



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

# ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE09-038  
Date Opened: 08/28/2009 Date Closed: 11/05/2009  
Principal Investigator: Sonny Murianka  
Subject: Wheel Chair Door Becomes Unlatched

Manufacturer: Motor Coach Industries, Inc  
Products: 2001-2004 MCI G4500 Series Coaches  
Population: 352

Problem Description: The sliding wheel chair door may unexpectedly open.

## FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	1	1	1
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	1	1

Description of Other: Technical Service Bulletin.

Action: This PE has been closed. MCI has filed a Safety Defect Report (09V-345) copy attached.

Engineer: Sonny Murianka  
Div. Chief: Richard Boyd *RB*  
Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 11/05/2009  
Date: 11/05/2009  
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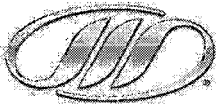
### Summary:

This investigation was prompted by a review of service bulletins provided by MCI to the agency.

MCI submitted a field change program bulletin in their July 2009 monthly communications (49 CFR 597.5) submission regarding a wheelchair lift interlock door retrofit kit for G4500 series coaches. Per the bulletin, the sliding wheelchair door may become unlatched, the visual warning indicator in the driver's area may go unnoticed by the driver and there is no audible warning. During the review process, ODI learned of a complaint from an individual whose group chartered a G4500 motorcoach and reportedly the wheelchair access door on the right side of the bus opened while the bus was traveling on the highway at 55 mph.

The investigation was opened to assess the scope and safety consequence of this issue. In September 2009, MCI filed a Safety Recall (09v-345) outlining their intended remedy program to resolve this issue. MCI will add an audible alarm to alert the driver that the door is not fully latched. They also intend to reinforce the upper door latch to improve latching system durability.

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



MOTOR COACH INDUSTRIES

09V-345  
(7 Pages)

Timothy J. Nalepka  
Senior Vice President & General Counsel

Direct Line: (847) 285-2085  
Facsimile: (502) 318-8085

September 1, 2009

**BY EMAIL AND**  
**BY CERTIFIED MAIL**

Associate Administrator for Enforcement  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
Attention: Recall Management Division (NVS - 215)  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE.  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: **PART 573 NOTICE RE G4500 WHEELCHAIR LIFT UPPER DOOR WARNING**  
**AND LATCH**

Dear Sir or Madam:

I have enclosed Motor Coach Industries, Inc.'s ("MCI") Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report, proposed customer notification letter, draft Service Bulletin 325B, and sample envelope and mailing label to be used with the customer notification letters.

Please confirm receipt of this notice, provide NHTSA's reference number, and advise if the proposed customer notification letter, draft Service Bulletin 325B, and sample envelope and mailing label are satisfactory.

Thanks for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,  
MOTOR COACH INDUSTRIES, INC.

By: Timothy J. Nalepka  
Senior Vice President &  
General Counsel

Enclosures

Safety Defect and Noncompliance Report Guide for Vehicles  
**PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report**

On August 26, 2009, Motor Coach Industries, Inc. decided that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in the motor vehicles listed below, and is furnishing notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Reports.

Date this report was prepared: September 1, 2009

Furnish the manufacturer's identification code for this recall (if applicable):

MCI Service Bulletin 325B

1. Identify the full corporate name of the fabricating manufacturer of the vehicle being recalled. If the recalled vehicle is imported, provide the name and mailing address of the designated agent as prescribed by 49 U.S.C. §30164.

Motor Coach Industries, Inc.  
1700 E. Golf Road  
Suite 300  
Schaumburg, IL 60173

Identify the corporate official, by name and title, whom the agency should contact with respect to this recall.

Virgil Hoogestraat, Vice President, Engineering

Telephone Number: (847) 285-2023 Fax No.: (847) 285-2095

Name and Title of Person who prepared this report.

Timothy J. Nalepka  
Senior Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary

Signed: 

**I. Identify the Vehicle Models Involved in the Recall**

2. Identify the Vehicles Involved in the Recall, for each make and model or applicable vehicle line (provide illustrations or photographs as necessary to describe the vehicle), provide:

Make(s): MCI

Model Years and Models Involved: 2001-2004 G4500

Production Dates: Beginning: June 2001 Ending: October 2004

VIN Range: Beginning: 80036 Ending: 80510  
Beginning: 62536 Ending: 62555

80036 - 80045	80056 - 80171	80182 - 80194	80198 - 80199	80201 - 80202
80206	80249 - 80253	80266 - 80288	80307 - 80367	80388 - 80472
80497 - 80510	62536 - 62555			

Descriptive information which characterizes /distinguishes the recalled vehicles from those model vehicles not included in the recall:

The vehicles that are subject to the recall are all MCI G4500 model coaches that were sold with a wheelchair lift and upper wheelchair lift door.

Identify the approximate percentage of the production of all the recalled models manufactured by your company between the inclusive dates of manufacture provided above, that the recalled model population represents. For example, if the recall involved Widgets equipped with certain items of equipment from January 1, 1996 through April 1, 1997, then what was the percentage of the recalled Widgets of all Widgets manufactured during that time period.

Approximately sixty-nine percent (69%) of the total number of G4500 coaches manufactured during the inclusive dates of manufacture provided above.

**II. Identify the Recall Population**

3. Furnish the total number of vehicles recalled potentially containing the defect or noncompliance.

<u>MODELS</u>	<u>MODEL YEARS</u>	<u>NUMBER OF VEHICLES POTENTIALLY INVOLVED</u>
G4500	2001 thru 2004	352

Total Number Potentially Affected by the Recall: 352

4. Furnish the approximate percentage of the total number of vehicles estimated to actually contain the defect or noncompliance:

100% of the coaches described in Section I.2. above.

Identify and describe how the recall population was determined--in particular how the recalled models were selected and the basis for the beginning and final dates of manufacture of the recalled vehicles:

MCI determined the vehicle recall population by including all G4500 model coaches manufactured or sold with a wheelchair lift and upper wheelchair lift door.

### III. Describe the Defect or Noncompliance

5. Describe the defect or noncompliance. The description should address the nature and physical location of the defect or noncompliance. Illustrations should be provided as appropriate.

The upper wheelchair door is used by passengers with physical disabilities for coach ingress and egress by use of a wheelchair lift platform that rises and lowers between ground level and the coach's passenger deck level. While the wheelchair door is open in combination with the use of the wheelchair lift, there are interlocks that actuate the coach's brakes, disable the coach throttle, and actuate the coach's flashing lights. The interlocks remain in effect until the wheelchair lift is stowed and the upper wheelchair door is sensed to be closed. If the upper wheelchair door opens due to a malfunction of both the upper air-actuated latch and the lower mechanical latch after the door has been sensed to be closed and the interlocks released, there is a telltale light in the driver's dash that illuminates to alert the driver that the upper wheelchair door is not fully latched and closed. Should the driver not notice the illuminated telltale light indicating that the wheelchair door is not fully latched and closed, the wheelchair door could slide open without further warning and expose passengers to the risk of falling from the coach while the vehicle is in motion.

Describe the cause(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

The wheelchair door may open as a result of a malfunction of the door's latches and the coach driver may not be alerted by the illumination of a telltale light in the dash indicating that the door was not fully latched and closed.

Describe the consequence(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

Should the driver not notice the illuminated telltale light indicating that the wheelchair door is not fully latched and closed, the wheelchair door could slide open without further

warning and expose passengers to the risk of falling from the coach while the vehicle is in motion.

Identify any warning which can (a) precede or (b) occur:

There is a telltale light in the driver's dash that illuminates to alert the driver that the upper wheelchair door is not fully latched and closed.

If the defect or noncompliance is in a component or assembly purchased from a supplier, identify the supplier by corporate name and address.

Not Applicable

Identify the name and title of the chief executive officer or knowledgeable representative of the supplier:

Not Applicable

#### IV. Provide the Chronology in Determining the Defect/Noncompliance

*If the recall is for a defect, complete item 6, otherwise item 7.*

6. With respect to a defect, furnish a chronological summary (including dates) of all the principal events that were the basis for the determination of the defect. The summary should include, but not be limited to, the number of reports, accidents, injuries, fatalities, and warranty claims.

MCI is currently aware of one incident in which a coach passenger reported on March 10, 2008, that the upper wheelchair door opened while the coach was in operation. MCI has not received any reports of any other incidents, or of any accidents, injuries, or fatalities, relating to the defect at issue. MCI also reviewed its warranty records, which did not reveal any warranty claims relating to this defect. After discussing the matter with NHTSA, MCI decided in August 2009 to submit this report pursuant to 49 CFR Part 573.

7. With respect to a noncompliance, identify and provide the test results or other data (in chronological order and including dates) on which the noncompliance was determined.

Not Applicable

#### V. Identify the Remedy

8. Furnish a description of the manufacturer's remedy for the defect or noncompliance. Clearly describe the differences between the recall condition and the remedy.

MCI plans to add an audible alarm in the driver's area as an additional alert to the driver that the wheelchair door is not fully latched and closed. MCI also plans to reinforce the upper door latch to improve latching system durability.

Clearly describe the distinguishing characteristics of the remedy component/assembly versus the recalled component/assembly.

The audible alarm will actuate along with the visual indicator anytime the upper wheelchair door is not fully closed and latched. The reinforced upper door latch will reduce the likelihood of the wheelchair door becoming unintentionally unlatched.

Identify and describe how and when the recall condition was corrected in production. If the production remedy was identical to the recall remedy in the field, so state. If the product was discontinued, so state.

MCI discontinued production of the G4500 model in 2004.

#### VI. Identify the Recall Schedule

9. Furnish a schedule or agenda (with specific dates) for notification to other manufacturers, dealers/retailers, and purchasers. Please identify any foreseeable problems with implementing the recall.

MCI anticipates sending notifications to customers within one week after receiving approval by NHTSA of MCI's draft customer notification.

## VII. Furnish Recall Communications

10. Furnish a final copy of all notices, bulletins, and other communications that relate directly to the defect or noncompliance and which are sent to more than one manufacturer, distributor, or purchaser. This includes all communications (including both original and follow-up) concerning this recall from the time your company determines the defect or noncompliance condition on, not just the initial notification. *A DRAFT copy of the notification documents should be submitted to this office by Fax (202-366-7882) for review prior to mailing.*

Note that these documents are to be submitted separately from those provided in accordance with Part 573.8 requirements.

MCI has attached its proposed customer letter and bulletin.