Truck Equipment Service Co. response to Preliminary Evaluation [PE13-032]

[6]

The search criteria for gleaning related warranty claims was: Sorting my warranty spreadsheet for key phrase (8” channels) and going through my warranty folders reviewing handwritten notes from phone conversations.

[7]

The warranty coverage on the ‘Cornhusker800’ models in question is 3 years. At this time we don’t have a mileage limit.

Extensions to this warranty coverage are reviewed on a case by case basis. Currently no customer claim for warranty issues discussed here, has ever been denied.

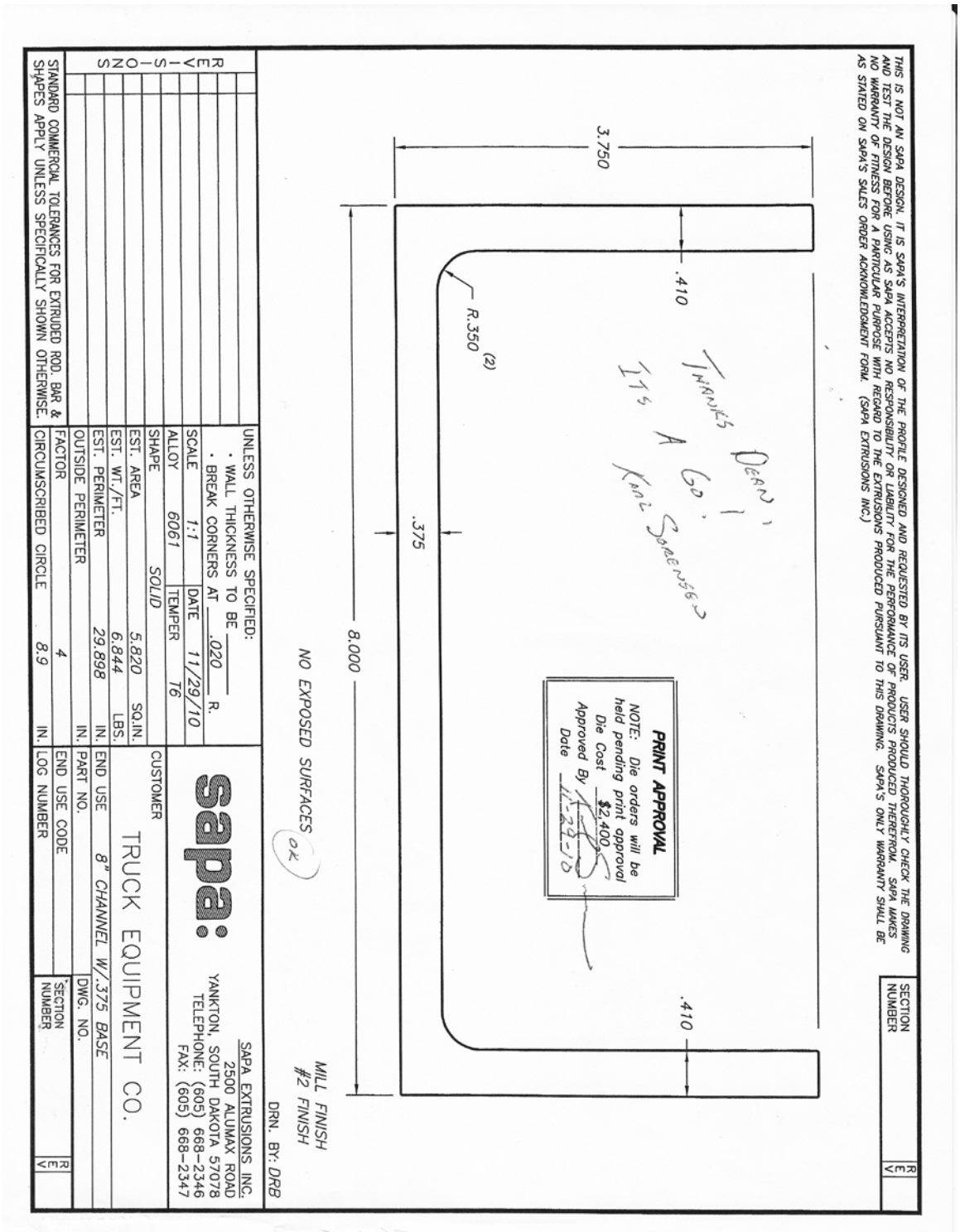
[8]

Cornhusker has issued no formal bulletins to dealers or repair shops. Communication has been in the form of phone conversations as our dealer network is small and we talk almost on a daily basis.

Instructions to regional repair shops are verbal by phone or I will include instructions with the repair parts shipment.

[9]

When the 8” channels showed signs of failing, we worked with our aluminum extrusion supplier (SAPA) to make a running engineering change to increase the thickness of the web on the 8” channel from .250” to .375”.



We also added (1) extra 5/8” Huck bolt fastener to the attaching angle located on the front of the 8” channel going from (2) to (3) fasteners.

We ran a FEA analysis to confirm our modification plans. I am including that analysis as a separate attachment.

[10]

As Cornhusker is a small manufacturer, we can monitor all warranty claims and quickly identify trending issues.

We discuss and identify our best options and implement them much faster than a larger company.

[11]

The modifications done to the pickup plate assembly were done to (4) 8” alum channels that run from the front nose rail to the back structural beam. This channel is an aluminum extrusion. We ordered a new die to produce this channel with a .375” thick web. The original web was .250” thick.

We also went from (2) to (3) 5/8” Huck bolts to attach the 8” channel to the front nose rail.

(a) This new revision of the channel was implemented into our new production on or around 03/17/11.

(b) The channel ‘web’ was increased in thickness from .250” to .375”. (1) extra 5/8” Huck bolt fastener was added to the front of each channel.

(c) These changes were made in response to customer complaints, of cracks found during visual inspections.

(d) The part number of the original 8” channel is [AY56561008]

(e) The part number of the modified channel is the same, as this was done as a running engineering change, and both versions are interchangeable.

(f) The original channel with the .250” web was withdrawn from production on or around 03/17/11. The remainder on hand was scrapped.

(g) The modified AY56561008 was available for resale or repair on or around 03/17/11.

(h) Both versions of the 8” channel are interchangeable.

No further modifications are planned in the next 120 days as we have seen no failures on units that have been updated.

[12]

10 largest fleet owners:

[13]

(a) The alleged defect tended to occur on trailers with a shallower kingpin setting (i.e. 18”) , and a higher payload trailer such as 3 and 4 axle units.

(b) The forces on the front end of the 8” channel overcame the yield strength of the 8” channel with a .250” web thickness.

(c) Out of the (4) 8” channels, cracks seemed to appear on the middle channels. Probably cause they are closer to the kingpin.

(d) We never heard a report of loss of control. On the worst examples the bottom kingpin plate would sag, but no unit went down on the tractor driving wheels.

(e) Warning to the driver would be that they would notice the trailer was sitting differently on the 5th wheel or they might hear unusual noises.

(f) We feel this alleged defect has been handled in a responsible and effective manner. Reports of problems are dwindling to zero.