U.S. Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

ODI RESUME

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

NHTSA

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Investigation: EQ 11-002
Prompted by: 11E-003
Date Opened: 02/17/2011 **Date Closed:** 05/25/2012
Investigator: Alexander Ansley
Approver: Jennifer Timian
Subject: Carrier A/C Evaporator Fires

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: CARRIER CORPORATION
Products: Carrier GenV EM-1 Evaporator Units made 1/2006 - 12/2010
Population: 44,915

Problem Description: Certain Carrier EM-1 evaporators contain a fuse holder that may melt and cause a fire in school buses and shuttle buses.

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: Close EQ

Summary:

On January 25, 2011, Carrier Corporation (Carrier) notified the NHTSA that it had decided certain GenV EM-1 evaporator assemblies, installed into school buses and shuttle buses, contain a safety related defect. Carrier stated that certain EM-1 evaporators, manufactured between January 2006 and December 2010, contain a Delphi Pack-Con III fuse holder in an Allied Motion motor assembly. Over time, the Delphi fuse holder contacts may relax and possibly produce arcing. If sufficient arcing occurs, the fuse holder may melt, and may be accompanied by flame, smoke and potential fire. This issue was assigned recall number 11E-003.

On February 2, 2011, RMD contacted Delphi Corporation (Delphi) via e-mail to learn if it intended to file a Part 573 Report for the Pack-Con III fuse holders that Carrier deemed defective in its Part 573 filing. On February 17, 2011, Delphi responded via e-mail that this particular fuse holder had been in production since 1976 without any field issues reported to Delphi. Delphi stated that it, "...believes the Pack-Con III fuse holder is not defective and that the Pack-Con III fuse holder was misapplied by Carrier."

On March 17, 2011, RMD issued an information request (IR) letter to Delphi to formally request a list of purchasers that received these fuse holders. On March 25, 2011 Delphi responded by supplying a list of purchasers to NHTSA's Office of the Chief Counsel under a request for confidentiality. Given the information supplied in Delphi's earlier February 17, 2011 response, RMD chose not to contact the purchasers of these fuse holders during this EQ as no other vehicle or equipment manufacturers have filed similar safety defect decisions with the NHTSA at this time. RMD may, however, contact these fuse holder purchasers in the future should any other safety defect decisions regarding this equipment be filed with the NHTSA.

On October 6, 2011, RMD mailed IR letters to 10 purchasers identified in Carrier's Part 573 filing in order to learn if any vehicles were manufactured with these EM-1 evaporators. Six manufacturers responded by filing Part 573 Reports for vehicles they manufactured and also conducted safety recalls. Three manufacturers, Sonny Merryman Inc., Colonial Equipment Company, and Rivers Bus Sales responded that their evaporators were only installed into used vehicles or retail sold, neither requiring the companies to conduct safety recalls. Pro Air, LLC (Pro Air) responded that it distributed its more than 5,400 units to companies that might manufacture new motor vehicles. After multiple requests, RMD received Pro Air's purchaser list on November 29, 2011.

On December 14, 2011, RMD mailed IR letters to 5 purchasers identified by Pro Air. Three companies responded by filing Part 573 Reports and conducting safety recalls. Two companies, TMC Group and Herr Display Vans, did not respond to RMD's IR letter or follow-up e-mails requests. These companies will be referred to NHTSA's Office of the Chief Counsel for further possible enforcement action.

In total, 9 manufacturers filed the following Part 573 Reports as a result of this EQ:

11V-502 - Collins Bus Corp.
11V-540 – Molly Corporation
11V-559 – Double K, Inc.
11V-571 – Starcraft Bus
11V-581 – Kingmor Supply, Inc.
12V-003 – Elkhart Coach
12V-011 – Forest River, Glaval Bus Div.
12V-044 – Turtle Top
12V-179 – Nesco Bus

This Equipment Query is closed.