



U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

DOT Auto Safety Hotline
Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire
To Report Vehicle Safety Defects
1-888-DASH-2-DDT
(1-888-327-4236)
INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 100145

Date Received

Repository

12-28-2004
12-OCT-2004

Reference No.
10096587

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name: [Redacted]
Address: [Redacted]
City: ANGELS CAMP State: CA Zip Code: [Redacted]

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening Telephone Number

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? YES NO
In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner _____ Date: 1/1/

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side: [Redacted]
Make: Chevy Model: Suburban Model Year: 2002
Date Purchased: _____ Dealer's Name and Telephone Number: _____
Engine: _____ Fuel Type: _____
Original Owner: Dealer's City: Sacramento State: CA Zip Code: _____
Transmission Type: _____ Vehicle Component Code: _____
 AntiLock Brakes Cruise Control Powertrain: _____
Multiple Failure: 2

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s): 07-AUG-2004 Failure Mileage: _____ Failure Speed: _____
Car seat

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make: _____ Tire Model (Name or Number): _____ Tire Size (Example F215/65R15): _____
DOT No. (Example: DOTM19ABC036) Original Equipment Prior Repair Failure Location: _____
Tire Component Code: _____ Tire Failure Type: _____

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE

Make: BRITAX Date Manufactured: 25-JUN-2003 Model No./Name: MARATHON
Seat Type: CONVERTIBLE Installation System: Vehicle Safety Belt
Child Seat Component Code: 550000 Failed Part: CHILD SEAT; TETHER/HARNESS Locking Device

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), failure(s), crash(es), and injury(ies).)

Crash: Yes No Fire: Yes No
Number of Persons Injured: 0 Number of Deaths: 0 Reported to Police: N

Narrative Description of Incident(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies).
Please describe (1) events leading up to the failure, (2) failure and its consequences, and (3) what was done to correct the failure; i.e. parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available).

THE CHILD SEAT HARNESS WILL NOT TIGHTEN AND THE CONSUMER HAD TO SEND IN HER CHILD SAFETY SEAT AND TWO WEEKS LATER A RECALL FOR THE HARNESS STRAPS WAS ISSUED. UPON RECEIVING THE CHILD SEAT BACK FROM THE MANUFACTURER THE PROBLEM STILL EXIST. PLEASE PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION. *JB

I have taken the seat to 2 different car seat checks and have been told both times it is not safe. I have made numerous attempts to get it fixed from Britax.

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice. ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY.

The Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-502) This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a Manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.

To Whom It May Concern:

10/28/04

I am sending this letter in as a supplement to the paperwork enclosed. I have made numerous attempts to resolve this car seat safety problem with Britax, all to no avail. I have spoken to many different customer service representatives and have left messages for a supervisor to return my call. I also faxed the enclosed letter to the supervisor that I was told handles these issues. I still have never received a phone call back from him. I only reccached a customer service rep. After several phone calls from me. They didn't return my calls either.

I have a Britax Marathon child safety seat manufactured in June of 2003. I called Britax in early August about a problem it was having. The locking mechanism doesn't work. When you tighten the adjuster strap you can then pull on them and they loosen. You can actually see the locking device loosen when you lift the cloth material over it. I was told to purchase a box (which cost me \$9.00) and send the car seat in to Britax to be fixed. I sent the seat in the following day. About 1 and 1/2 weeks later I received a recall notice in the mail describing the exact same problem I had described. The letter said not to use the safety and that replacement straps would be sent. I did later receive the straps and finally called to see where my seat was after several weeks of hearing nothing. I think it took about a month before I did finally receive my seat back with the warranty repair notice stating that it had been fixed. It has not been fixed and still does the same thing. Again I spent an enormous amount of time on the phone again with Britax trying to get the same problem resolved. I have been to 2 different car seat safety checks and have been told the same thing. Do not use the seat, it is not safe, the locking mechanism clearly slips.

On October 18th I sent the same seat back in (again after hours of getting nowhere on the phone and being told I would have to pay for it). They still have my seat and I have heard nothing about it.

While all of this was happening I had to send in my second Britax car seat for a very similar problem. Again I paid for a box and sent it in and had to purchase a 3rd Britax seat because Britax now had both of my car seats, both of which were unsafe to use. Incredibly enough the 3rd one, which was manufactured in September of 2004 (after the July recall deadline) has the same problem. At this point I thought that there was no way this one could be unsafe after the recall and drove to our county car seat safety specialist. She looked at all and checked it and told me not to use it as you can see the locking device slipping. I am planning on returning that one to the store as defective. Luckily in the meantime I have received my roundabout car seat back from Britax and it seems to be working fine now. They still have my marathon (sent back for the second time).

I feel as though there is a serious safety issue with the marathon that has not been corrected since the recall and I have been through the ringer trying to get this resolved. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,



Dear Mr. Matt Banash,

10/13/04

I am writing this letter to you out of sheer frustration. I am extremely unhappy with the service I have received (or should I say, no received) from Britax in the last 2 months. In order for you to truly understand my frustration as a consumer with your company I need to start back in August.

I have already filed a complaint against Britax with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and was advised by our family attorney to also file complaints with the Better Business Bureau and Attorney General. I am hoping that this letter to you will avoid that from happening. I will however do whatever needs to be done to ensure that no other consumers receive the same kind of treatment.

In the beginning of August, 2004 I called Britax and spoke to a woman on the phone about my Marathon car seat. I explained the problem with it and how it was not safe to use. I was told to buy a box at my expense and take it to a Fed Ex place and send it. She gave me an RA # (04-223-662) to write on the box. I spent \$10 on a box and lugged it down to a Fed ex dealer and sent it off on August 7, 2004. About 2 weeks after that I received a recall letter for the Marathon car seat for the same problem I described. I called to make sure that my car seat would be fixed soon and properly and to ask to be reimbursed for my cost of the box, since it was recalled. I was told that Britax would not reimburse me.

At the end of September I called once again to speak with someone about my second car seat not working properly. I told them how my Roundabout car seat was having a very similar problem as the Marathon did. I was told that it was no longer under warranty and would not be covered. I was told that I would have to buy the replacement parts and fix it myself. I explained my frustration with that after everything I went through with the first one and how this car seat was purchased in 2002. I did order the replacement parts as I needed my car seat to be working correctly. I later spoke to a child passenger safety program coordinator who told me that I should not have to pay for that. I called back and spoke to a Michelle and she told me that Britax would fix it and Fed Ex would come pick up the car seat that Friday (September 30, 2004). I told her that I could not take it to a Fed Ex place as I had had surgery on my wrist the previous Tuesday and was unable to drive.

Because I was unable to drive and just received my Marathon back then I had not yet opened it when I spoke to Michelle about my Roundabout. Much to my dismay when I was able to drive and had my husband put in my fixed Marathon did I find out that it was not fixed. I went to a car seat safety check point and was told exactly what my husband and I confirmed. It was not safe to put my son in it because the strap slipped. I immediately called Michelle at her direct # which she had given me 704-409-1674. I left message after message, I spoke to many operators who always told me that Michelle was either at lunch, or on another line and that she would call me back. She did leave one message, but I continued to call and ask her to call me back. I never heard back from anyone. I called Britax customer service at least 8 times and asked to speak to a supervisor. I was told every time that none were available, or even there.

About a week ago I drove to the nearest car seat retailer (an hour and a half away from me) and purchased now a third Britax car seat (call me crazy to buy another Britax) because I had no car seat to use at all. If you remember, your company has one of them and the other one is still not safe after being sent in and recalled.

Today I finally reached a person at Britax (after waiting 28 minutes) who at least tried to help me find out where my roundabout is. I spoke to Susan at Britax and she said she is going to call me back and let me know what is going on with my roundabout and what was done on my Marathon. She said I would need to probably resend in my marathon to be looked at again.

In the past 3 years I have spent over \$1,200 on Britax car seats and have had nothing but problems with them. The funny thing is that with my older daughter I didn't buy Britax and never had any problems. As you can see I have made every humanly possible effort to resolve this and still have a safe car seat for my son. I went from 2 car seats for our vehicles to none, to having to buy a 3rd one in order to have one safe car seat. At this point I want to either be reimbursed for the last car seat I had to purchase or I want my Marathon to be resent in (without costing me another \$10 for a box), fixed and back to me within 30 days. I would certainly like a call back to discuss this further with you. My home phone number is 209-736-9240. I will do whatever needs to be done in order to resolve this issue in a timely manner.

Regretfully,





August 2004

SAFETY RECALL NOTICE

Dear Britax Owner:

This notice is sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act. Britax Child Safety, Inc. has decided that Marathon, Wizard, and Husky restraints, as well as the Traveller Plus, manufactured by Britax for Snug Seat, fail to conform to Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 213, Child Restraint Systems. According to our records, your child restraint system may be affected.

What's Wrong

Extensive testing has determined that under certain circumstances, the adjuster strap may slip within the metal adjuster that controls the tightness of the harness and may allow the harness to loosen. While occurrence of this slippage is extremely rare, if it were to occur, in the event of a crash, your child may move further forward than allowed under Safety Standard 213. With this condition, there is the increased risk of injury.

What You Should Do

All consumers who returned a registration card to us will automatically receive the adjuster strap replacement. You should soon receive the replacement adjuster strap under a separate mailing.

Until the adjuster strap is replaced, these restraint models are safe to use as long as slippage is not occurring. Consumers are encouraged to test their restraints for slippage. To test your restraint, pull on the shoulder harness without lifting the adjuster release lever (located on the front of the restraint under the cover flap):

- If the harness loosens, use of the restraint should be stopped until the adjuster strap is replaced.
- If the harness does not loosen, the restraint can continue to be used until the replacement adjuster strap is received.

However, because the slippage can develop over time with repeated usage, it is important to check for a secure harness with each use of the restraint.

Instructions for replacement will be included with the adjuster strap replacement kit. Video instructions will also be available on our website, www.britaxusa.com, to assist you in this process. Please do not return the restraint to the retailer.

Questions

Please contact our special recall information line at 1-800-683-2045 with questions concerning this issue. If you call, be sure to have the model and manufacture date from your restraint(s). You can get further information on our website, at www.britaxusa.com.

If you believe that we have failed or are unable to remedy this noncompliance without charge or within a reasonable time, you may submit a complaint to the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590 or call the toll free Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236.

We apologize for this inconvenience but we know our consumers expect us to be every bit as cautious as they are in protecting the safety of their children.

Sincerely,
Britax Child Safety, Inc.

michaele
704-401-1674

Britax Child Safety, Inc.
13501 South Ridge Drive
Charlotte, NC 28273
USA

A Britax Childcare company

Tel: (704) 409-1700
Fax: (704) 409-1710
BritaxUSA.com

Marathon 1st time

	Britax Child Safety, Inc. 13501 South Ridge Drive Charlotte, NC 28273	FR-014a Rev.: A
	Warranty Repair Notification	Page 1 of 1

August 27, 2004

[Redacted]

Angels Camp, CA [Redacted]

RE: [Redacted]

Dear Ms. [Redacted]

Thank you for allowing Britax to complete warranty work on your restraint.

Upon evaluation of your restraint, the following items were repaired / replaced:

Replaced adjuster strap. Proper operation was confirmed when repaired.

Your restraint is subject to NHTSA Recall No. 04C-002. In addition to the above repair activities, in accordance with the recall plan provided to NHTSA, the adjuster strap was replaced. The adjuster strap has thicker webbing and has a looped rather than folded end.

All work performed will be warranted for a period of one year from date of repair. Any part not associated with this work order will continue to be covered under the 1 year Limited Manufacturer's Warranty that originated when the restraint was purchased. Without proof of purchase, the manufacturer's warranty shall not exceed one year from the original manufacture date of the restraint. This warranty does not include damages that arise from negligence, misuse or use not in accordance with the product instruction. Always refer to your owner's manual with questions regarding the use of your restraint.

Should you have additional questions regarding this work order, please contact Britax Consumer Quality Services at 1-888-427-4829, option #2 and refer to the Return Authorization number noted above for easy reference.

We hope you will continue to use and depend on our product and experience.

Sincerely,

Sandra Hay
 Quality Inspection Department
 Britax Child Safety, Inc.

Roundabout

	Britax Child Safety, Inc. 13501 South Ridge Drive Charlotte, NC 28273	FR-014 Rev.: A
	Warranty Repair Notification	Page 1 of 1

October 14, 2004

[Redacted]
Angels Camp, CA [Redacted]

RE: [Redacted]

Dear Ms. [Redacted]

Thank you for allowing Britax to complete warranty work on your restraint.

Upon evaluation of your restraint, the following items were repaired / replaced:

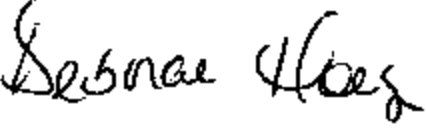
Adjuster strap was replaced. Proper operation confirmed when repaired.

The above work has been documented and is on record. All work performed will be warranted for a period of one year from date of repair. Any part not associated with this work order will continue to be covered under the 1 year Limited Manufacturer's Warranty that originated when the restraint was purchased. Without proof of purchase, the manufacturer's warranty shall not exceed one year from the original manufacture date of the restraint. This warranty does not include damages that arise from negligence, misuse or use not in accordance with the product instruction. Always refer to your owner's manual with questions regarding the use of your restraint.

Should you have additional questions regarding this work order, please contact Britax Consumer Quality Services at 1-888-427-4829, option #2 and refer to the Return Authorization number noted above for easy reference.

We hope you will continue to use and depend on our product and experience.

Sincerely,



Quality Inspection Department
Britax Child Safety, Inc.