



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 13-032
Date Opened: 09/20/2013
Investigator: Nate Seymour **Reviewer:** Bruce York-B
Approver: Frank Borris
Subject: Trailer Structural Cracks

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: CORNHUSKER 800
Products: 2008-2013 Trailers
Population: 2,000 (Estimated)
Problem Description: Structural members adjacent to the upper fifth wheel plate may crack or deform increasing the risk of a vehicle crash.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	0	TBD	TBD
Crashes/Fires:	0	TBD	TBD
Injury Incidents:	0	TBD	TBD
Number of Injuries:	0	TBD	TBD
Fatality Incidents:	0	TBD	TBD
Number of Fatalities:	0	TBD	TBD
Other*:	1	Confidential	Confidential

*Description of Other: Review of quarterly EWR submissions

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: Open a Preliminary Evaluation

Summary:

During ODI's routine review of manufacturer's Early Warning Reporting (EWR) submissions, reports of frame and structural member cracking or deforming were identified on the subject trailers. A cracked or deformed structural member presents an increased risk of failure and is potentially an out of service violation per CFR 49 Part 393.201.

The reports indicated that the vertical supports located adjacent to the upper fifth wheel may develop cracks. ODI is concerned that a cracked structural member in close proximity to the trailer hitch may lead to a vehicle loss of control or crash. Additionally, the reports stated the frame members that support the upper fifth wheel buckled on some trailers as the result of frame cracks. It is unknown to ODI whether these two failure modes are related.

ODI has opened this assess the severity and frequency of the alleged defect.