

When Congress recently authorized federal funds for state highway safety programs, it was persuaded by Rep. Bud Shuster (R.-Pa.) to prohibit their use to “purchase . . . any passive restraint system for any motor vehicle owned by any state,” except when the vehicle is primarily used for educational purposes.

The amendment should have no practical effect on current use of the funds (Section 402 funds).

Shuster offered the amendment to overturn a ruling by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that federal funds for the state programs could be used to equip state and local government vehicles with air bags. “That ruling is not consistent with Congressional intent regarding the use” of such funds, Shuster protested.

During House consideration of the amendment, Rep. Bob Eckhardt (D.-Tex.) expressed to Shuster his opinion that the amendment would only restrict the use of the funds to retrofit state vehicles with passive restraints, but would not prohibit their use to buy vehicles already equipped with passive restraints.

“The gentleman’s interpretation is absolutely correct,” Shuster replied.

No passive restraint systems are currently available for retrofitting.

Michigan Motorcyclists Favor Helmet Use

Although some state legislatures have repealed helmet use laws under pressure from motorcyclist groups, a Michigan survey has revealed that 67 percent of that state's motorcyclists believe that helmets should be worn at all times. Fifty-three percent say there should be a helmet use law.

Motorists overwhelmingly (85 percent) favored helmet use for motorcyclists, with 80 percent saying that helmets should be required by law.

So far, 26 state legislatures have either repealed or seriously weakened helmet use legislation, resulting in a large rise in the death rate among motorcyclists. (See *Status Report*, Vol. 13, No. 12, Aug. 21, 1978.)

The Michigan State Police office of highway safety planning sponsored the poll to evaluate motorist and cyclist attitudes toward traffic regulation. Other questions revealed:

- While a majority of cyclists and motorists admitted to regular violation of the 55 mph national speed limit, "an overwhelming majority" (78 percent) favored maintaining the current rule.
- Fifty-four percent of Michigan's drivers favor laws requiring mandatory use of child restraints or safety belts for children under the age of four.
- Thirty-nine percent of the drivers said they would favor belt use laws for all adults and passengers.

Quoted Without Comment

"You may recall that there were hundreds of motorcyclists roaring around Lansing last Wednesday enroute to and from the Capitol to protest a Michigan law which requires that motorcyclists wear helmets.

"Well, I thought you'd like to know of an interesting event which occurred as the motorcyclists left town. Two of them collided at I-96 and Okemos Road. One rider, Thomas C. Grone of Utica, was saved from death or a serious head injury when he flew from his cycle and struck his helmeted head on pavement. The jar cracked his helmet open, but he suffered only minor bruises. When it was all over, Grone looked at the State Police trooper and then at his helmet and he said: 'Man, I'll never protest the helmet law again.'"

From "The Onlooker" column by
Jim Hough in the *State Journal*,
Lansing, Michigan

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