



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-DOT
(1-888-327-4236)
INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

2007

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 100148

Date Received

JUN - 8 AM 10:41
30-APR-2007

Repository ☐

Reference No.
10189266

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Address

City

SOUTH BERG STRASBERG

State CO

Zip Code

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 5/29/2007

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side

1ALL32C0266A

Make

ALFA

Model

GOLD

SGF34RLES

Model Year

2006

Date Purchased
17-NOV-05

Dealer's Name and Telephone Number
RV PEDELARS 928-344-0005

Engine:

No: Cylinders 4

Fuel Type:

N/A

Original Owner

☒

Dealer's City

YUMA

State

AZ

Zip Code

85364

Transmission Type

AUTOMATIC

N/A

☐ Antilock Brakes

☐ Cruise Control

Powertrain

REAR WHEEL DRIVE

N/A

Vehicle Component Code

211000 TRAILER HITCHES:FIFTH WHEEL ASSEMBLY

Multiple Failure: ☒ 4

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s)

18-APR-2007

Failure Mileage

2550

Failure Speed

0

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make

Tire Model (Name or Number)

Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)

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:

Date Manufactured:

Model No./Name:

Seat Type:

Installation System:

Child Seat Component Code:

Failed Part:

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).

TL* THE CONTACT OWNS A 2006 ALFA GOLD, 5TH WHEEL TRAILER, MODEL NUMBER SGF34RLES. THE INSTALLATION OF THE SHOCK ABSORBENT BRACELET BASE PLATE BOLTS WAS NOT LONG ENOUGH TO CONNECT TO THE LOCKING MECHANISM. THE LEFT REAR BOLT WAS LOOSE, CAUSING THE FLUID TO LEAK ON THE TIRE. ALSO, THE FRONT LEFT BOLT WAS ONLY HELD BY ONE BOLT. HOWEVER, THE FRONT RIGHT SIDE BOLTS WERE ALL IN PLACE. THIS INCIDENT WAS FIRST NOTICED ON APRIL 18, 2007. THE FAILURE AND CURRENT MILEAGE WERE 2550. *AK

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED CORRESPONDENCE & PICTURES

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

The Privacy Act of 1974-Public Law 93-579 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.

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

Ref: 2006 Alfa Gold 5th wheel, Model: SGF34RLES, Serial Number 1AU3200206A [REDACTED]

Purchase date 11/17/07

Selling Dealer: RV Peddlers inc. 6772 E. Hwy. 80, Yuma, AZ.

Upon our arrival to Cedaredge, Colo. from Yuma, AZ. we set up our RV. While I was putting on the wheel cover's I noticed what appeared to be oil on the inside left wheel. On closer inspection I found that the lower shock absorber mounting bracket on the left rear had come loose and the bolts were missing. (See attached photo # 1) Upon further inspection I found that all the lower shock absorber mount's were loose and some bolts missing. None of the remaining bolt's that were used were long enough to engage the lock ring on the lock nut, rendering them ineffective. (see photo's 1 through 4)

The property where the RV is located is at 15736-2600 RD. Cedaredge, Colo. and belongs to Gerald and Sandra Figueroa.

[REDACTED] is a retired Navy LT. Comander and was an air craft maintenance and inspection officer. He looked the RV over and took pictures of the improperly installed shock absorber's. We determined this to be a very serious safety issue.

Upon contacting Alfa Leisure I spent at least two day's trying to prevail upon them that it is more than a warrenty issue. Finally a young lady by the name of [REDACTED] in customer service, suggested the sales department and she connected me. I spoke to another lady by the name of [REDACTED] she suggested I send all the information and pictures to her and she would see that they were sent to all departments. including warrenty and engineering.

We Emailed them to her at [REDACTED] We received conformation that the information and pictures had arrived. See attachment (Alfa Leisure safety issue #1)

By noon on the 20th of April when I had not heard from anyone from Alfa Leisure, I contacted [REDACTED] and she connected me to the office of [REDACTED] in charge of warrenty. I was unable to talk to him so I left him a message telling him I was sending a packett containing pictures and information by registered mail. We received conformation of delivery on 4/26/07. I also sent a packett of pictures and information to the U.S. Department Of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Administration on the 20th of April. This packett was returned to me unopened stating need more information. I contacted the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration on the 30th of April, phone # [REDACTED] and filed a formal report and was told they would send me a packett to fill out.

On May 1st. I received a phone call from [REDACTED] stating that they (Alfa Leisure) were looking into the matter. He stated that the shock absorbers were only added to the Alfa Gold model's and that they could be taken off and done away with. I told him I would do nothing until I received a final report.

On May 7th I received a report from National Highway Traffic Safety Asministration to be completed and returned.

I also contacted officer [REDACTED] with the Colo. Department of Public Safety, Grand Junction, Montrose Colo. area. I had talked to him about this matter before. I told him I was sending in a report to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and asked him if he would send me his report and I would include it with my report.

On May 18th I received a call from [REDACTED] and he said that they (Alfa Leisure) had determined that this was an isolated incident that possibly only affected two or three trailers. That they were in the process of putting a package together to replace all four of the shock's, including new mounting brackets, bolt's, nut's and etc. He said they would ship them to us. I told him I would contact someone to install them, He said they would have to negotiate with who ever we contacted on price prior to having any work done.

I personally feel that Alfa Leisure has not addressed this as a serious safety issue.

As of this letter we have not received any documented correspondence from Alfa Leisure, only phone conversations

Respectfully:

[REDACTED]

Reminder: AOL will never ask you to send us your password or credit card number in an email. This message has been scanned for known viruses.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Alfa Leisure Safety Issue
Date: Wed, 18 Apr 2007 12:09 PM

Attachments: [REDACTED]

AOL Pictures Shoebox: [Save All](#) | [View](#) (What is this?)

[REDACTED]

As per our phone conversation this morning, I'm writing in regards to a **serious safety issue** on my Alfa Gold 5th wheel (Model # SGF34RLES, Ser # 1ALL3200206A [REDACTED]). In short, I discovered that the left rear shock absorber lower mount adapter had completely disassembled from the rear spring mounting base plate. Damage to shock absorber had also occurred as evidenced by fluid leakage and denting of the lower shock barrel. The shock absorber and mounting adapter were merely dangling loose between the tire/wheel/brake assembly and spring assembly. Further inspection also revealed that the right front shock absorber was about to become disassembled in a similar manner and was being held attached by one bolt. Denting and scraping of the lower shock barrel was also evident, indicating displacement and interference with the spring assembly. Inspecting of the lower shock adapter mounting bolts indicates that the installed bolts were too short to engage the self-locking feature of the self-locking nuts. This allowed the nuts to easily back off and cause the entire lower shock to become disassembled. My concern is that the dangling shock and mounting bracket could get lodged between the tire/wheel/brake assembly and spring assembly, causing serious jamming of the adjacent assemblies, tire blow-out, or worse. **Loss of life could be the result.** I strongly recommend an immediate technical/engineering review of this serious matter and further issuance of a safety bulletin to all dealers and owners.

Photos are attached.

My Alfa 5th Wheel unit is located at my friend's home ([REDACTED] Cedaredge, Colorado [REDACTED] Phone number [REDACTED]).

My phone number is [REDACTED]. We are currently staying in the RV at my friend's property.

We eagerly await your response and hope that you are able to correct any other like discrepancies before injuries occur. Our e-mail address is: [REDACTED]. Please ask your technical advisors or engineering department to call immediately.

Very respectfully,
[REDACTED]

PS: I'm using my friend's e-mail service as we do not currently have on-line service.

5 Attached Images

April 20, 2007

[REDACTED]
c/o Warranty Dept.
ALFA Leisure Inc.

[REDACTED]
Chino, CA [REDACTED]

Ref.: 2006 ALFA Gold 5th Wheel, Model: SGF34RLES, Serial Number:
1AU3200206A [REDACTED] Purchase date: 11/17/05, Selling Dealer: RV Peddlers Inc., [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Yuma, AZ [REDACTED]

Enclosed: Photos (5 each) of shock absorber damage and mount disconnect.

Dear [REDACTED]

Since purchasing our ALFA Gold 5th Wheel RV (Ref.) my wife and I have been very pleased with the unit. However, upon returning to our summer location in Colorado we discovered an extremely serious problem that could cause a serious towing accident and, more importantly, loss of life.

While installing the tire protective covers, we discovered that the left rear shock absorber lower mount adapter had completely disconnected from the rear spring mounting base plate. Damage to shock absorber had also occurred as evidenced by fluid leakage and denting of the lower shock barrel. The shock absorber and mounting adapter were dangling loose between the tire/wheel/brake and spring assemblies. Further inspection revealed that the right front shock absorber was missing the outboard mounting bolt/nut and was about to become disassembled in a similar manner. Only one loose bolt/nut kept the shock assembly from dangling loose. Denting and scraping of the lower shock barrel was also evident on this shock absorber, indicating displacement and interference with the adjacent spring assembly. In addition, the right rear shock assembly was becoming loose as it was easily movable by hand. Inspection of the lower shock adapter mounting bolts revealed that the installed bolts were too short to engage the locking feature of the self-locking nuts (see photos). This is in conflict with accepted industry practice of ensuring that a bolt must protrude through/beyond the locking nut to expose at least three bolt threads to assure locking or prevent loosening. The improper bolt/nut installation on the shock absorber lower mounts on our RV unit allowed the nuts to easily back off and cause the entire lower shock mount to disconnect. Another problem that may exist is that the position of the outboard mounting holes drilled into the spring base plate may be too close to the lower spring leaf to allow a sufficiently longer bolt to be installed. Our main concern is that if this condition exists on other ALFA units and if left uncorrected a dangling shock mounting bracket could get lodged between the tire/wheel/brake and spring assemblies. If not inspected and/or corrected, an unsuspecting driver/owner could experience a tire blow-out or worse. **Serious injury or loss of life could result.** We strongly recommend an immediate technical/engineering review of this serious matter and further issuance of a safety bulletin to all dealers and owners.

It is worthy of note that since owning our RV we've towed our unit only three times for a total of 2,550 miles. Our ALFA Gold 5th Wheel is obviously not movable or safe for

continued towing. Our 5th Wheel RV is parked at our friend's home, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Cedaredge, CO [REDACTED] (Phone: [REDACTED])

We do realize that our 12 month Factory Warranty has expired. However, considering the issue of product safety and this particular factory induced error we ask that ALFA Leisure provide for the repair of our RV unit at no cost to us.

Please provide a response to our recommendations and request for repairs.

Very respectfully,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Strasburg, CO [REDACTED]

Ph.: [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: "RV Consumer Group" <rvgroup@rv.org>; [REDACTED]; "Neighbor - [REDACTED]"
Sent: Saturday, April 21, 2007 8:33 AM
Attach: Alfa Leisure Safety Issue.eml; Chuck's ALFA Letter.doc
Subject: ALFA Gold Leisure 5th Wheel Safety Issue

Dear Trailer Life

Attached is an e-mail and letter which my friend, [REDACTED] sent to ALFA Leisure Company. While [REDACTED] is not currently connected to online services, he asked that I e-mail the attached letters to you on his behalf. [REDACTED] current phone contact information is included in the attached letters. The letters pertain to a shock absorber mounting problem which may be of major concern to other owners of ALFA RV units. The referenced photos are included in the e-mail attachments. [REDACTED] e-mail address is Cc'd above. Hopefully, this information will assist other owners and/or prevent potential injury. As the above letters were recently sent there has been insufficient time for response. ALFA Leisure is also included in the above Cc.

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]

