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may be easily replaced. But the importance of interchangeability diminishes but is not eliminated if the life of the light source is such that it approaches the life of the lens reflector unit in which it is installed. Manufacturers expect this to be for the life of the vehicle. This is a chief feature of HID light sources. Thus, NHTSA might be wiling to accept rated average laboratory life information demonstrating long life as a tradeoff for detailed interchangeability information such as dimensions relating to the interface of the light source to the ballast.1

To explain, barring damage, a lens reflector unit ought to last the life of a motor vehicle because of its certification of conformance to the environmental test requirements set out in Standard No. 108. The task, then, is to design a light source with an equivalent life expectancy. Although industry views 10 years as the average life of a vehicle, it is not uncommon to see in daily service those that are from 10 to 15 years old. NHTSA believes that non-HID light sources used in today's headlamps have a rated average laboratory life of 300 to 500 hours. Thus, one with a minimum rated life of 2,000 hours represents a four-fold to six-fold plus increase in the life of a headlamp light source. Use of such a light source would significantly reduce the need to replace headlamp light sources over the life of a vehicle.

This trade off could be accomplished by adding appendix B to part 564, to serve as a repository for information on long-life light sources. To NHTSA, a long-life light source is one with a rated average laboratory life of not less than 2,000 hours. This figure represents the design target that industry uses today in developing long-life light sources, and has been provided to NHTSA in industry comments on related rulemakings. The manufacturer of such a light source would provide the lesser amount of information that would be required by appendix B, but, at its option, could make its submission under appendix A. The reader is reminded that, in either event, a replaceable light source which is the subject of information submitted to Docket No. 93–11 is required to comply with Standard No. 108.

To conform part 564 to this view, NHTSA would amend § 564.2 *Purpose* to clarify that the existing purpose applies to appendix A, and that a new one would apply to appendix B. Language relating to rated average laboratory life would be added where appropriate to implement the purpose of appendix B.

The reader should note that the proposed conforming amendments to § 564.5 (a) and (c) reflect the agency's recent proposal to amend paragraph S7.7 of Standard No. 108 and § 564.5 (a) and (c) to transfer HB type replaceable light sources to Docket No. 93–11 (60 FR 14247).

II. LEDs and Miniature Halogen Bulbs

The reader is referred to the NPRM for a full discussion of the issues raised by NHTSA. Because the agency has decided to terminate rulemaking on light-emitting diodes (LEDs) and miniature halogen bulbs for the reasons discussed below, it is also deferring any extended published analysis of the comments received on these issues until such time as it may decide to reinitiate rulemaking on this topic.

NHTSA asked for recommendations as to how it might specify a means of determining the number of "equivalent" compartments for lamps equipped with LEDs. AAMA, Ford, and GM thought it premature for the agency to specify unique requirements for lamps equipped with distributive light sources until studies can be completed to assess concerns regarding possible perceptions with respect to brightness. These studies, in AAMA's estimate, would take six months to a year. During that time, its member companies could gather data on intensity, brightness and dimensional features (e.g., aspect ratio) of signal and marking lamps of recent model vehicles. Similar comments came from Ford and GM. Other commenters did not reach a consensus on whether SAE J1889 would be an appropriate specification for LEDs.

Based upon these comments, NHTSA has concluded that there is a great amount of uncertainty within the lighting community about the best method of regulating the photometric requirements of non-traditional light sources for signal and marking lamps. In view of these uncertainties and a lack of consensus among the commenters on methods of equivalent compartmentalization, NHTSA has decided not to pursue further rulemaking at this time. For this reason, it is appropriate also not to pursue the issue of test methods for LEDs and miniature type light sources. However, the docket will remain open to accept comments about these issues, and NHTSA may reinitiate rulemaking at a

time when a more definite outcome appears feasible.

Request for Comments

Interested persons are invited to submit comments on the proposal. It is requested but not required that 10 copies be submitted.

All comments must not exceed 15 pages in length. (49 CFR 553.21). Necessary attachments may be appended to these submissions without regard to the 15-page limit. This limitation is intended to encourage commenters to detail their primary arguments in a concise fashion.

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 the street address given above, and seven copies from which the purportedly confidential information has been deleted should be submitted to the Docket Section. 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.

All comments received before the close of business on the comment closing date indicated above for the proposal 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. Comments received too late for consideration in regard to the final rule will be considered as suggestions for further rulemaking action. Comments on the proposal will be available for inspection in the docket. The NHTSA will continue to file relevant information as it becomes available in the docket after the closing date, and it is recommended that interested persons continue to examine the docket for new material.

Those persons desiring to be notified upon receipt of their comments in the rules docket should enclose a selfaddressed, stamped postcard in the envelope with their comments. Upon receiving the comments, the docket supervisor will return the postcard by mail.

Effective Date

Since the final rule would not impose any additional burden and is intended to afford an alternative to existing requirements, it is hereby tentatively found that an effective date earlier than 180 days after issuance of the final rule is in the public interest. The final rule

¹ A manufacturer "rates" the design "life" of a light source by "laboratory" tests of a large number of units that are activated under identical and ideal test conditions of temperature, humidity, lack of vibration, etc. When the test sources have been run to burn out, the manufacturer takes the total time data and determines the "average" in hours.