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00T-004 (01)

OFFICE
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

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RECEIVED

May 31, 2000

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Mr. Kenneth N. Weinstein
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance, NSA-01
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Defect/Noncompliance Information Report,
Metzeler Reifen GMBH

Dear Mr. Weinstein:

Enclosed is the referenced report submitted in accordance with 49 C.F.R. Part 573 by Metzeler Reifen GMBH, a manufacturer of motorcycle tires.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis N. Barnes

Dennis N. Barnes

DNB/lme

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Jon White, Chief
Recall Analysis Division, NSA-11 (w/encl.) (via fax)

Sherwood S. Willard (via fax)

PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report

On May 24, 2000, Metzeler Reifen GMBH decided that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in items of motor vehicle equipment listed below, and is furnishing notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Reports.

Date this report was prepared: **May 25, 2000**

Furnish the manufacturer's identification code for this recall (if applicable): **N/A**

1. Identify the full corporate name of the fabricating manufacturer/brand name/trademark owner of the recalled item of equipment. If the recalled item of equipment is imported, provide the name and mailing address of the designated agent as prescribed by 49 U.S.C. 30164.

<u>Manufacturer</u>	<u>Designated Agent</u>
Metzeler Reifen GmbH Gnelseustraße 15 8000 Munich 50 Germany	Metzeler Motorcycle Tire North America Corporation 300 North Pottstown Pike #280 Exton, PA 19341

Identify the corporate official, by name and title, whom the agency should contact with respect to this recall.

Sherwood Willard – Vice President

Telephone Number: **203/784-2326**
 Fax Number: **203/784-2378**

Name and Title of Person who prepared this report.
Sherwood Willard – Vice President

Signed: *Sherwood Willard*

1. Identify the Recalled Items of Equipment

2. Identify the Items of Equipment Involved in this Recall, for each make and model or applicable item of equipment product line (provide illustrations or photographs as necessary to describe the item of equipment), provide:

Generic name of the item: **Motorcycle tire**

Make: **Metzeler** Model: **ME 880 Marathon**

Part Number: **IP Code 1042400**

Size: **130/70 R 18 M/C 63H TL ME 880 FRT**

Function: **Front Tire**

Other information which characterizes/distinguishes the items of equipment to be recalled: **DOT Serial No.: EB OK BOE (from week 28 1999 forward)**

Make: **Metzeler** Model: **ME 880 Marathon**

Part Number: **IP Code 1042500**

Size: **160/80 R 16 M/C 81H RF.TL ME 880**

Function: **Rear Tire**

Other information which characterizes/distinguishes the items of equipment to be recalled: **DOT Serial No.: EB 44 COK (from week 23 1999 forward)**

Identify the approximate percentage of the production of all the recalled models manufactured by your company between the inclusive dates of manufacture provided above, that the recalled model population represents.

Production of the 130/70 R 18 M/C 63H TL ME 880 FRT started in week 28, 1999. All production of tires of this size will be recalled.

Production of the 160/80 R 16 M/C 81H RF.TL ME 880 started in week 23, 1999. All production of tires of this size will be recalled.

The other sizes of the ME 880 tires are bias ply tires, not radial tires, and they have not exhibited the same problem that was found with the radial ME 880's.

II. Identifying the Recall Population

3. Furnish the total number of items of equipment recalled potentially containing the defect or noncompliance.

Number of Items: **2,235 ME 880 tires in the sizes listed have been produced and sold to the U.S. market.**

Model Year Potentially Involved

N/A

Total Number Potentially Affected by the Recall: 2,235 ME 880 tires in the sizes listed which are all the ME 880 tires in the sizes listed sold in the US

4. Furnish the approximate percentage of the total number of items of equipment estimated to actually contain the defect or noncompliance:
100%

Identify and describe how the recall population was determined – in particular how the recalled models were selected and the basis for the beginning and final dates of manufacture of the recalled items of equipment:

All ME 880 tires in the sizes listed manufactured after the first production date are subject to recall. See also response to item 6 below.

iii. Describe the Defect or Non Compliance

5. Describe the defect or noncompliance. The description should address the nature and physical location of the defect or noncompliance. Illustrations should be provided as appropriate.

The tire shows unacceptable high speed stability when mounted on Honda GL 1500 motorcycles with one rider and loaded saddle bags and operated in very high air/asphalt temperatures.

Describe the cause(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

The Company is reviewing the design specifications to determine the precise cause.

Describe the consequence(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

Vehicle instability at speeds in excess of 80 mph.

Identify any warning which can (a) precede or (b) occur.

The motorcycle will begin to weave.

If the defect or noncompliance is in a component or assembly purchased from a supplier, identify the supplier by corporate name and address.

N/A

Identify the name and title of the chief executive officer or knowledgeable representative of the supplier:

N/A

IV. Provide the Chronology in Determining the Defect/Noncompliance

If the recall is for a defect, complete Item 6, otherwise Item 7.

6. With respect to a defect, furnish a chronological summary (including dates) of all the principle events that were the basis for the determination of the defect. The summary should include, but not be limited to, the number of reports, accidents, injuries, fatalities, and warranty claims.

We received one report of instability from a distributor at the end of April 2000. Metzeler test engineers were sent to the U.S. and they conducted test rides in the hot area of Texas on May 16, 2000. There are no reports of accidents, injuries or warranty claims. See attached report of the May 16, 2000 tests.

7. With respect to a noncompliance, identify and provide the test results or other data (in chronological order and including dates) on which the noncompliance was determined.

N/A

V. Identify the Remedy

8. Furnish a description of the manufacturer's remedy for the defect or noncompliance. Clearly describe the differences between the recall condition and the remedy.

Remedy is to recall the tires at the manufacturers' expense and to reimburse the owners for any costs incurred in obtaining replacement tires.

Clearly describe the distinguishing characteristics of the remedy component/assembly versus the recalled component/assembly.

The recalled tires will be replaced at no cost to the user.

Identify and describe how and when the recall condition was corrected in production. If the production remedy was identical to the recall remedy in the field, so state. If the product was discontinued, so state.

Production has been stopped and the condition is being studied.

VI. Identify the Recall Schedule

Furnish a schedule or agenda (with specific dates) for notification to other manufacturers, dealers/retailers, and purchasers. Please, identify any foreseeable problems with implementing the recall

These tires are sold by Metzeler to two distributors in the United States. The distributors, in turn, sell these tires to dealers. The distributors have been notified orally to stop selling the tires. Either the distributors will be asked to provide Metzeler with a list of dealers who will be contacted by Metzeler by telephone and advised not to sell any of the tires or the distributors will contact the dealers directly and advise them not to sell the tires. In either case, the dealers will be asked to provide the names and addresses of all persons to whom they have sold these tires. This process was begun on May 25, 2000. Immediately upon receiving the names and addresses of the tire purchasers, Metzeler will forward, via certified mail, return receipt requested, recall notification letters as approved by DOT. The Company will track any non-delivery or failures to respond and will follow-up with these users.

Since there is a limited number of tires involved (approximately 2,235) and they are usually sold in pairs, we do not anticipate many problems in implementing the recall. We believe 1,195 of the tires are still in the inventory of the two distributors. Therefore, 320 tires are either in the inventory of dealers or have been sold to final end users.

VII. Furnish Recall Communications

9. **Furnish a final copy of all notices, bulletins, and other communications that relate directly to the defect or noncompliance and which are sent to more than one manufacturer, distributor, or purchaser. This includes all communications (including both original and follow-up) concerning this recall from the time your company determines the defect or noncompliance condition on, not just the initial notification. A DRAFT copy of the notification documents should be submitted to this office by Fax (202-366-7882) for review prior to mailing.**

These will be provided as developed.

Note: These documents are to be submitted separately from those provided in accordance with Part 573.8 requirements.