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DOT Announces Advanced Air Bag Regulation That Improves Benefits and Reduces Risks

May 5, 2000. Washington, DC. Amidst a standing room only crowd, 11 television cameras and numerous journalists, Secretary Rodney Slater and NHTSA Acting Administrator Rosalyn Millman announced an advanced air bag rule requiring that future air bags create less risk of serious air bag-induced



NHTSA Acting Administrator Rosalyn Millman and Secretary Slater announce the advanced air bag regulation in the Marx Media Center, May 5, 2000.

injuries than current air bags, particularly for small women and young children, and provide frontal crash protection for all occupants.

The rule issued by NHTSA imposes performance requirements to ensure that future air bags do not pose an unreasonable risk of serious injury to occupants who are very near the air bag when it deploys. The agency adopts a number of options to ensure that vehicle manufacturers would be free to use various combinations of advanced air bag technologies. With this flexibility, they could use technologies, like dual stage inflators and weight sensors, that

Continued on p. 2



The new family of crash tests dummies. The family includes a one, three and six year old child dummy, a small female dummy, and an average male dummy.

NHTSA Deputy Administrator Millman Kicks-Off National Bike Month/Praises Youth Efforts to Promote Safe Bicycling

by **Cathy Hickey,**
Office of Public and Consumer Affairs

May 10, 2000. Washington, D.C. NHTSA Deputy Administrator Rosalyn G. Millman grabbed a bike and helmet and joined more than 100 youth from the Washington, D.C. area and beyond to kick-off National Bike Month.

As a key participant in Earth Force's *Get Out Spoke'n!* Youth Bicycle Summit on Capitol Hill, Millman spoke to the children about the importance of always following the rules of the road when biking, especially wearing a bike helmet. Earth Force is a national non-profit organization that helps

Continued on p. 3

Delta Vision: Delta Voices National Conference

May 10-11, Crystal City, Virginia. Secretary Slater hosted the two day conference to bring attention to the economic prosperity of the Mississippi Delta region and other areas of the country which have not benefitted from the Nation's economy. President Clinton delivered luncheon remarks on the 10th, following Vice President Gore's town hall meeting earlier in

the morning. Secretary Slater later participated in a Satellite Media Tour to select television stations in the Mississippi Delta, arranged by OST Public Affairs and NHTSA Public Affairs. The National Conference was attended by approximately 750 Delta leaders, legislators, non-profit representatives, federal officials, business people, and public and

private stakeholders. Satellite down links brought the Conference directly to universities, colleges, and other venues in the Delta region. ■

"From the Banks of the Potomac to the Mississippi, We are Listening to the Voices of the Delta."

— President Clinton



President Clinton and Secretary Slater prior to President Clinton's luncheon address on May 10.



Secretary Slater opens the two day National Delta Vision Delta Voices Conference at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Crystal City, Virginia.

DOT Announces Advanced Air Bag Regulation That Improves Benefits and Reduces Risks

Continued from p. 1

control or prevent air bag deployment in appropriate circumstances. Some new vehicles are already equipped with these types of devices.

Future tests will incorporate a new family of crash test dummies with improved injury criteria better representing human injury tolerances. The family includes 1-, 3-, and 6-year old child dummies, a small (5th percentile) female dummy, and an average size (50th percentile) male dummy. Currently, only a 50th percentile male dummy is required.

During the first stage, from Sept. 1, 2003 to Aug. 31, 2006, increasing percentages of motor vehicles will be required to meet requirements for reducing air bag risks, either by automatically turning off the air bag in the presence of young children or deploying the air bag in a manner much less likely to cause serious or fatal injury to out-of-position occupants. To test the ability to detect the presence of children, the rule specifies that child dummies be placed in child seats that are, in turn, placed on the passenger seat. It also specifies tests that are conducted with unrestrained child dummies sitting, kneeling, standing, or lying on the passenger seat.

During the second stage phase-in, from Sept. 1, 2007 to Aug.31, 2010, the maximum

test speed for the belted rigid barrier test will be increased from 30mph to 35 mph in tests

with the 50th percentile adult male dummy. As in the case of the first-stage requirements, this second-stage requirement will be phased in for increasing percentages of motor vehicles.

More information on the advanced air bag regulation can be found at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/airbag/>. ■



Several news organizations recorded the announcement of advanced air bag regulation on May 5, 2000.

NHTSA Deputy Administrator Millman Kicks-Off National Bike Month

Continued from p. 1

young people solve environmental problems in their communities. *Get Out Spoke'n!* is their national campaign to make America more bike-friendly.

In 1998, traffic crashes killed 761 bicyclists and injured an additional 53,000. Bicyclists under age 16 accounted for 30 percent of all bicyclists killed and 44 percent of those injured. Bicycle helmets are the single most effective countermeasure to death or serious injury in the event of a crash and are 85-88 percent effective in mitigating head and brain injuries. The current national average for helmet use is only 20-25 percent.

"I am thrilled that so many young people are promoting safe cycling," said Millman. "These young people will help us ensure that every rider always wears a helmet and follows the rules of the road."

According to NHTSA estimates, universal helmet use by children ages 4-15 would prevent 135 to 155 deaths annually. It is also estimated that every dollar spent on bicycle helmets for children ages 4-15 saves \$3 in health care costs.

At the summit, Millman praised youth award winners from around the country for their contributions to improve bicycle safety and to promote bicycling as a healthy and environmentally friendly alternative to driving. One group she presented an award to was from her home state of Pennsylvania. Eighteen young people involved in Glinodo Earth Force in Erie, Pennsylvania, collected

hundreds of surveys and assessments that indicated bicycle safety is a major concern in their area. To address this problem, they've held events, made presentations and partnered with other local government agencies, organizations and student groups to get the word out about safe bicycling.

In addition to NHTSA and Earth Force,

the annual Youth Bike Summit is co-sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Pew Charitable Trusts. Also on hand to congratulate the awards winners and provide remarks were Congressman Earl Blumenuer, Congressman David Bonior, Congressman Mark Foley and Congressman David Minge. Following remarks and the awards presentation, Millman joined the youth in a bicycle rodeo to teach and emphasize safe riding skills.

Additional information on bicycle safety is available on NHTSA's website at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/bike ■



Deputy Administrator Rosalyn Millman dons a helmet and a bike at the May 10 event.



Congressman Earl Blumenuer charges the bicyclists to "Get Out Spoke'n!"

Sam Saddriver On the Road

Through donations from 146 outdoor advertising companies across the country, NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation



(ODI) has displayed 2000 Hotline billboards in 36 states this year. The Hotline billboard promotes the toll-free number of the DOT Auto Safety Hotline using its character Sam Saddriver. ODI received more than 5,000 offers to donate both billboard space and labor for installation; far exceeding the number of posters that were available for distribution. ■

New Bookmarks Encourage Agency Contact

by Kathie Klass,
Office of Public and Consumer Affairs

We want to hear from you.... is the message the Customer Service Team is sending to anyone who will hear. The "hot-off-the-press" bookmark encourages consumers to contact NHTSA in a way that is most convenient with them, whether by phone, fax, internet or mail.

The bookmark is a quick and easy read of NHTSA's mission and responsibilities, and is distinctive in its red white and blue marking.

The bookmark was devised after the team reviewed old customer service brochures and decided that with the many materials the agency sends to consumers, a simple, informative bookmark would be an appropriate, consolidated update. Consumers are more likely to use a bookmark, which serves as an ongoing reminder of the services that NHTSA provides.

Bob Shelton, Executive Director and team sponsor, encourages all NHTSA employees to enclose a bookmark with every mailing that leaves the agency. Please contact Kathie Klass in OPACA for additional supplies for your office. She can be reached at 6-5971. ■

NHTSA Has a Presence at Public Service Recognition Week on the National Mall

May 4-7, 2000. Washington, DC.

— NHTSA's three exhibits were a part of the Public Service Recognition Week celebration on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. Bob Ross (NHTSA's Traffic Safety Programs)



and Kelly Schuler's (Safety Assurance) daughter Jennifer volunteered and distributed a wide variety of brochures and items on NHTSA's programs and initiatives. The event was well attended, with hundreds passing through the tents and viewing the exhibits. ■

NHTSA

CUSTOMER SERVICE PRIORITIES

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Auto Safety Hotline
800-843-2-DOY (800-877-4296)

The Web
www.nhtsa.dot.gov

Mail
NHTSA, 400 7th St., SW, Room 5232
Washington, DC 20590

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) mission is to save lives, prevent injuries and reduce traffic related health care and other economic costs.

Responsibilities Include:

- Motor vehicle and equipment safety recalls
- Potential safety defects
- Seat belts
- Air bags
- Anti-lock brakes
- Bicycles, motorcycles, and school buses
- Child restraints
- Emergency Medical Services
- Impaired driving
- Odometer fraud
- Safety statistics
- Motor vehicle safety standards
- Crash tests and ratings
- Truck ratings
- Aggressive driving
- Other educational materials

We are easy to contact:

- Auto Safety Hotline: 800-843-2-DOY (800-877-4296)
- The Web: www.nhtsa.dot.gov
- Mail: NHTSA, 400 7th St., SW, Rm 5232 Washington, DC 20590

Take Your Children to Work Day Gets Law Enforcement Presence

Children who accompanied a parent to work on April 27, 2000, *Take Your Children to Work Day* at NHTSA, were visited by a member of the Washington State Patrol. Sergeant Karen De Witt, on a one-year Officer Leadership Program assignment to the Traffic Safety Program's Traffic Law Enforcement Division, spoke to the young people about the importance of seat belt use, wearing bike helmets, and how to be a safety bicyclists and pedestrian. Sergeant De Witt explained to them that the work their parents do at NHTSA saves lives just as law enforcement officers save lives. The youth also had the opportunity to ask Karen about her job as a police officer. Sergeant De Witt said that she is always eager to speak with young people. Some of them are the police officers of tomorrow, and it is a chance to show law enforcement in a positive light. ■



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Kathryn Henry
Editor

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"I don't think anything is unrealistic if you believe you can do it. I think if you are determined enough and willing to pay the price, you can get it done."

— Mike Ditka