



# STRENGTHENING HIGH SPEED PERFORMANCE TESTING

## Enhancing NHTSA Safety Requirements through Harmonized Global Standards

The U.S. Tire Manufacturers Association (USTMA) supports targeted updates to Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) to modernize high speed performance testing for passenger car and light truck tires.

The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) must align its testing requirements with internationally adopted standards under the [United Nations Global Technical Regulation on Tyres](#) (GTR No. 16) to strengthen consumer safety, regulatory clarity and global competitiveness. USTMA members already test and label their products under the more stringent global requirements, but in the absence of FMVSS testing alignment, **NHTSA lacks the critical power to enforce these safety standards.**

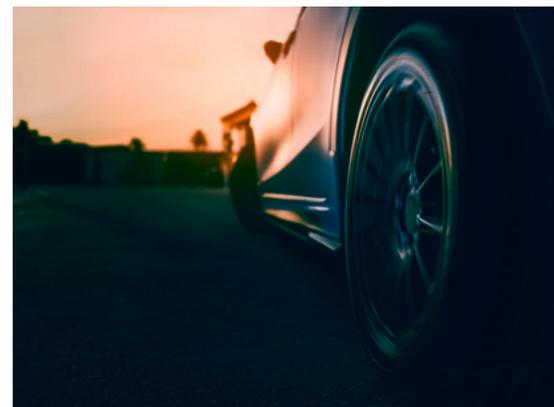
Incorporating internationally harmonized high speed testing requirements **ensures that speed symbol markings are supported by rigorous, verifiable performance testing.** This update **strengthens consumer safety, aligns U.S. standards with global best practices** and **creates a level playing field** for manufacturers without imposing new or unproven requirements.

## EMPOWERING NHTSA TO ENFORCE SAFETY

High speed capacity is a critical safety and performance attribute for modern tires. While existing FMVSS testing establishes baseline requirements, it does not fully reflect current tire capacity, global testing practices or the information already communicated to consumers through speed symbols.

### ADOPTING ADDITIONAL GTR NO. 16 PROVISIONS WOULD:

- **Harmonize U.S. testing requirements** with global standards
- Ensure that speed symbol markings are **verified and enforceable**
- Close unenforceable **regulatory loopholes abused by non-compliant, lower-quality imports**
- Provide **reliable performance information** to consumers



## HARMONIZING GLOBAL TIRE REGULATIONS

GTR No. 16 was developed to **unify high speed performance testing in the United States, Europe and other global regulatory regimes.** These standards ensure the most stringent testing requirements are applied to passenger car and light truck tires to ensure robust and consistent safety outcomes worldwide. **The regulations ensure high speed performance requirements are appropriately matched to a tire's rated capability.**

# FMVSS No. 139, Section 6.2 (High Speed Test) must be revised to incorporate United Nations Global Technical Regulation on Tyres (GTR No. 16), Amendment 2, Sections 3.6.1.4 through 3.6.1.7 and Section 3.6.2.2.



**FMVSS NO. 139**  
(Already incorporated  
in GTR No. 16)



**UN GLOBAL TECHNICAL  
REGULATIONS No. 16**  
(Incorporated regs  
from UNECE Reg No.  
30 & 54)

## TEST SPEEDS

30 minute stages at fixed speeds of 140, 150 and 160 km/h for all passenger and light truck tires

Testing speeds tailored to individual ratings

## MAXIMUM TEST SPEEDS

160 km/h

Ranges from 160 km/h up to 300 km/h, depending on speed symbol

## MOST STRINGENT TESTING

Passenger Car Speed Symbol  
≤ S Applies to 3% of Tires Sold in U.S.

Passenger Car Speed Symbol  
≥ T Applies to 97% of Tires Sold in U.S.

Light Truck Speed Symbol  
≤ P Applies to <1% of Tires Sold in U.S.

Light Truck Speed Symbol  
≥ Q Applies to >99% of Tires Sold in U.S.

## STRATEGIC HIGHLIGHTS

- **Speed symbols are widely used but not federally verified.** Virtually all passenger car and light truck tires display speed ratings, yet current regulations do not require those claims to be validated through federal safety testing.
- **Speed symbol tests under FMVSS empowers NHTSA to enforce safety.** Incorporating GTR No. 16 into FMVSS No. 139 would allow NHTSA to verify speed ratings and require recalls when tires fail to meet labeled performance.
- **Consumers benefit from clearer, proven performance information.** GTR-based testing provides verifiable data that aligns speed symbols with real-world operating conditions.
- **Current gaps invite unfair competition.** Lower-quality imports can exploit existing rules by testing at lower FMVSS speeds while labeling higher speed ratings.
- **USTMA members are already prepared to comply.** Manufacturers already test tire speed symbols to verify performance, enabling immediate implementation without disruption.
- **This is a targeted, commonsense update.** FMVSS No. 139 already incorporates portions of GTR No. 16 and extending it closes a known safety and enforcement gap.



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