

UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND
THE FRENCH MINISTRY OF EQUIPMENT AND HOUSING
CONCERNING COOPERATION ON
EXPERIMENTAL SAFETY VEHICLES

- I. This understanding between the United States Department of Transportation and the French Ministry of Equipment and Housing is concluded following an exchange of views which took place within the NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society. It establishes the broad outlines of a program of cooperation in research and development on experimental safety vehicles.
- II. The United States Department of Transportation has initiated a project for the development of an experimental safety vehicle with a total weight of 4,000 pounds (1,800 kilograms), the normal weight for American private automobiles.
- III. The French Ministry of Equipment and Housing is also seeking to increase the safety of motor vehicles. It is contributing to projects in that field which are planned or are already under way within the European Economic Community, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the OECD, and the NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society. On the national level, a research and development program has been launched which will at first be concerned with crashworthiness and will ultimately include crash prevention. The automobile manufacturers, equipment manufacturers, and research centers are participating in that program. The objective of the

French program is to establish feasible and economically acceptable minimum performance standards which could be prescribed, in a middle range future, for vehicles of European size operating in France in order to prevent vehicle crashes and to afford protection to vehicle occupants and to pedestrians involved in crashes. That objective will be achieved through development of prototypes of safety subassemblies incorporated into cars which will be experimentally tested.

IV. The United States Department of Transportation and the French Ministry of Equipment and Housing recognize the complementary aspects of the program initiated in each country. The United States Department of Transportation has already made available to the French Ministry of Equipment and Housing technical information and data which are the basis for the three contracts let by the United States Government for the design, fabrication, and delivery to the Department of Transportation of an experimental safety vehicle which must attain high safety performance specifications for experimental vehicles of the size commonly used in France.

V. The United States Department of Transportation and the French Ministry of Equipment and Housing agree to exchange, within the limits of the laws and regulations in force, technical data acquired in the course of their respective projects. They will seek similar agreements with the appropriate agencies of other countries interested in experimental safety vehicles eventually on a multi-lateral basis. The two agencies agree that these associated data should be transmitted to these agencies to the extent that such agencies accept similar obligations. The exchange of information can be used

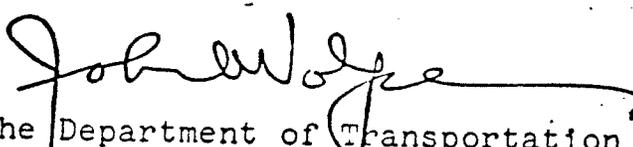
to serve as a basis for development of international regulations with regard to vehicle safety.

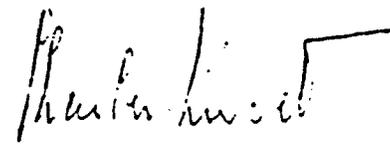
VI. If necessary, the two parties may agree to define more precisely and completely the present understanding with respect to provisions for exchanges, especially in the following areas:

- establishment of performance specifications for experimental safety vehicles;
- making safety advances developed in one program available for adaptation to the other;
- information on the progress of the programs;
- the conduct of performance tests; and
- consultation between French and American engineers.

VII. This understanding will become effective when signed by the authorized representatives of the two agencies, and will remain in force until terminated by either side on 30-days' notice in writing. It is understood that the pace of this program of cooperation will be contingent upon the availability of funds which the respective administrations are ready to devote to these programs and upon the resources of the car manufacturers concerned.

Done at Washington, in duplicate, in English and in French, this seventh day of October, 1971.


For the Department of Transportation
of the United States of America


For the Ministry of Equipment
and Housing
of the French Republic