



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

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 04-051
Prompted By: EA04-009 & EA04-019
Date Opened: 07/22/2004
Principal Investigator: Tom Bowman
Subject: Wheel Separations

Manufacturer: Airstream, Inc., General Coach - Hensall, Keystone RV Company, Komfort Corporation
Products: Towable Vehicles
Population: 3500 (ESTIMATED)

Problem Description: Wheels nuts can loosen and break in vehicles equipped with aluminum wheels and excess paint/coatings in the wheel-hub mounting interface.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	0	0	0
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
# Injuries:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	0	0

*Description Of Other:

Action: Open a Preliminary Investigation

Engineer: Thomas Bowman

Date: 07/22/2004

Div. Chief: Richard Boyd

Date: 07/22/2004

Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 07/22/2004

Summary: ODI is investigating wheel mounting nut loosening resulting in wheel separations in towable recreational vehicles.

ODI has conducted investigations of wheel separations with Fleetwood (ea04-009) and Jayco (ea04-019) vehicles. ODI's investigation found that foreign material such as coatings between the wheel mounting joint surfaces can compromise the ability of the nuts to maintain clamp and lead to nut loosening and/or stud breakage which could result in a wheel separation. A wheel that separates from a vehicle at highway speeds poses a hazard to other users of the roadway and can affect the stability and safety of the affected RV.

Thor industries purchases and installs wheel and hub equipment that is similar to the components that have resulted in wheel separations.