



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

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 05-044

Date Opened: 08/17/2005

Date Closed: 10/19/2005

Principal Investigator: Sonny Murianka

Subject: Loose Axle Hardware

Manufacturer: 4-Star Trailers, Inc
Products: 4-Star MY 2003-2005 Horse Trailers
Population: 200

Problem Description: Axle securement hardware on certain trailers equipped with "STT" air suspension may not have been properly torqued.

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: This investigation is closed. A safety related defect trend has not been identified.

Engineer: Sonny Murianka

Date: 10/19/2005

Div. Chief: Richard Boyd

Date: 10/19/2005

Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 10/19/2005

summary: ODI discovered this problem during a service bulletin review. On July 21, 2005, 4-Star forwarded ODI a copy of a service letter recently sent to their dealers and owners advising them of the immediate need to inspect and retorquer the mounting bracket bolts on the axle suspension. A line technician discovered the problem when he noticed that the bolts installed on the axle were not appropriately torqued.

ODI's investigation prompted 4-star to further examine the axle configuration and its attaching hardware. 4-Star has now concluded that the service bulletin was erroneous for the following reasons: starting with the first production trailer, a brace bar was welded to the trailer's frame to add stability to the floor of the trailer. The bar was then bolted to brackets with lock nuts and the brackets were then welded to the axles. Therefore, the added strength supplied by the welds makes the amount of torque irrelevant. At ODI's request, 4-Star provided data and examined trailers from each model year and provided documentation that supports their claim.

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PE05-044 Closing Resume, Continued

Although 4-Star feels that they were premature in reaching the decision on the issuance of the subject service bulletin, they have no plans of canceling the service bulletin at this time.

Based on 4-Star data and further review into this matter, a safety defect issue was not identified at this time and further uses of the agency's resources are not currently warranted. The agency reserves the right to take further action on the trailers if warranted by the circumstances. This investigation is closed.

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