

NPRM – Amendments to Part 512 Confidential Business Information—The Alliance WG has drafted comments supporting NHTSA’s rulemaking. The Alliance comments provide additional detail on the competitive harm that could occur if the information is made public. Comments are due January 2, 2007.

III. Quality/Compliance Issues

NHTSA Investigation on Tundra Ball Joints – An additional partial response to the NHTSA inquiry was submitted on December 7. A request for a further extension was granted until January 5.

NHTSA Investigation on Sienna Liftgate Support Struts – On December 1, NHTSA upgraded the defect investigation into the Toyota Sienna liftgate struts to an Engineering Analysis. NHTSA had been investigating reports that the liftgate struts would fail, causing the liftgate to fall and cause injury to those nearby. In the upgrade resume, NHTSA expresses concern about the power liftgate closing on its own and mentions that the liftgate can drop down approximately 12 inches before power closing. They note 14 reports of injury including both NHTSA and Toyota reports.

Defect Investigation –Scion tC Glass Moonroof Panel Breakage—On December 8, TMA received a copy of the closing resume for the defect investigation into the Scion tC Moonroof. NHTSA had been investigating reports that the panoramic moonroof had shattered. NHTSA compared the rate of shattering of a large moonroof panel on peer vehicles with the Scion tC and determined that the Scion tC is comparable. They conclude, as did Toyota, that the moonroof panels can shatter, even though they are constructed of tempered glass, as a result of impacts.

Defect Investigation –Highlander Hybrid Electric Power Steering— On November 21, TMA received the opening resume of a defect investigation into the Highlander Hybrid. The investigation will focus on an issue with the Electronic Power Steering (EPS) ECU which could cause a sudden loss of power steering assist. NHTSA received two complaints and one of the complaints alleges that a crash occurred. An inquiry letter was received, due February 9, which notes several EWR field reports related to the issue, indicative of NHTSA’s now using TREAD Act-mandated data.

Early Warning Reporting (EWR) – Comprehensive Inquiries (CI)—TMA submitted the response to the two CI letters received. One involved the service brakes of the 2002 MY Toyota Sienna, and the other involved the seats of the 2001 Toyota Sequoia. NHTSA issued 36 of these letters to various manufacturers in order to evaluate the usefulness of the EWR data. TMA is monitoring new investigations, to see if the CI responses are influencing NHTSA’s process.

Defect Petition – Camry/Solara Engine Surge—TMA filed the responses to NHTSA’s inquiry regarding this petition. A request for a partial submission was granted. Toyota’s investigation (conducted by Aisin) into the petitioner’s throttle body has been completed, with no trouble found. NHTSA will decide in the next few weeks to deny the petition or to open an investigation.

Compliance IR – FMVSS 208 Occupant Protection –TMA filed the responses regarding FMVSS 208 compliance of the 2007 MY Yaris and Camry with NHTSA.

Compliance IR – FMVSS 214 Side Impact Protection—TMA filed the response to the IR letter requesting information regarding FMVSS 214 compliance of the 2007 MY Toyota Highlander. In addition, the compliance test was conducted at TRC on December 1. The test was run at

LINCAP speed. The 2007 MY Highlander met all the requirements of FMVSS 214 and will be awarded a 5 star rating for the driver and rear passenger.

Foreign Recall Report – Camry Fuel Tank-- On November 27, TMA submitted a Foreign Recall Report (FRR) regarding an issue with certain Toyota Camry vehicles to address an issue with the fuel tank. The issue is limited to 3,502 vehicles produced at Toyota Motor Thailand Co., Ltd. There is a possibility that a tapping tool may have accidentally damaged the upper panel of the fuel tank, which could result in fuel leakage from the tank when refueling. This is a result of the improper repair (tapping) of a weld-nut (located on a lower body panel near the fuel tank) that is used for the installation of the rear seat belt. The affected vehicles were produced by Toyota Motor Thailand, and these vehicles are not exported to the U.S.

Early Warning Reporting (EWR) – 2006 Q3 Data and Various Updates Submitted to NHTSA—As required under the TREAD Act, TMA-DC submitted the 2006 Q3 EWR data to NHTSA. Copies of non-dealer field reports were also submitted. During this submission window, the 2006 Q1 death and injury data was updated to reflect the addition of a claimant's VIN. The 2004 Q2 and 2005 Q4 aggregate data and all quarters of the historical data submission were updated due to the discovery of an accounting error.

Defect Information Report (DIR) – 2007 Solara Curtain Shield Airbag -- TMA filed a Defect Information Report (DIR) with NHTSA regarding a voluntary safety recall of the 160 model year 2007 Toyota Camry Solaras. The affected vehicles were equipped with the curtain shield airbag system, and there is a possibility that its tether strap may have been incorrectly routed during the assembly process. In this condition, the front side of the curtain shield airbag may not deploy as designed, and could result in insufficient occupant protection during a side impact collision or rollover event. Owners will be instructed to bring their vehicle in to a Toyota dealer to have the tether strap inspected and repaired if necessary.

2003-2005 MY Tundra Access Cab LATCH Issue--TMA-DC received approval from NHTSA for the draft owner notification letter, warning label, and LATCH installation request form to address the FMVSS 225 non-compliance on 2003-2005 MY Tundra Access Cab pickup trucks. The original NCIR will be updated on December 22 and owner letters will begin mailing in January 2007.