

**Office of Commercial Space  
Transportation**

**Finding of No Significant Impact;  
Vandenberg Air Force Base, CA**

**AGENCY:** Office of Commercial Space Transportation, Department of Transportation.

**ACTION:** DOT Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

**SUMMARY:** DOT is issuing this notice to advise the public that a FONSI has been made on the expendable launch vehicle program at Vandenberg Air Force Base (VAFB), California.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In February 1986, the Office of Commercial Space Transportation published the Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Commercial Expendable Launch Vehicle Programs (51 FR 6870) February 26, 1986). In cooperation with the U.S. Air Force, the Office has completed an environmental assessment of the commercial space transportation program at VAFB. DOT licenses commercial space launches from the National Ranges, one of which is VAFB. This programmatic assessment addresses the impact of commercial launches from VAFB, California.

The FONSI is based on an environmental assessment of the commercial space transportation program at VAFB. This programmatic assessment identified the impacts that the conduct of commercial launch activities would have on the environment. None of these were significant. However, certain factors associated with individual launch proposals were not addressed in the assessment and may require further review when a company proposes to conduct a new activity at VAFB. These include use of new launch vehicles, new propellants, new site development, or environmental effects associated with some payloads in the events of a launch accident.

Copies of the FONSI and assessment may be requested from Office of Commercial Space Transportation, S-52, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Room 10330, Washington, DC 20590.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Norman Bowles, Associate Director for Licensing Programs, Office of Commercial Space Transportation, (202) 366-2929 or Gerald Musarra, Office of the General Counsel, (202) 366-3905, Department of Transportation, Washington, DC 20590.

Dated: February 1, 1988.

Courtney A. Stadd,  
Director, Office of Commercial Space  
Transportation.

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**National Highway Traffic Safety  
Administration**

[Docket No. 79-17; Notice 36]

**New Car Assessment Program;  
Optional Testing by Manufacturers**

**AGENCY:** National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Amendment to Optional New Car Assessment Program (Optional NCAP).

**SUMMARY:** This notice amends the vehicle eligibility criteria for the Optional NCAP test program for motor vehicle manufacturers. Before this notice, vehicles were eligible to be tested under Optional NCAP if production design changes were made to the vehicles at some time after the original NCAP results for the vehicle were publicly released. By this amendment, vehicles are eligible to be tested under Optional NCAP if production design changes were made at any date after the production date of the vehicle that was tested in NCAP.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This amendment becomes effective February 5, 1988.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Charles L. Gauthier, Office of Market Incentives, NHTSA, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC 20590 (202-366-4805).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On August 21, 1987, the agency published criteria for an Optional NCAP test program for motor vehicle manufacturers (52 FR 31691). The program was instituted to provide manufacturers with an opportunity to retest any of their vehicles that have been tested in the NCAP program and subsequently modified with production changes to improve occupant protection. The testing was designed to be conducted at the manufacturers' expense, but under criteria established by NHTSA. These criteria require that the testing be conducted at the same test facilities and according to the same controls and procedures used for the agency's NCAP testing. The Optional NCAP test results would be published by the agency in its NCAP press releases.

In the November 19, 1986, **Federal Register** notice seeking comment on the proposed criteria for Optional NCAP (51

FR 41888), and in the August 21, 1987, **Federal Register** notice announcing the final Optional NCAP criteria, the agency described the rationale for the program. Specifically, "the agency [has] concluded that it would be helpful to both consumers and the vehicle manufacturers if the information about improved NCAP test results for the modified vehicles were made public as soon as possible."

The intent of the program was that, as vehicles changed from the ones originally tested in NCAP, manufacturers could request retesting under Optional NCAP. It was assumed that the changes would be made after the NCAP results were announced. However, based on information received from Volkswagen of America, Inc., (Volkswagen), it is clear that limiting eligibility for Optional NCAP to only those vehicles that have had a change made after the NCAP results are announced is not consistent with the intent of the program.

As previously discussed, Optional NCAP was designed to give information to consumers on vehicles that have had changes made to improve their NCAP crash test performance, and, therefore, are different from the vehicles originally tested in NCAP. That is the case with the Volkswagen Fox. Volkswagen Fox vehicles currently available in dealer showrooms are different from the one tested by NHTSA. Thus, the agency believes that the current NCAP test data available to the public on some vehicles may not be indicative of the crash test performance of the vehicle a consumer may actually be considering for purchase.

In order to correct this type of situation, the agency published a notice on December 10, 1987, seeking comments on proposed changes to the Optional NCAP eligibility Criteria Nos. 1.a. and 1.b. (52 FR 46880).

The eligibility criteria were proposed to be changed to allow vehicles to be tested in Optional NCAP as long as the production design changes were made after the production date of the vehicle tested in NCAP.

The agency received comments to the notice from Chrysler Corporation (Chrysler), Ford Motor Company, General Motors Corporation, and Volkswagen of America, Inc. (Volkswagen). All commenters concurred with the agency's proposed changes to the test vehicle eligibility criteria for Optional NCAP as presented. Chrysler and Volkswagen also provided comments which concerned NCAP in general and the need for several of the Optional NCAP criteria. However, those

were unrelated to the proposed amendment to Optional NCAP. These comments are discussed below.

#### The NCAP Program in General

Chrysler commented that NCAP is misleading to consumers and that the results do not provide useful, real-world comparative ratings of the crashworthiness of passenger cars and light-duty vehicles. These comments are not relevant to the agency's notice requesting comments on an amendment to Optional NCAP. However, the agency's position on NCAP and its usefulness to consumers can be found in the August 21, 1987, notice establishing the criteria for the Optional NCAP test program for motor vehicle manufacturers (52 FR 31691).

#### Vehicles Eligible To Be Included in the Optional NCAP

Volkswagen stated that the agency should allow manufacturers to retest any vehicles they wish under Optional NCAP, without the need to demonstrate to the agency that an improvement has been made. This argument is based on Volkswagen's belief that a manufacturer is unlikely to underwrite the expense of Optional NCAP testing unless it is confident that the results will demonstrate improvement. The need for Optional NCAP requirements specifying vehicle eligibility and supporting data criteria (Criteria No. 1 and No. 2) were discussed at length in the August 21, 1987, notice establishing the Optional NCAP test program for motor vehicle manufacturers (52 FR 31691). To briefly reiterate, the agency is not going to use Optional NCAP to disseminate information about essentially repetitive testing of unchanged vehicle models. Without the controls established by the Optional NCAP criteria, a manufacturer could use this program to publish different crash test results for unchanged vehicles. Such actions would not benefit consumers or further any purpose of NCAP. Accordingly, the agency is not persuaded by the Volkswagen comment.

#### Amendment to the Criteria for Optional NCAP Testing

After considering all comments, NHTSA is amending the vehicle eligibility criteria in Optional NCAP for the reasons set forth in the proposal and repeated above. Therefore, Optional NCAP Criteria Nos. 1.a. and 1.b. are amended as follows:

1. The following vehicles are eligible for testing under this program:
  - a. Any model that has previously been tested under the NCAP program, and at some time after the production date of

the vehicle tested in NCAP, the manufacturer has made production design changes to the models that are likely to significantly improve its NCAP test results.

- b. A model selected by NHTSA that is in the same line as a model that was previously tested under the NCAP program, but the tested model is no longer in production, and, at some time after the production date of the vehicle tested in NCAP, the manufacturer has made production design changes to the line of vehicles that are likely to significantly improve the NCAP test results.

The agency will implement these amended criteria for Optional NCAP testing on the day this notice is published in the *Federal Register*. Thus, any manufacturer requests for optional testing that are received on or after that date will be evaluated under these amended criteria.

Issued on February 2, 1988.

Diane K. Steed,

*Administrator.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

### Office of the Secretary

[Dept. Circular—Public Debt Series—No. 4-88]

### 8-3/4 Percent Treasury Bonds of 2017

Washington, January 28, 1988.

#### 1. Invitation for Tenders

1.1. The Secretary of the Treasury, under the authority of Chapter 31 of Title 31, United States Code, invites tenders for approximately \$8,750,000,000 of United States securities, designated 8-3/4% Treasury Bonds of 2017 (CUSIP No. 912810 DY 1), hereafter referred to as Bonds. The Bonds will be sold at auction, with bidding on the basis of yield. Payment will be required at the price equivalent of the yield of each accepted bid. Additional amounts of the Bonds may be issued to Government accounts and Federal Reserve Banks for their own account in exchange for maturing Treasury securities.

#### 2. Description of Securities

2.1. The Bonds will be issued February 16, 1988, and are offered as an additional amount of 8-3/4% Treasury Bonds of 2017 (CUSIP No. 912810 DY 1) dated May 15, 1987. Payment for the Bonds will be based on the price equivalent to the bid yield determined in accordance with this circular, plus accrued interest from November 15, 1987, to February 16,

1988. Interest on the Bonds offered as an additional issue is payable on a semiannual basis on May 15, 1988, and each subsequent 6 months on November 15 and May 15 through the date that the principal becomes payable. They will mature May 15, 2017, and will not be subject to call for redemption prior to maturity. In the event any payment date is a Saturday, or other nonbusiness day, the amount due will be payable (without additional interest) on the next business day.

2.2. The Bonds are subject to all taxes imposed under the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. The Bonds are exempt from all taxation now or hereafter imposed on the obligation or interest thereof by any State, any possession of the United States, or any local taxing authority, except as provided in 31 U.S.C. 3124.

2.3. The Bonds will be acceptable to secure deposits of Federal public monies. They will not be acceptable in payment of Federal taxes.

2.4. The Bonds will be issued only in book-entry form, and in denominations of \$1,000, \$5,000, \$10,000, \$100,000, and \$1,000,000, and in multiples of those amounts. They will not be issued in registered definitive or in bearer form.

2.5. The Bond may be held in its fully constituted form or it may be divided into its separate Principal and Interest Components and maintained as such on the book-entry records of the Federal Reserve Banks, acting as fiscal agents of the United States. The provisions specifically applicable to the separation, maintenance, transfer, and reconstitution of Principal and Interest Components are set forth in Section 6 of this circular. Subsections 2.1 through 2.4. of this section are descriptive of Bonds in their fully constituted form; the description of the separate Principal and Interest Components is set forth in Section 6 of this circular.

2.6. The Department of the Treasury's general regulations governing United States securities, i.e., Department of the Treasury Circular No. 300, current revision (31 CFR Part 306), as to the extent applicable to marketable securities issued in book-entry form, and the regulations governing book-entry Treasury Bonds, Notes, and Bills, as adopted and published as a final rule to govern securities held in the TREASURY DIRECT Book-Entry Securities System in 51 FR 18260, *et seq.* (May 16, 1986), apply to the Bonds offered in this circular.

#### 3. Sale Procedures

3.1. Tenders will be received at Federal Reserve Banks and Branches