U.S. Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

ODI RESUME

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

NHTSA

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Investigation: EQ 14-015
Prompted by:
Date Opened: 12/17/2014 **Date Closed:** 02/26/2015
Investigator: Cynthia Glass
Approver: Jennifer Timian
Subject: Fluid Tank Mounting Bracket Failure

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: LiquidSpring LLC
Products: LiquidSpring Aftermarket Chassis
Population: 235

Problem Description: The mounting bracket for the suspension's fluid tank may fail resulting in the fluid tank falling from the vehicle onto the roadway.

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: This EQ investigation is closed.

Summary:

See the attached closing report.

EQ 14-015: Suspension Fluid Tank Mounting Bracket May Fail
Closing Report

BACKGROUND

In a letter dated July 1, 2014, LiquidSpring LLC, (LiquidSpring), notified the NHTSA that it decided a defect exists in certain aftermarket CLASS DS96F-A, DS96F-M and DS96F-MC suspensions for Ford E-450 chassis; DS120F-A and DS120FA10 suspensions for Ford F-450 chassis; DS137F-A and DS137F-A10 suspensions for Ford F-550 chassis with 18,000lb GVWR; DS147F-B2 suspensions for Ford F-550 chassis with 19,500lb GVWR; and DS96GM-AR, DS96GM-AR12, DS96GM-AM and DS96GM-MR suspensions for Chevrolet G3500/4500 chassis. The mounting bracket that attaches the suspension fluid tank to the frame may fail allowing the fluid tank to separate from the vehicle. If the suspension fluid tank mounting bracket fractures and the tank separates from the chassis, the tank may become a road hazard, increasing the risk of a crash. This matter was assigned recall number 14E-034.

In their 573 Defect Notification Report, LiquidSpring provided a customer list identifying the vehicle manufacturers that may have incorporated the subject mounting brackets into their vehicles. On December 17, 2014, the Recall Management Division (RMD) opened this Equipment Query (EQ) Investigation in order to write the companies that purchased these mounting brackets but had not yet informed NHTSA of a defect decision, to notify them of the various defect decisions, and to encourage additional safety recalls where appropriate.

Prior to opening this EQ investigation, four vehicle manufacturers filed a defect report announcing their decision to conduct a safety recall for their affected vehicles. On December 19, 2014, an information request (IR) letter was sent to the vehicle manufacturers for which NHTSA had not been notified of a defect decision.

VEHICLE MANUFACTURERS RESPONSE

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

Manufacturer	Recall#
Dodgen Industries	14V-826
Life Line Emergency Vehicles	15V-024

Ten manufacturers submitted responses explaining that they are not vehicle manufacturers, that the subject mounting brackets were not installed on any of their vehicles, or that the subject mounting brackets were quarantined in their facility and repaired by LiquidSpring prior to installation or sale. The following manufacturers are not conducting a recall campaign:

American Emergency Vehicles
Braun Industries
Braun Northwest
Crestline Coach Ltd
Elkhart Coach
LGE Coachworks
Osage Ambulances
PL Custom Emergency Vehicles
Tiffany Coach Builders
US Ambulance

One manufacturer, Demers Ambulance, Inc., did not submit a written response to RMD's IR letter, even after multiple attempts to contact them were made by RMD staff. This company will be referred to NHTSA's Office of the Chief Counsel for further possible enforcement action.

RECALL MANAGEMENT DIVISION ACTION

All vehicle and motor vehicle equipment manufacturers who purchased the subject mounting brackets 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.