U.S. Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

ODI RESUME

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

NHTSA

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Investigation: EQ 14-002
Prompted by: 13E-050
Date Opened: 01/16/2014 **Date Closed:** 08/25/2014
Investigator: Cynthia Glass
Approver: Jennifer Timian
Subject: Battery Equalizers/Converters May Ignite

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: Sure Power, Inc.
Products: Battery Equalizers and DC-DC Converters
Population: 10,989

Problem Description: Certain model battery equalizers and DC-DC converters are capable of conducting electricity after being exposed to heat, increasing the risk of a fire.

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: This EQ investigation is closed.

Summary:

The Closing Resume Summary is attached.

EQ 14-002: Sure Power Battery Compound May Conduct Electricity
Closing Resume Summary
August 25, 2014

BACKGROUND

On September 10, 2013, Sure Power Inc. (Sure Power) notified the NHTSA that it decided a defect exists in battery equalizers and DC-DC converters with part numbers: 12025C00, 12025C00-B, 12025E00, 12025E00-B, 12030C20HR, 12030C20HR-B, 12040C00, 12040C00-B, 12040E00, 12040E00-B, 52204, 52206, 52206RB, 52208, 52208P, 52208RB, 52210, 52210-20430K, 52210P, 52210RB, 52210RB-B, 52210RB-T, 52304, 52304P, 52306, 52306RB, 52308, 12040C01. These battery equalizers and DC-DC converters were manufactured between January 2000 and August 18, 2013, and contain a particular potting compound. The potting compound was used for insulation in the subject products and was found to be capable of conducting electricity after being exposed to heat. Once electrically conductive, the material is capable of melting and burning, increasing the risk of a fire. This matter was assigned recall number 13E-050.

On January 16, 2014, the Recall Management Division (RMD) opened this Equipment Query (EQ) Investigation in order to write the companies that purchased these battery equalizers and DC-DC converters, to notify them of this defect in any vehicle or vehicle equipment they manufactured, and to ensure thorough safety recalls are conducted where appropriate.

Prior to opening this EQ investigation, eleven (11) vehicle manufacturers filed a defect report announcing their decision to conduct a safety recall for their affected vehicles. The vehicle recall campaigns are:

Manufacturer	Recall #
Blue Bird Body Company	13V-480
Chance Coach	13V-457
Daimler Buses North America	13V-476
Motor Coach Industries, Inc.	13V-498
New Flyer Industries Ltd.	13V-485
North American Bus Industries	13V-457
Nova Bus Corporation	13V-642
Orion Bus	13V-476
Setra of North America	13V-530
Thomas Dennis Company	13V-476
Universal Coach	13V-498

In their 573 Defect Notification Report, Sure Power provided a customer list consisting of 90 companies who purchased the defective battery equalizers and DC-DC converters. Sure Power did not provide an address or contact information for 22 companies and indicated that eight (8) of those companies were currently out of business. The following companies were identified as “out of business”:

Boydstun
EV America, LLC
General Purpose Vehicles
Hadley
Odyssey Group
SP Electric
Trans Teq LLC
Tulsa Equipment

A list of the fourteen (14) companies that did not have an address or contact information, and that are not "out of business", was sent to Sure Power and it was requested that they provide the missing information.

After reviewing the customer list, adjusting it to remove duplicates and the companies that filed Part 573 Reports before the investigation was opened, and removing other purchasers, such as companies no longer in operation for which a pursuit would be fruitless, NHTSA sent Information Request (IR) letters to those purchasers for which NHTSA had not been notified of a defect decision. Each was informed of Sure Power's defect decision and requested to make a defect decision and file a Part 573 Report, or to explain why a defect decision was not warranted. Manufacturers that did not respond to this request were mailed a second request on June 26, 2014.

SURE POWER OEM RESPONSE

In response to the IR letters, twelve (12) vehicle manufacturers filed a defect report and indicated they would conduct a recall of their vehicles. The vehicle recall campaigns are:

Manufacturer	**Recall #**
Altec	14V-503
Cottrell, Inc.	14V-028
Dueco, Inc.	14V-186
Eldorado National	14V-030
Kaffenbarger Truck Equipment	14V-037
Kenworth Truck Company	14V-014
Marathon Coach, Inc.	14V-041
Monroe Truck Equipment	14V-070
Paccar	14V-014
Peterbilt Motors	14V-014
Prevost Car, Inc.	14V-073
Schwing America Inc.	14V-035

Twenty-six (26) manufacturers submitted responses explaining that they are not vehicle manufacturers. Many of these manufacturers are parts distributors and retailers who do not have any obligations to conduct safety recalls. Accordingly, the following manufacturers do not need to make a defect decision or conduct recall campaigns:

ABC Bus Incorporated
Able Manufacturing
Arctic Fox
City of Phoenix
Country Coach
Creative Mobile Interiors Inc.
Dometic Corporation
FWD Seagrave Corporation
Getman Corporation
Grisham Services, Inc.
Harris Assembly Group
Hartel & Sons, Inc.
KCS International, Inc.

Kershaw
Kress Corporation
Manitowoc Crane Group
Minnich Manufacturing Company
Mobile Climate Control
Muncie Transit Supply
NACCO Material Handling
P&H Auto Electric
Serva Group
Terex America
Trak International
Trimet
ZF Industries

Six (6) manufacturers submitted a response explaining that they sold the battery equalizers and DC-DC converters to the military for research and development projects overseas. Accordingly, the following manufacturers do not need to make a defect decision or conduct recall campaigns:

Elgin Sweeper Company Inc.
Isometrics, Inc.
Miller Industries
Montery Electronics
SST Truck Company LLC
Volvo Trucks NA Inc.

Thirteen (13) manufacturers submitted a response explaining that the defective battery equalizers and DC-DC converters were not installed on any vehicles or were returned to Sure Power and remedied prior to installation or sale. The following manufacturers are not conducting a recall campaign:

Autocar, LLC
Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, LLC
Brinks Manufacturing
Daimler Trucks North America
Fontaine Modification Company
General Safety Equipment, LLC
Grove World Wide
Ipower
Mack Trucks Inc.
Navistar, Inc.
Process Manufacturing
Thermo King
Translectric, Inc.

Thirteen (13) manufacturers did not submit a written response to RMD's IR letter, even after multiple attempts to contact them were made by RMD staff. The following companies will be referred to NHTSA's Office of the Chief Counsel for further possible enforcement action:

Bombardier
Dowel Schlumberger
I Power Energy Systems, LLC
Indata Tech
Iowa Mold Tool
Lift Moore Inc.
Neopart
Neoplan USA Corporation
Optare
Precision Automotive Industries, Inc.
Schlumberger Pumping Services
Schlumberger Technologies
Triton Industries, Inc.

RECALL MANAGEMENT DIVISION ACTION

All vehicle and motor vehicle equipment manufacturers who purchased the defective battery equalizers and DC-DC converters have been identified and have either filed recall reports and are conducting recalls, or have provided responses explaining why they are not conducting recalls. Accordingly, this equipment query investigation is closed. Copies of documents associated with this investigation, including responses to IR letters, can be found in this Equipment Query's document repository by clicking the "Associated Documents" button.