U.S. Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

ODI RESUME

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

NHTSA

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Investigation: EQ 12-005
Prompted by: 12E-002
Date Opened: 04/16/2012 **Date Closed:** 12/02/2013
Investigator: Alexander Ansley
Approver: Jennifer Timian
Subject: Braun Wheelchair Lifts

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: Braun Corporation
Products: 2006-2010 Century-2 & Vista-2 Lifts
Population: 21,412

Problem Description: Certain Braun wheelchair lifts may experience a roll stop latch failure that may cause injury to a wheelchair occupant.

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: Close EQ

Summary:

On January, 31, 2012, Braun Corporation (Braun) notified the NHTSA that it had decided a defect exists in certain Century-2 and Vista-2 wheelchair lifts, manufactured from November 20, 2006 through September 10, 2010, and installed on various vans and transit buses. Over time and with frequent use, the roll stop latches on the outer barrier may become bent or misaligned. Should this occur, a wheelchair occupant may defeat or ride over the insufficiently latched roll stop. If this occurs when the lift platform is in an elevated position, the wheelchair's occupant could fall and sustain injury. NHTSA assigned recall number 12E-002 to this matter.

On April 30, 2012, the Recall Management Division (RMD) mailed an Information Request (IR) letter to Braun requesting a list of all customers that purchased the defective wheelchair lifts. On May 10, 2012, Braun submitted a list of purchasers to NHTSA's Office of the Chief Counsel (NCC) requesting confidentiality for its business records. On October 2, 2012, NCC responded to Braun's request for confidentiality with a letter granting Braun's request.

On June 11, 2012, RMD mailed IR letters to sixteen (16) manufacturers that were detailed in Braun's purchaser list. Seven (7) manufacturers chose to conduct safety recalls for their affected vehicles. Additionally, Forest River, Inc. submitted two (2) Part 573 Reports recalling both affected Forest River and Glaval Bus vehicles. Three (3) IR letters were undeliverable. Two (2) companies, Ameritrans Bus Company and Accubuilt, Inc. did not respond to RMD's IR letter.

Braun's purchaser list also included a number of authorized dealerships that install and service Braun wheelchair lifts. RMD chose to contact twenty-seven (27) of these dealerships as they received sizable quantities of recalled wheelchair lifts which may have been installed on new vehicles. On August 21, 2012, RMD mailed an additional twenty-seven (27) IR letters these Braun dealerships. Twelve (12) companies provided responses explaining their product was returned, no actual defective product was received, or their units were not installed into new motor vehicles. Eight (8) companies filed Part 573 Reports and conducted safety recalls for their altered vehicles. Seven (7) of these companies did not respond to RMD's IR letter. These nonresponsive companies were: Ride-Away Corporation, The Mobility Specialist, Cummings Mobility Conversions, Fenton Mobility Products, Advanced Wheels of Technology, Inc., and Gresham Driving Aids.

In total, fifteen (15) companies filed Part 573 Reports with NHTSA and conducted safety recalls for this matter. The nine (9) companies that did not respond have been forwarded to NCC for possible enforcement action.

This EQ influenced the following safety recalls:

12V-326 - Prime-Time Specialty Vehicle, Inc.
12V-292 – Molly Corporation

12V-344 – Double K, Inc.
12V-404 – Turtle Top
12V-281 – Coach & Equipment Mfg. Corp.
12V-356 – Eldorado National Kansas, Inc.
12V-293 – Forest River, Inc.
12V-321 – Forest River, Inc. / Glaval Bus
12V-427 – Mobility Works
12V-442 – Mobility Transportation Services, Inc.
12V-437 – National Van Builders, Inc.
12V-433 – Quality Van Sales, Inc.
12V-440 – New England Wheels Inc.
12V-449 – Mobility Services
12V-584 – Creative Bus Sales, Inc.
12V-443 – C&C Mobility

This EQ is closed.