

showing the expertise of the person supplying the opinion.

(e) The submitter of information for which confidential treatment is requested shall submit to NHTSA with the request a certification in the form set out in appendix A from the submitter or an agent of the submitter that a diligent inquiry has been made to determine that the information has not been disclosed, or otherwise appeared publicly, except as indicated in accordance with paragraphs (b)(3)(iii) and (iv) of this section.

(f) A single submission of supporting information, in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section, may be used to support a claim for confidential treatment of more than one item of information claimed to be confidential. However, general or nonspecific assertions or analysis may be insufficient to form an adequate basis for the agency to find that information may be afforded confidential treatment, and may result in the denial of a claim for confidentiality.

(g) Where confidentiality is claimed for information obtained by the submitter from a third party, such as a supplier, the submitter of the information is responsible for obtaining all information and a certification from the third party necessary to comply with paragraphs (b), (d) and (e) of this section.

(h) Information received by NHTSA that is identified as confidential and whose claim for confidentiality is submitted in accordance with this section will be kept confidential until a determination of its confidentiality is made under section 512.6 of this part. Such information will not be publicly disclosed except in accordance with this part.

(i) A submitter of information shall promptly amend supporting information provided under paragraphs (b) or (e) of this section if the submitter obtains information upon the basis of which the submitter knows that the supporting information was incorrect when provided, or that the supporting information, though correct when provided, is no longer correct and the circumstances are such that a failure to amend the supporting information is in substance a knowing concealment.

(j) Noncompliance with this section may result in a denial of a claim for confidential treatment of information. Noncompliance with paragraph (i) of this section may subject a submitter of information to civil penalties.

(1) If the submitter fails to comply with paragraph (a) of this section at the time the information is submitted to NHTSA so that the agency is not aware of a claim for confidentiality, or the scope of a claim for confidentiality, the claim for confidentiality may be waived unless the agency is notified of the claim before the information is disclosed to the public. Placing the information in a public docket or file is disclosure to the public within the meaning of this part, and any claim for confidential treatment of information disclosed to the public may be precluded.

(2) If the submitter of the information does not provide all of the supporting information required in paragraphs (b)(3) and (e) of this section, or if the information is insufficient to establish that the information may be afforded confidential treatment under the substantive tests set out in §512.5, a request that such information be afforded confidential protection may be denied. The Chief Counsel may notify a submitter of information of inadequacies in the supporting information, and may allow the submitter additional time to supplement the showing, but is under no obligation to provide either notice or additional time to supplement the showing.

§512.5 Substantive standards for affording confidential treatment.

Information submitted to or otherwise obtained by NHTSA may be afforded confidential treatment if it is a trade secret, or commercial or financial information that is privileged or confidential. Information is considered to be confidential when:

(a) Disclosure of the information would be likely to result in substantial competitive harm to the submitter of the information; or

(b) Failure to afford the information confidential treatment would impair the ability of NHTSA to obtain similar information in the future; or

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(c) Disclosure of the information would be likely to impair other protectable government interests.

§512.6 Determination of confidential treatment.

(a) The decision as to whether an item of information shall be afforded confidential treatment under this part is made by the Office of Chief Counsel.

(b) Copies of documents submitted to NHTSA under §512.4(a)(5), from which information claimed to be confidential or privileged has been deleted, are placed in the public file or docket pending the resolution of the claim for confidential treatment.

(c) When information claimed to be confidential or privileged is requested under the Freedom of Information Act, the determination of confidentiality is made within ten working days after NHTSA receives such a request, or within twenty working days in unusual circumstances as provided under 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(6).

(d) For information not requested pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, the determination of confidentiality is made within a reasonable period of time at the discretion of the Chief Counsel.

(e) The time periods prescribed in paragraph (c) of this section may be extended by the Chief Counsel for good cause shown on the Chief Counsel's own motion, or on request from any person. An extension is made only in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552, and is accompanied by a written statement setting out the reasons for the extension.

(f) If the Chief Counsel believes that information which a submitter of information asserts to be within a class of information set out in appendix B is not within that class, the Chief Counsel:

(1) Notifies the submitter of the information that the information does not fall within the class as claimed, and briefly explains why the information does not fall within the class; and

(2) Renders a determination of confidentiality in accordance with paragraph (g) of this section.

(g) A person submitting information to NHTSA with a request that the information be withheld from public disclosure as confidential or privileged

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business information is given notice of the Chief Counsel's determination regarding the request as soon as the determination is made.

(1) If a request for confidentiality is granted, the submitter of the information is notified in writing of that determination and of any appropriate limitations.

(2) If a request for confidentiality is denied in whole or in part, the submitter of the information is notified in writing of that decision, and is informed that the information will be made available to the public not less than ten working days after the submitter of the information has received notice of the denial of the request for confidential treatment, if practicable, or some earlier date if the Chief Counsel determines in writing that the public interest requires that the information be made available to the public on such earlier date. The written notification of a denial specifies the reasons for denying the request.

(h) There will be no release of information processed pursuant to this section until the Chief Counsel advises the appropriate office(s) of NHTSA that the confidentiality decision is final according to this section, §512.7 or §512.9.

§512.7 Petitions for reconsideration upon denial of a request for confidential treatment.

(a) A submitter of information whose request for confidential treatment is denied may petition for reconsideration of that denial. Petitions for reconsideration must be addressed to and received by the Office of Chief Counsel prior to the date on which the information would otherwise be made available to the public. The determination by the Chief Counsel upon such petition for reconsideration shall be administratively final.

(b) If the submission of a petition for reconsideration is not feasible by the date on which the information would otherwise be made available to the public, a request for an extension of time in which to submit a petition, accompanied by an explanation describing the reason for the request and the length of time needed, must be received by the Office of Chief Counsel by