

NHTSA Final EDR Rule

August 9, 2012

On August 9, 2012, NHTSA published a Final Rule (Vol. 77, Number 154; Docket No.NHTSA-2012-0099) amending requirements for voluntarily installed event data recorders (EDRs). Three Petitions for Reconsiderations from the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, Automotive Safety Council and Honda Motor Co. were reviewed. The Association of Global Automakers and Nissan North America both filed comments supporting the petitions. The Agency responded to the other petitions.

The effective date for this Final Rule is October 9, 2012. Passenger cars, trucks and busses with a gross vehicle weight rating of 8500 lbs. or less and an unloaded vehicle weight of 5500 lbs. or less (except walk-in van-type trucks or vehicles designed exclusively for the US Postal Service), voluntarily equipped with an EDR and manufactured on or after September 1, 2012 must comply with this Final Rule. The compliance date for vehicles built in 2 or more stages and altered vehicles is September 1, 2013.

NHTSA responses:

Steering Input - Petitioners claimed that implementing the new EDR requirement to report steering input in percent would impose an unnecessary proliferation of EDR calibrations to match vehicle builds and requested the use of the original input range to -250 degrees CW to 250 degrees CCW with a resolution specification of 5 degrees.

Response: Based upon the supporting information provided by Bosch, NHTSA is going back to the steering input data element range of -250 degrees CW to 250 degrees CCW that was in the 2008 Final Rule.

Data Clipping Flag - All three petitioners requested that the agency consider delaying the requirement that an EDR must flag the first occurrence of input that saturates or clips the sensor.

Response: NHTSA agreed with Honda, the Alliance, ASC, and GAM that the data clipping flag requirement should be delayed and provided an extra year of lead time for this requirement to give manufacturers additional time to comply.

End of Event Time - Petitioners requested a change to the end of event time definition in order to avoid large changes to existing software and the need to re-qualify in a short time frame.

Response: Denied.

Occupant Size Classification - Petitioners requested clarification on the occupant size classifications definition. They felt the stated definition was misleading because it may now include the 5th percentile female (as defined in 49 CFR Part 572, subpart O) in the same category as a full sized adult.

Response: Denied – NHTSA wants the occupant size classification to be inclusive of the 5th percentile.

Non-Reversible Deployment of Restraints - Petitioners requested that NHTSA clarify the requirements for data capture by EDRs in events having non-reversible, deployable restraints other than air bags. They feel the agency intended to allow the capture and recording of deployments of these types of devices, such as pretensioners, at the option of the manufacturer, but that the current regulatory text in 49 CFR 563.9(b) is unclear.

Response: Denied - NHTSA believes that section 563.9(b) is clear. When a memory buffer is available, EDRs must capture and record current event data that does not involve deployment of an air bag. If the memory buffers are full, manufacturers may either overwrite previous data that does not involve deployment of an air bag, or not record the current event data if it does not involve deployment of an air bag.

Multi Event Storage - Petitioners requested clarification on the locking of events involving side impact air bags. They claimed that the regulatory text could be interpreted that if a side impact deployment occurs first, it would be locked and a subsequent secondary frontal air bag deployment would not be recorded. They felt that this was not keeping with the agency's intent to record frontal air bag deployments.

Response: NHTSA agreed that if a side impact deployment occurred first and the EDR recorded the lateral delta-V, this event would need to be locked and a subsequent event (including the deployment of a frontal air bag) would not need to be recorded and is left to the option of the manufacturer.

Technical Workshop - Petitioners asked NHTSA to consider holding a technical workshop to ensure that all stakeholders are properly prepared to comply with Part 563.

Response: Denied

Compliance Test Procedures - Petitioners requested NHTSA to publish a Part 563 compliance test procedure as soon as possible.

Response: NHTSA is working with the SAE EDR committee to ensure that any compliance test procedure issued would consider the SAE J1698 Vehicle Event Data Interface. The test procedure will be provided in the docket for the 2011 Final Rule.

Petitions for this Final Rule must be received by NHTSA on or before September 24, 2012.