U.S. Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

ODI RESUME

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

NHTSA

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Investigation: EQ 11-004
Prompted by: 11E-008
Date Opened: 08/04/2011 **Date Closed:** 03/19/2012
Investigator: Alexander Ansley
Approver: Jennifer Timian
Subject: Gunite Slack Adjusters Breaking

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: ACCURIDE CORPORATION
Products: Multiple model & lot numbers made 10/15/2010 - 1/31/2011
Population: 37,474

Problem Description: Certain Gunite branded automatic slack adjusters may break, reducing vehicle braking capability.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	0	0	0
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	0	0

***Description of Other:**

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: Close EQ

Summary:

On February 23, 2011, Accuride Corporation notified the NHTSA that it had decided certain Gunite branded automatic slack adjusters contain a safety related defect. Accuride stated that certain slack adjusters, manufactured between October 15, 2010, and January 31, 2011, contain inadequate structural integrity at the slack adjuster housing due to inadequate "knitting" of the iron at the time of casting. This inadequate structural integrity could cause the housing to break at the handle under normal operating loads. If the slack adjuster were to break, the wheel brake to which the slack adjuster is attached would no longer function, causing the vehicle to have reduced braking capacity and, if mounted on the steer axle, the vehicle could pull to one side, possibly resulting in a crash. This issue was assigned recall number 11E-008.

Accuride's Defect Report also contained a purchaser list of vehicle manufacturers who were sold these slack adjusters. On August 4, 2011, NHTSA's Recall Management Division opened an equipment query (EQ) for this issue in order to write to these affected vehicle manufacturers.

On September 8, 2011, RMD mailed information request (IR) letters to 15 manufacturers notifying them of the Accuride safety recall and requesting they conduct a safety recall for any new motor vehicles they manufactured with these slack adjusters. On November 3, 2011, RMD mailed a 2nd IR letter on November 3, 2011 to 5 manufacturers who did not respond to the first letter.

Autocar Industries, Inc., Beall Transport of Montanna, and Kalmar Industries Corp., responded that their units were only sold into the aftermarket. These units would be covered under Accuride's safety recall.

Manac Inc. and Polar Tank Trailer, LLC., responded that their only affected units were shipped to Canada and, thus,

no U.S. safety recall is necessary.

MAC Trailer Mfg., Inc. responded that the units they received did not fall within the production dates that Accuride recalled. Road Systems Incorporated responded that their affected inventory was returned to Accuride and no motor vehicles were affected.

Three companies did not file sufficient responses to RMD's IR letters. Despite additional correspondence through phone calls and e-mails, Alfab, Inc. and Peerless Limited did not file a written response with RMD. E.D. Etnyre & Co. mailed RMD a large packet of notification letter copies and recall remedy receipts that they collected in the course of Accuride's recall. When RMD explained the regulatory requirement that E.D. Etnyre & Co. must notify the NHTSA of its defective vehicles via a Part 573 Defect & Noncompliance Information Report, the company chose not to respond. These three companies will be referred to NHTSA's Office of the Chief Counsel for further enforcement action.

In total, five manufacturers responded to RMD's IR letters by submitting Defect Reports and conducting safety recalls for their affected vehicles. Those companies are listed below:

11V-479 - Silver Eagle
11V-481 - Wilson Trailer Company
11V-488 - Transcraft Corporation
11V-555 - Mertz Manufacturing LLC
11V-601 - Rosa Trailer Mfg.

As RMD received adequate responses from all but three companies (as noted above), this Equipment Query is closed.