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July 17, 2019

## Via Courier

Heidi King
Deputy Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
West Building
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: Petition for Determination of Inconsequential Noncompliance

Dear Ms. King:

On behalf of Harley-Davidson Motor Company, we are submitting the enclosed Petition for Determination of Inconsequential Noncompliance pursuant to 49 U.S.C. §§ 30118(d) and 30120(h) and 49 C.F.R. §§ 556.1-556.9, for an exemption from the notice and remedy requirements, on the ground that the noncompliance to which this petition relates is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety.

We appreciate your consideration of this petition. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Christopher H. Grigorian

CHG:krb Enclosures

cc:

Josh Neff NHTSA RMD

Karen Kircher, Esq. (Harley Davidson) Michael Nixdorf (Harley-Davidson)

AUSTIN BOSTON CHICAGO DALLAS DENVER

DETROIT HOUSTON JACKSONVILLE LOS ANGELES MADISON MEXICO CITY MIAMI MILWAUKEE NEW YORK ORLANDO SACRAMENTO SAN DIEGO SAN FRANCISCO SILICON VALLEY TALLAHASSEE

TAMPA WASHINGTON, D.C. BRUSSELS TOKYO

ES19-002684

# Harley-Davidson Motor Company Petition for Determination of Inconsequential Noncompliance

July 17, 2019

Harley-Davidson Motor Company submits this Petition for Determination of Inconsequential Noncompliance pursuant to the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act (Safety Act), 49 U.S.C. §§ 30118(d) and 30120(h) and 49 C.F.R. §§ 556.1-556.9, for an exemption from the notice and remedy requirements of 49 U.S.C. §§ 30118 and 30120, on the ground that the noncompliance to which this petition relates is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety.

## I. Background

Harley-Davidson is a Wisconsin corporation with its principal place of business at 3700 W. Juneau Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53208. Harley-Davidson manufactures and sells on-road motorcycles, including the motorcycle models that are the subject of this petition.

On June 17, 2019, H-D determined that a population of model year (MY) 2018-2019 Softail FXBB Street Bob (FXBB) motorcycles (manufactured between June 22, 2017 and June 11, 2019) and MY 2018-2019 Softail FXLR Low Rider (FXLR) motorcycles (manufactured between June 26, 2017 and June 11, 2019) failed to comply with the requirements of Federal motor vehicle safety standard (FMVSS) No. 120. Specifically, at the inflation pressure stated on the certification label, the load rating of the front tire per the Tire and Rim Association Year Book (TRA Year Book) may be less than the stated gross axle weight rating (GAWR) of the motorcycle. Therefore, these motorcycles may not comply with FMVSS 120 S5.3.1. NHTSA Recall No. 19V-475. (A copy of H-D's Part 573 report is attached as Exhibit 1.)

The front wheel of the FXBB motorcycle is fitted with a Dunlop D401F 100/90-19 57H BW tire as original equipment. The model has a GAWR of 450 lbs., but at the recommended inflation level shown on the certification label (i.e., 30 psi), the calculated load rating of this tire according to the TRA Year Book is 386 lbs. The following is a copy of the certification label for the FXBB model:



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This tire has a maximum load carrying rating of 507 lbs. at 41 psi (compared with the front GAWR of 450 lbs.) and, thus, complies with FMVSS 120 S5.1.2.

The front wheel of the FXLR motorcycle is fitted with a Michelin Scorcher "31" 100/90B19 62H BW as original equipment. The front axle has a GAWR of 450 lbs., but at the recommended inflation level shown on the certification label (i.e., 30 psi), the calculated load rating of this tire according to the TRA Year Book is 443 lbs.<sup>2</sup> The following is a copy of the certification label for the FXLR model:



As discussed below, however, tests performed by the respective tire manufacturers demonstrate that these tires have an actual load carrying capacity that exceeds the GAWR at the recommended cold inflation pressure stated on the certification label.

H-D has contained and corrected all motorcycles within its control and has addressed this issue in production.

## II. Discussion

Under the Safety Act, each FMVSS promulgated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) must be "practicable, meet the need for motor vehicle safety, and be stated in objective terms." 49 U.S.C. § 30111(a). The Safety Act defines "motor vehicle safety" as follows:

the performance of a motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment in a way that protects the public against unreasonable risk of accidents occurring because of the design, construction, or performance of a motor vehicle, and against unreasonable risk of death or injury in an accident, and includes nonoperational safety of a motor vehicle.

49 U.S.C. § 30102(a)(9).

The Safety Act exempts manufacturers from the Safety Act's notice and remedy requirements when NHTSA determines that a noncompliance is inconsequential as it relates to motor vehicle safety. See 49 U.S.C. §§ 30118(d) and 30120(h). Sections 30118(d) and 30120(h) demonstrate Congress's acknowledgement that there are cases where a vehicle fails to meet the requirements of a safety standard, yet the impact on motor vehicle safety is so slight that an exemption from the notice and remedy requirements of the Safety Act is justified. NHTSA has stated that the relevant consideration in evaluating an inconsequentiality petition is "whether an occupant who is affected by the noncompliance is likely to be exposed to a significantly greater

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Because this tire has a maximum load rating of 584 lbs. at 41 psi (compared with the front GAWR of 450 lbs.), the motorcycle complies with FMVSS 120 S5.1.2, which specifies that the maximum load rating of the tire must meet or exceed the GAWR.

risk than an occupant in a compliant vehicle." 69 Fed. Reg. 19897, 19900 (Apr. 14, 2004) (emphasis added).

Under FMVSS 120 S5.1.2, "the sum of the maximum load ratings of the tires fitted to an axle shall be not less than the gross axle weight rating (GAWR) of the axle system as specified on the vehicle's certification label required by 49 CFR Part 567." Furthermore, FMVSS 120 S5.3.1 specifies that the manufacturer shall provide the "size designation . . . and the recommended cold inflation pressure for those tires such that the sum of the load ratings of the tires on each axle . . . is appropriate for the GAWR as calculated in accordance with S5.1.2."

NHTSA has explained that the GAWR "formalizes the decision each manufacturer makes about the load-bearing ability of the tires, rims, axle, brakes, and suspension components (at a minimum) chosen to support and control the loaded vehicle." 42 Fed. Reg. 7140, 7141 (Feb. 7, 1977). FMVSS 120 S5.3.1 seeks to ensure that the combination of the tire size designation and the recommended cold inflation pressure can support and control the loaded vehicle.

As described in H-D's noncompliance report, the recommended inflation pressure for the designated tire size would put the tires' rated load capacity as stated in the TRA Year Book below the motorcycle's front GAWR. Specifically, the front wheel of the FXBB motorcycle is fitted with a Dunlop D401F 100/90-19 57H BW tire, which has a calculated load rating of 386 lbs. per the TRA Year Book when inflated to 30 psi. Because the FXBB's GAWR is 450lbs., the tire's load rating at this inflation pressure is 64 lbs. below the specified front GAWR.<sup>3</sup>

The front wheel of the FXLR motorcycle is fitted with a Michelin Scorcher "31" 100/90B19 62H BW, which has a calculated load rating of 443 lbs. per the TRA Year Book when inflated to 30 psi. Because the FXLR's GAWR is 450 lbs., the tire's load rating is 7 lbs. below the GAWR.<sup>4</sup>

Although the load rating of the tires at the recommended inflation pressure as stated in the TRA Year Book falls below the GAWR, these tires were designed to carry a greater load than specified. Recent testing of these tires conducted by their respective manufacturers (Michelin and Dunlop) confirms that these tires can be safely operated on these motorcycles at 30 psi at the stated GAWR of 450 lbs. Accordingly, H-D believes the noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety.

For the Dunlop tire, H-D commissioned an endurance test that tracks the conditions in FMVSS 119 S7.2 and Table III. The test constituted the three phases of the endurance test detailed in Table III of FMVSS 119 at the recommended tire pressure of 41 psi beginning with maximum sidewall load and increasing the load at each phase. The test added a fourth, extended phase that tested the tire at the recommended tire pressure (30 psi). The phases break down as follows:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> In order to achieve the 450 lbs. load rating under the TRA Year Book calculations, the tire would need to be inflated to 36 psi.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> In order to achieve the 450 lbs. load rating, the TRA Year Book calculates that the tire would need to be inflated to 32 psi.

- Phase 1: 100% maximum sidewall load (507 lbs.) for 4 hours totaling 200 miles;
- Phase 2: 108% maximum sidewall load (549 lbs.) for 6 hours totaling 300 miles;
- Phase 3: 117% maximum sidewall load (594 lbs.) for 24 hours totaling 1,200 miles; and
- Phase 4: 125% of the gross axle load (495 lbs., derived by applying the 0.88 correction factor under the FMVSS 119 test procedure) for 8,300 miles at 30 psi.

In total, the four-phase endurance test ran the tire for 10,000 total miles at loads above the stated GAWR on the motorcycle. The tire passed all four phases of the endurance test. (A copy of the endurance test report is included in Exhibit 2.) Based on these results – including the worst-case scenario of Phase 4 – the load carrying capacity of the tire at 30 psi would adequately support the GAWR of 450 lbs.

For the Michelin Scorcher tire, which is original fitment on the FXLR model and optional/replacement fitment on the FXBB model, H-D worked with Michelin to confirm that the Scorcher "31" could be operated safely at a recommended tire pressure of 30 psi on both of these models when loaded to the full GAWR of 450 lbs. Michelin confirmed the performance of the tires through a high-speed test on a smooth drum by inflating the tire to 30 psi, applying a load of 450 lbs., and running the tire at a maximum speed of 210 kph (130 mph). Based on its testing, Michelin provided H-D with letters certifying that the tire would adequately support the GAWR of 450 lbs. (Copies of the performance certificates from Michelin are included as Exhibits 3 and 4.)

The above-referenced Dunlop and Michelin tires are the only fitments specified by H-D as original or replacement equipment for these two vehicle models.

Based on these test results, H-D believes that the noncompliance does not expose the rider of a noncompliant motorcycle to a significantly greater risk than a rider on a compliant motorcycle. 69 Fed. Reg. at 19900. While the recommended inflation pressure of 30 psi would reduce the tire's load rating as stated in the TRA Year Book, the tire's <u>actual</u> load carrying capacity is sufficient to allow the motorcycle to be safely operated at its full GAWR.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, H-D believes that that the difference is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety.

## III. Conclusion

The labeling noncompliance at issue here is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety. The load carrying capacity of the tires when inflated to 30 psi would adequately support the gross axle weight for both motorcycle models (FXLR and FXBB).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> H-D also notes that NHTSA has previously granted a petition for inconsequential noncompliance where the recommended cold inflation pressure on the certification label was below the appropriate "GAWR as calculated in accordance with S5.1.2." *See* 55 *Fed. Reg.* 49365 (Nov. 27, 1990).

For the foregoing reasons, H-D believes the noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety and respectfully requests that NHTSA exempt H-D from the notice and remedy requirements of the Safety Act.

Respectfully submitted,

Harley-Davidson Motor Company



## Harley-Davidson Motor Company

## Vehicle Report

NHTSA ID: 19V475 Transaction ID: 19-00601-22815-10 (Original Report)

Required fields indicated with \*

**Manufacturer: Harley-Davidson Motor Company** 

3700 W. Juneau Avenue Milwaukee WI 53201-0653 Chris Grigorian Outside Counsel For

202-672-5542,

This is a Noncompliance Report. Filing a petition pursuant to 49 CFR 556

#### **Vehicle Information**

Harley-Davidson Softail FXBB Street Bob 2018 - 2019

\* Model Yr. Start: 2018 \* Make: Harley-Davidson

\* Model: Softail FXBB Street Bob

\* Model Yr. End: 2019

Type:

MOTORCYCLES

OTHER

**Body Style:** 

Powertrain: GAS

**Descriptive Information:** 

Certain 2018 and 2019 Harley-Davidson Softail FXBB Street Bob motorcycles shipped prior to 6/17/19 are part of the recall population. The remaining 2018 and 2019 Harley-Davidson Softail FXBB Street Bob model motorcycles have updated VIN labels and owner's manuals. The specific

number of this make/model/model year is: 8543

**Production Dates** 

Begin: 06/22/2017

End:

06/11/2019

VIN Range(s): Begin:

Harley-Davidson Softail FXLR Low Rider 2018 - 2019

\* Model Yr. Start: 2018

\* Model Yr. End: 2019

Type:

MOTORCYCLES

\* Make: Harley-Davidson

**Body Style:** OTHER

\* Model: Softail FXLR Low Rider

Powertrain: GAS

**Production Dates** 

Begin: 06/26/2017

Descriptive Information:

End: 06/11/2019

End:

Certain 2018 and 2019 Harley-Davidson Softail FXLR Low Rider motorcycles shipped prior to 6/17/19 are part of the recall population. The remaining 2018 and 2019 Harley- Davidson Softail FXLR Low Rider model motorcycles have updated VIN labels and owner's manuals. The specific number of this

make/model/model year is: 4388

VIN Range(s): Begin:

Number potentially involved: 12931

Estimated percentage of involved with defect: 100%

## **Defect / Noncompliance Description**

For this Defect/Noncompliance:

## \* Describe the defect or noncompliance:

At the stated inflation front tire pressures on the VIN label, the load rating (according to the Tire and Rim Association Yearbook) may be less than the stated GAWRs. Therefore, these vehicles may not comply with FMVSS 120, Section S5.3.1. However, H-D believes the actual load capacities at the stated recommended inflation pressures are sufficient in these applications.

## If a noncompliance, provide the applicable FMVSS:

120 - Wheels and rims- other than passenger cars

If applicable, provide any further FMVSS affected:

Describe the cause:

This Recall affects all vehicles.

\* Describe the safety risk:

Harley-Davidson believes this labeling noncompliance is inconsequential to motor vehicle safety and intends to submit an inconsequentiality petition in accordance with 49 CFR Part 556.

Identify any warning which can precede or occur:

If applicable, identify the manufacturer of the defective or noncompliant component. If the manufacturer of the component is unknown, provide the information for the company that supplied the subject component.

Component manufacturer

Company Information

Company Contact Information

Company Name:

Country:

First Name:

Address 1:

**Last Name:** 

Add ----

Position:

Address 2:

Email:

City:

Email:

State:

Phone:

Zip/Postal Code:

### **Chronology of Defect / Noncompliance Determination**

Provide the chronology of events leading up to the defect decision or test data for the noncompliance decision.:

May 22, 2019: A potential VIN labeling issue was identified by the Harley-Davidson Product Integrity Department while investigating tire load ratings. May 30 - June 13, 2019: Harley-Davidson's Technical Subcommittee (TSC) conducted its investigation of this potential issue. As part of that work, Harley-Davidson's Regulatory organization initiated a review of applicable regulatory requirements to assist the TSC in its investigation. June 12, 2019: All motorcycles within our control at assembly plants were contained. June 13, 2019: This issue was escalated to Harley-Davidson's Recall Investigation Committee (RIC). June 14, 2019: The RIC met and escalated the issue to Harley-Davidson's executive management. June 17, 2019: Upon review of the results of the RIC's investigation and analysis, Harley-Davidson's executive management determined that the subject motorcycles may not comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 120.

#### **Identify the Remedy**

Describe the defect/noncompliance remedy program, including the manufacturer's plan for reimbursement.

Harley-Davidson intends to submit a petition for determination of inconsequential noncompliance in accordance with 49 CFR Part 556.

Describe what distinguishes the remedy component from the recalled component.

This issue has been corrected in production and in the population of contained vehicles.

Identify and describe how and when the recall condition was corrected in production.

On vehicles shipped on or after 6/17/19, VIN labels have been updated. Also, updated owner's manuals have been included with the motorcycles.

#### Identify the Recall Schedule

Describe the recall schedule for notifications.:

**Planned Dealer Notification Begin Date:** 

Not Applicable Pending Resolution of Harley-Davidson's Part 556 Petition.

Planned Dealer Notification End Date:

**Planned Owner Notification Begin Date:** 

**Planned Owner Notification End Date:** 

## Manufacturer's identification code for this recall (if applicable):

Please be reminded that owner notification letters must be mailed no more than 60 days from submission of this report.

#### **Manufacturer Comments to NHTSA Staff**

#### **Document Upload**

There are 0 documents associated with this report.

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, West Building Washington DC 20590 USA 1.888.327.4236 TTY 1.800.424.9153 This application works best in IE9 and above and recent versions of Firefox, Chrome and Safari

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## Comment

TEST COMPLETE TIRE OKAY ENDING MILEAGE 16093KM



Jean-Luc BOUVIER
Research and Development director
MICHELIN 2 Wheel division
Agence, Service, Département
Adresse
CODE POSTAL
Phone +33 630 10 94 65
Télécopie

Clermont-Ferrand,

Date: July 15th 2019

Purpose: Performance certificate for 110/90 B19 M/C 62H SCORCHER "31" F TL/TT

on Harley-Davidson FXLR platform

I, Jean-Luc BOUVIER, Research and Development Director for Michelin 2 Wheel Division, certify that the performance of 110/90 B19 M/C 62H SCORCHER "31" F TL/TT covers the operating conditions of Harley-Davidson FXLR platform, described as follow:

GAW: 450 lb (204 kg)

Recommended Cold inflation pressure: 207 kPa (30 psi)

Top Speed: 190 kph

Jean-Luc BOUVIER

Michelin 2Wheel R&D director

Téléphone : (33) 4 73 32 20 00 Télécopie : (33) 4 73 32 22 02

Internet: http://www.michelin.com

Société en commandite par actions au capital de 504 000 004 d'Euros. 855 200 507 R.C.S. Clermont-Ferrand N° identification TVA FR 33855200507

MONT-FEAR

Code Européen : 2211z



Jean-Luc BOUVIER
Research and Development director
MICHELIN 2 Wheel division
LADOUX Technology Center
Place des Carmes Déchaux
63040 Clermont-Ferrand Cedex 9 France

+33 630 10 94 65

Clermont-Ferrand, July 12th, 2019

Purpose: Performance certificate for 100/90 B19 M/C 57H SCORCHER "31" F TL/TT on Harley-Davidson FXBB platform

I, Jean-Luc BOUVIER, Research and Development Director for Michelin 2 Wheel Division, certify that the performance of 100/90 B19 M/C 57H SCORCHER "31" F TL/TT covers the operating conditions of Harley-Davidson FXBB platform, described as follow:

GAW: 450 lb (204 kg)

Recommended Cold inflation pressure: 207 kPa (30 psi)

Top Speed: 190 kph

Jean-Luc BOUVIER

Michelin 2Wheel R&D director

Manufacture Française des Pneumatiques Michelin

Internet

Téléphone : (33) 4 73 32 20 00 Télécopie : (33) 4 73 32 22 02

Internet : http://www.michelin.com

Société en commandite par actions au capital de 504 000 004 d'Euros. 855 200 507 R.C.S. Clermont-Ferrand N° identification TVA FR 33855200507

Code Européen : 2211z

#### OMB Control No.: 2127-0004

## Part 573 Safety Recall Report

## 19V-475

**Manufacturer Name:** Harley-Davidson Motor Company

NHTSA Recall No.: 19V-475

Manufacturer Recall No.: NR



#### **Manufacturer Information:**

Manufacturer Name: Harley-Davidson Motor Company

Address: 3700 W. Juneau Avenue

Milwaukee WI 53201-0653

Company phone: (414) 343-4056

## **Population:**

Number of potentially involved: 12,931 Estimated percentage with defect: 100 %

#### **Vehicle Information:**

Vehicle 1: 2018-2019 Harley-Davidson Softail FXBB Street Bob

Vehicle Type: MOTORCYCLES

Body Style : OTHER Power Train : GAS

Descriptive Information: Certain 2018 and 2019 Harley-Davidson Softail FXBB Street Bob motorcycles shipped

prior to 6/17/19 are part of the recall population. The remaining 2018 and 2019 Harley-Davidson Softail FXBB Street Bob model motorcycles have updated VIN labels and owner's manuals. The specific number of this make/model/model year is: 8543

Production Dates: JUN 22, 2017 - JUN 11, 2019

VIN Range 1: Begin: NR End: NR Not sequential

Vehicle 2: 2018-2019 Harley-Davidson Softail FXLR Low Rider

Vehicle Type: MOTORCYCLES

Body Style : OTHER Power Train : GAS

Descriptive Information: Certain 2018 and 2019 Harley-Davidson Softail FXLR Low Rider motorcycles shipped

prior to 6/17/19 are part of the recall population. The remaining 2018 and 2019

Harlev-

Davidson Softail FXLR Low Rider model motorcycles have updated VIN labels and owner's manuals. The specific number of this make/model/model year is: 4388

Production Dates: JUN 26, 2017 - JUN 11, 2019

VIN Range 1 : Begin : NR End : NR ☐ Not sequential

## **Description of Noncompliance:**

Description of the At the stated inflation front tire pressures on the VIN label, the load rating

Noncompliance: (according to the Tire and Rim Association Yearbook) may be less than the

stated GAWRs. Therefore, these vehicles may not comply with FMVSS 120, Section S5.3.1. However, H-D believes the actual load capacities at the stated

recommended inflation pressures are sufficient in these applications.

FMVSS 1: 120 - Wheels and rims- other than passenger cars

FMVSS 2: NR

Description of the Safety Risk: Harley-Davidson believes this labeling noncompliance is inconsequential to

motor vehicle safety and intends to submit an inconsequentiality petition in

accordance with 49 CFR Part 556.

Description of the Cause: NR

Identification of Any Warning NR

that can Occur:

## **Supplier Identification:**

## **Component Manufacturer**

Name: NR

Address: NR

NR

Country: NR

### **Chronology:**

May 22, 2019: A potential VIN labeling issue was identified by the Harley-Davidson Product Integrity Department while investigating tire load ratings. May 30 - June 13, 2019: Harley-Davidson's Technical Subcommittee (TSC) conducted its investigation of this potential issue. As part of that work, Harley-Davidson's Regulatory organization initiated a review of applicable regulatory requirements to assist the TSC in its investigation. June 12, 2019: All motorcycles within our control at assembly plants were contained. June 13, 2019: This issue was escalated to Harley-Davidson's Recall Investigation Committee (RIC). June 14, 2019: The RIC met and escalated the issue to Harley-Davidson's executive management. June 17, 2019: Upon review of the results of the RIC's investigation and analysis, Harley-Davidson's executive management determined that the subject motorcycles may not comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) No. 120.

## **Description of Remedy:**

Description of Remedy Program: Harley-Davidson intends to submit a petition for determination of

inconsequential noncompliance in accordance with 49 CFR Part 556.

How Remedy Component Differs This issue has been corrected in production and in the population of

from Recalled Component: contained vehicles.

Identify How/When Recall Condition On vehicles shipped on or after 6/17/19, VIN labels have been updated. was Corrected in Production: Also, updated owner's manuals have been included with the motorcycles.

**Recall Schedule:** 

Description of Recall Schedule: Not Applicable Pending Resolution of Harley-Davidson's Part 556

Petition.

Planned Dealer Notification Date : NR - NR Planned Owner Notification Date : NR - NR

\* NR - Not Reported