

reference label on the edge of the door or latch post nearest the driver.

Standard No. 118 *Power Window Systems*: rewiring of the power window system so that the window transport is inoperative when the ignition is switched off.

Standard No. 208 *Occupant Crash Protection*: installation of a seat belt warning buzzer. The petitioner states that all non-U.S. certified 1992 and 1993 Mercedes-Benz 500SEL passenger cars built prior to September 1993 are equipped with driver's side air bags and knee bolsters, and that those built after September 1993 are equipped with both driver's and passenger's side air bags and knee bolsters. The petitioner further states that these vehicles are equipped with Type 2 seat belts in both front and rear outboard seating positions.

Standard No. 214 *Side Impact Protection*: installation of reinforcing beams.

Standard No. 301 *Fuel System Integrity*: installation of a rollover valve in the fuel tank vent line between the fuel tank and the evaporative emissions collection canister.

Additionally, the petitioner states that the bumpers on the non-U.S. certified 1992 and 1993 Mercedes-Benz 500SEL passenger cars must be reinforced to comply with the Bumper Standard found in 49 CFR Part 581.

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

All comments received before the close of business on the closing date indicated above 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 petition will be published in the Federal Register pursuant to the authority indicated below.

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 30141(a)(1)(A) and (b)(1); 49 CFR 593.8; delegations of authority at 49 CFR 1.50 and 501.8.

Issued on: December 12, 1995.

Marilynne Jacobs,
Director, Office of Vehicle Safety Compliance.
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[Docket No. 95-86; Notice 1]

Isis Imports Ltd. Receipt of Application for Temporary Exemption From Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards No. 208 and 214

Isis Imports Ltd. of San Francisco, California, ("Isis") has applied for a temporary exemption of two years from paragraph S4.1.4 of Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 208 *Occupant Crash Protection*, and of three years from Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 214 *Side Impact Protection*. 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 an 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.

The make and type of passenger car for which exemption is requested is the Morgan open car or convertible. Morgan Motor Company ("Morgan"), the British manufacturer of the Morgan, has not offered its vehicle for sale in the United States since the early days of the Federal motor vehicle safety standards. It is the business of Isis to buy incomplete Morgan cars from the British manufacturer and import them as motor vehicle equipment, completing manufacture by the addition of engine and fuel system components. They differ from their British counterparts, not only in equipment items and modifications necessary for compliance with the Federal motor vehicle safety standards, but also in their fuel system components and engines, which are propane fueled. As the party completing manufacture of the vehicle, Isis certifies its conformance to all applicable Federal safety and bumper standards. The vehicle completed by Isis in the U.S. is deemed sufficiently different from the one produced in Britain that NHTSA considers Isis the manufacturer, not a converter, even though the brand names are the same.

Morgan itself produced around 470 cars in 1994, while in the year preceding the filing of its petition in September 1995, Isis produced 14 cars for sale in the United States. Twice previously NHTSA has exempted Isis from compliance with the automatic restraint requirements of Standard No. 208 on hardship grounds, the latest exemption expiring November 1, 1995. The staff of Isis consists of three full time employees and one part time

employee. Its cumulative net income for the years 1992-94 totals \$34,694.

Application for Exemption From Standard No. 208

Isis received NHTSA Exemptions Nos. 89-4 and 92-7 from S4.1.2.1 and S4.1.2.2 of Standard No. 208, respectively expiring October 1, 1992 and November 1, 1995 (54 FR 43647 and 57 FR 60564). Under the first exemption, it had sought to comply through a motorized belt system, then concluded that an air bag system would be preferable. At the time that its second exemption was granted, Isis had received proposals from air bag suppliers that it deemed prohibitive in cost. However, it hoped to have access to a system under development by Range Rover, or to aftermarket retrofit components.

According to the applicant, sufficient progress has been made during its second three-year exemption period that it can foresee compliance in only two more years. Morgan itself intends to equip its cars with air bags and has begun a test program towards this end. To date, 5 of 6 Hy-ge sled tests have been conducted. Body modifications are being engineered. Morgan is currently negotiating for "multi-point sensor air bag components", and estimates that it will take 12 to 18 months to complete the project "once we are given permission to use the components, most of which have already been sourced." Until such time, Isis will continue to use manual three-point restraint systems in its cars.

Application for Exemption from Standard No. 214

Isis claims that it has insufficient resources to work towards compliance with those requirements until its work on complying with Standard No. 208 is completed. It has had discussions with the British Motor Industry Research Association to identify the components that may require alteration, such as the door latches and interior padding. In its view, "it would not be prudent to test for side impact until we complete our modifications of the seating area and knee bolster assembly and finalize the air bag configuration, as changes in this area would be reflected in the performance of the vehicle in side-impact testing." It does, however, meet the previous side door strength requirements of the standard, and will work towards compliance during the three-year exemption period for which it has asked. Were the phase-in requirement of S8 applied to it, calculated on the basis of its limited