



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

## ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 07-029  
Date Opened: 06/20/2007 Date Closed: 11/29/2007  
Principal Investigator: Sonny Murianka  
Subject: Side Electrical Fuse Panel Fires

Manufacturer: Thomas Built Buses, Inc., Freightliner LLC  
Products: 2001-2008 FS-65 ER, MPV-ER/EF, HDX Thomas Built School Buses  
Population: 33,303

Problem Description: Electrical panel fires result in vehicle stalls and certain electrical safety devices become inoperative.

### FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	2	22	22
Crashes/Fires:	2	22	22
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: The 22 complaints alleged melting, smoke, burn, and/or fire.

Action: This investigation is closed. Thomas Built/Freightliner will conduct a safety recall. The number is 07V-544.

Engineer: Sonny Murianka *SM* Date: 11/29/2007  
Div. Chief: Richard Boyd *RB* Date: 11/29/2007  
Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter Date: 11/29/2007

Summary: The Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) opened this investigation after becoming aware of two school bus fires that started in the side mounted electrical fuse panel on a pair of Thomas Built school buses. The Fleet owner had reported the bus interiors filled with smoke, certain electrical devices became inoperative, and the buses stalled. The two buses involved in the fire incidents have consecutive VIN numbers and the fires were similar, but not identical to a previous recall (06V-136) conducted by Thomas Built. These buses were not included in the prior recall, which involved a defective power distribution module (PDM).

After further technical evaluation, Freightliner decided they would conduct a safety recall to correct deficiencies in the previous recall and also expand the population to capture all affected buses. The corrective action freightliner plans to take will be forwarded to ODI when available. Accordingly, this investigation is closed.