



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**

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 100148

Date Received

29-AUG-2012

Repository

Reference No.  
10472958

**OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)**

Name

Address

City LEESBURG

State FL

Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening Telephone Number

The information you provide will be used to identify potential safety-related defects. We may share your information with the applicable vehicle manufacturer during an investigation or recall in accordance with the routine uses described in the agency's Privacy Act notice. See 49 FR 53971 (Sep. 3, 2004).

**VEHICLE INFORMATION**

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

1NL1DTH22D1

Make

GULF STREAM

Model

PRAIRIE SCHOONER

Model Year

2009

Date Purchased

Dealer's Name and Telephone Number

Engine:

No: Cylinders

Fuel Type:

Original Owner

Dealer's City

State

Zip Code

Transmission Type

Antilock Brakes

Powertrain

Multiple Failure:

1

Incident Date(s)

22-AUG-2012

Cruise Control

**FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION**

Vehicle Component Codes: 200000 WHEELS, 020000 SUSPENSION, 980000 UNKNOWN OR OTHER

Failure Mileage

3200

Failure Speed

28

**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).

DESPITE HAVING BEEN TOWED ONLY 3,200 MILES, THE VISA 19 ERD'S DRIVER SIDE TIRE BLEW OUT DUE TO EXCESSIVE WEAR OF THE INNER 2 TO 2 1/2 INCHES OF TREAD DOWN TO THE CORDS. THE PASSENGER SIDE TIRE ON THE TRAILER SHOWED SIMILAR, THOUGH LESS DRASTIC WEAR. FORTUNATELY WE WERE ON A LOCAL ROAD WHEN IT HAPPENED RATHER THAN INTERSTATE 95 WHERE WE WERE HEADED.

PRESSURE IN THE TRAILER'S TIRES HAD BEEN CHECKED BEFORE EACH DAY'S TRAVEL TO MAINTAIN THE 50 TO 53 PSI SPECIFIED BY THE TIRE MANUFACTURER. WE NEVER OVERLOADED THE TRAILER. FRESH, GREY AND BLACK WATER HOLDING TANKS HAD ALWAYS BEEN EMPTIED BEFORE TRAVELING. ITEMS CARRIED IN THE TRAILER HAD BEEN WEIGHED INDIVIDUALLY, TOTALED AND DISTRIBUTED WITHIN THE TRAILER (60% FORWARD OF THE AXLE AND 40% REARWARD). AT NO TIME DID THE CARGO EXCEED 605 LBS. WHICH IS ONLY 60% OF THE TRAILER'S 1018 LBS. STATED CARGO WEIGHT LIMIT.

OTHER OWNERS OF 19 FT. VISAS HAVE POSTED SIMILAR PROBLEMS ON THE INTERNET, AND MOST HAVE POINTED TO PROBLEMS WITH THE LIPPERT 3500 GAWW AXLE. GIVEN HOW EVIDENT THE TOE OUT IS ON OUR VISA, WE MUST AGREE THAT THE AXLE IS FAULTY. THE POTENTIAL

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.

SEP 11 2012

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Leesburg, FL [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

NHTSA Headquarters  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
West Building  
Washington, DC 20590

August 31, 2012

Dear Vehicle Safety Complaint Investigator:

This letter is a follow-up to a Vehicle Safety Complaint we submitted on August 29, 2012 (ODI Number 10472958).

Attached please find a copy of the letter and corresponding photos we submitted to Gulf Stream Coach, Inc. outlining the tire safety issues we believe are associated with the Lippert Axle.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

National Retail Service Manager  
Gulf Stream Coach, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1005  
Nappanee, Indiana 46550

August 28, 2012

Re: 2013 Visa 19 ERD (serial number INL1DTH22D1 [REDACTED])  
Faulty axle, excessive tire wear and blowout

To Whom It May Concern:

In accordance with requirements of the Gulf Stream Coach, Inc. Limited Warranty, we are hereby giving specific notice of the above-referenced issues experienced with our new travel trailer that we purchased from Dick Gore's RV World in Jacksonville, FL on March 3, 2012.

On August 22, 2012, while towing the trailer outside Enfield, N.C., its driver's side tire blew out. The tire's inward treads had worn completely down to the cords while the outward treads showed only limited wear (see photo exhibits 1 through 3). The passenger's side tire also showed excessive inward tread wear, though not as extreme as the driver's side tire (see photo exhibits 4 and 5).

At the time of the blow out, the tires had only 3200 miles on them. Their tire pressures had been checked before each leg of our travels (generally 300 to 350 miles per day) to maintain them at 50 to 53 psi. Since they hadn't been losing air and since their easily visible outward treads still appeared relatively new, the inward tread wear went unnoticed.

There is no way that the tire wear could have been due to overloading. The trailer's fresh, grey and black water holding tanks had always been empty when towed. The items carried in the trailer were weighed individually, totaled (485 lbs. on the trip from Florida to New York State and 605 lbs. on the return trip) and distributed 60% forward of the axle and 40% rearward. These weights were substantially less than the cargo capacity limit of 1018 lbs posted on the inside door frame of the trailer (see photo exhibits 6 and 7).

We replaced the tires at a cost of \$233.82 (copy of the receipt is included) in order to finish our trip home to Florida. Subsequently, we found numerous posts on the internet by owners of 19' Visas who had experienced the same tire wear problems. Many of the comments blame the Lippert 3500 lb GVW axle (see photo exhibits 8 and 9). Whether our trailer's axle came from the factory bent or misaligned is unknown. What is known is that when one inspects our trailer's wheels, the amount of toe out is readily apparent, especially on the driver's side. Simply replacing the tires will not resolve the issue.

We therefore request that Gulf Stream Coach, Inc.: (1) authorize Dick Gore's RV World (or other appropriate nearby dealer) to replace the faulty axle with a stronger, better axle, and (2) reimburse us for the tire replacement expense we incurred in Rocky Mount, NC.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Leesburg, FL  
[REDACTED]

Cc: ~~National Highway Traffic Safety Administration~~  
Dick Gore's RV World, Inc.

**Driver side tire (blow-out tire)**



Exhibit 1



Exhibit 2



Exhibit 3

**Passenger side tire (excessive wear)**



Exhibit 4



Exhibit 5

**Stated Cargo Capacity of Visa 19' ERD on door**



Exhibit 6



Exhibit 7

**Lippert 3500 lb. GVW Axle**



Exhibit 8



Exhibit 9



Leesburg, FL [redacted]

ORLANDO FL 327

01 SEP 2012 PM 3 L



NHTSA Headquarters  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
West Bldg  
Washington, D.C 20590

ATTN: Vehicle Safety Complaint Dept 20590

