

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

G/TBT/N/USA/68
19 July 2004

(04-3086)

Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

Original: English

NOTIFICATION

The following notification is being circulated in accordance with Article 10.6.

1.	Member to Agreement notifying: <u>UNITED STATES</u> If applicable, name of local government involved (Articles 3.2 and 7.2):
2.	Agency responsible: Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) (71) Name and address (including telephone and fax numbers, e-mail and web-site addresses, if available) of agency or authority designated to handle comments regarding the notification shall be indicated if different from above:
3.	Notified under Article 2.9.2 [X], 2.10.1 [], 5.6.2 [], 5.7.1 [], other:
4.	Products covered (HS or CCCN where applicable, otherwise national tariff heading. ICS numbers may be provided in addition, where applicable): alternative motor vehicle fuels (HS Chapter 8703) (ICS 75.160).
5.	Title, number of pages and language(s) of the notified document: NHTSA's Four-Year Plan for Hydrogen, Fuel Cell and Alternative Fuel Vehicle Safety Research (2 Pages, English)
6.	Description of content: This notice announces the availability of a planning document that describes the scope and timeline of NHTSA's proposed research program addressing safety and fuel economy assessment of hydrogen-powered fuel cell and internal combustion engine vehicles. Ensuring that hydrogen internal combustion engine (ICE) and fuel cell powered vehicles provide a level of safety comparable to that of other vehicles currently in use in the United States requires a substantial research effort. Hydrogen-powered vehicles will utilize many advanced and unique technologies that have not been tested in the transportation environment. Very little data are available concerning the safe performance of these vehicles because so few exist; they are typically prototypes handled by specially trained personnel. Many manufacturers, however, are substantially investing in producing and marketing these vehicles in the near future. As these vehicles are deployed into the fleet, the safety of hydrogen as a fuel and the safety of alternative fuel vehicles in crashes becomes an important issue for public safety. A failure to adequately address safety concerns in the earliest stages of development could have a negative impact on the deployment of this new technology. Corollary efforts by NHTSA that are covered in the plan address fuel economy and international harmonization of global technical regulations for hydrogen vehicles. The agency will analyze the potential increases in the fleet fuel economy. NHTSA will also work with its international counterparts to determine the content of regulations pertaining to fuel cell and ICE hydrogen vehicles. NHTSA seeks public review and comment on the planning document. Comments received will be evaluated and incorporated, as appropriate, into planned agency activities.

7.	Objective and rationale, including the nature of urgent problems where applicable: Protection of Human Life and Health.
8.	Relevant documents: 69 Federal Register (FR) 42126 14 July 2004; Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 571. Will appear in the Federal Register when adopted.
9.	Proposed date of adoption: Proposed date of entry into force: } To be determined
10.	Final date for comments: 12 October 2004
11.	Texts available from: National enquiry point [X] or address, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail and web-site addresses, if available of the other body: Internet URLs: http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/06jun20041800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/04-15971.htm http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/06jun20041800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/pdf/04-15971.pdf