



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

## ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 07-054  
Date Opened: 11/09/2007 Date Closed: 03/04/2008  
Principal Investigator: SONNY MURIANKA  
Subject: Emergency Door Handle Failure

Manufacturer: Thomas Built Buses, INC., Freightliner LLC  
Products: 2000-2008 C2, FS65, MVP-ER, EF, HDX, Minotour, SAF-T-Liner C2  
Population: 93,553

Problem Description: The rear emergency door handle snaps off when attempting to open the door.

### FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	15	121	121
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. Daimler Trucks North America has submitted a safety recall. The assigned number is 08V-087.

Engineer: Sonny Murianka *SM* Date: 03/04/2008  
Div. Chief: Richard Boyd Date: 03/04/2008  
Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter Date: 03/04/2008

Summary: The Office of Defects Investigation opened this Preliminary Evaluation after becoming aware that fleets were having handle failures on the rear emergency door exit. The failure resulted in the door handle separating from the door latch mechanism. When the handle fails, the rear emergency exit door can not be opened from outside the bus.

The failure results from corrosion of the exterior door handle around the securing roll pin and square drive latch mechanism, causing the protective finish to chip and flake. Continued corrosion weakens the handle and eventually the handle may break while trying to open the exit door. ODI was concerned that during an emergency, a person outside of the bus would break the door handle while trying to open the emergency exit door, potentially delaying evacuation of the bus.

Under the safety recall, the aluminum handles will be replaced with a more robust handle.

The recall action resolves the issues raised by this investigation. Accordingly, this investigation is closed.