



U.S. Department of Transportation
**National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration**



1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590

CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

OCT 10 2018

Mr. Robert L. Birdwell
Executive Director, Quality & Service
GILLIG LLC
25800 Clawiter Road
Hayward, CA 94545

NEF-106kmb
EA16-001

Dear Mr. Birdwell:

As you may already be aware, the Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is conducting an Engineering Analysis (EA16-001) pursuant to evaluate the integrity of the Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fuel systems on certain model year (MY) 2014 Freightliner Business Class M2 vehicles, on substantially similar Freightliner vehicles, and on certain other medium- and heavy-duty CNG peer vehicles. This investigation was prompted by a fatal incident that occurred on April 3, 2014, in Howard, Wisconsin, when the incident vehicle experienced a catastrophic CNG fuel container burst after it was struck by an unsecured forklift being transported inside the truck's cargo compartment. As part of this investigation, ODI is gathering additional information about CNG fuel system integrity from vehicle manufacturers, fuel system integrators and fuel container manufacturers to better understand the state of the art and the hazard potential. The purpose of this letter is to request certain information from GILLIG LLC (GILLIG) to assist ODI in this pursuit.

Unless otherwise stated in the text, the following definitions apply to these information requests:

- **Subject vehicle(s):** All motor vehicles manufactured by GILLIG since January 1, 2010, for sale or lease in the United States, including, but not limited to, the District of Columbia, and current U.S. territories and possessions, which are equipped with one or more subject components, whether as original equipment, service replacement or aftermarket installation.
- **Subject component(s):** All CNG fuel containers (as defined in 49 CFR 571.304) that are equipped on subject vehicles manufactured since January 1, 2010.
- **Level 3 damage:** Damage that renders the subject component(s) unfit for continued service and cannot be repaired.

- **GILLIG:** GILLIG LLC, all of its past and present officers and employees, whether assigned to their principal offices or any of their field or other locations, including all of its divisions, subsidiaries (whether or not incorporated) and affiliated enterprises and all of its headquarters, regional, zone and other offices and its employees, and all agents, contractors, consultants, attorneys and law firms and other persons engaged directly or indirectly (e.g., employee of a consultant) by or under the control of GILLIG (including all business units and persons previously referred to), who are or, in or after January 1, 2010, were involved in any way with any of the following related to the alleged defect in the subject vehicles:
 - a. Design, engineering, analysis, modification or production (e.g. quality control);
 - b. Testing, assessment or evaluation;
 - c. Consideration, or recognition of potential or actual defects, reporting, record-keeping and information management, (e.g., complaints, field reports, warranty information, part sales), analysis, claims, or lawsuits; or
 - d. Communication to, from or intended for zone representatives, fleets, dealers, or other field locations, including but not limited to people who have the capacity to obtain information from dealers.

- **Document:** "Document(s)" is used in the broadest sense of the word and shall mean all original written, printed, typed, recorded, or graphic matter whatsoever, however produced or reproduced, of every kind, nature, and description, and all non-identical copies of both sides thereof, including, but not limited to, papers, letters, memoranda, correspondence, communications, electronic mail (e-mail) messages (existing in hard copy and/or in electronic storage), faxes, mailgrams, telegrams, cables, telex messages, notes, annotations, working papers, drafts, minutes, records, audio and video recordings, data, databases, other information bases, summaries, charts, tables, graphics, other visual displays, photographs, statements, interviews, opinions, reports, newspaper articles, studies, analyses, evaluations, interpretations, contracts, agreements, jottings, agendas, bulletins, notices, announcements, instructions, blueprints, drawings, as-builts, changes, manuals, publications, work schedules, journals, statistical data, desk, portable and computer calendars, appointment books, diaries, travel reports, lists, tabulations, computer printouts, data processing program libraries, data processing inputs and outputs, microfilms, microfiches, statements for services, resolutions, financial statements, governmental records, business records, personnel records, work orders, pleadings, discovery in any form, affidavits, motions, responses to discovery, all transcripts, administrative filings and all mechanical, magnetic, photographic and electronic records or recordings of any kind, including any storage media associated with computers, including, but not limited to, information on hard drives, floppy disks, backup tapes, and zip drives, electronic communications, including but not limited to, the Internet and shall include any drafts or revisions pertaining to any of the foregoing, all other things similar to any of the foregoing, however denominated by GILLIG, any other data compilations from which information can be obtained, translated if necessary, into a usable form and any other documents. For purposes of this request, any document which contains any note, comment, addition, deletion, insertion, annotation, or otherwise comprises a non-identical copy of another document shall be treated as a separate document subject to production. In all cases where original and any non-identical copies are not available,

“document(s)” also means any identical copies of the original and all non-identical copies thereof. Any document, record, graph, chart, film or photograph originally produced in color must be provided in color. Furnish all documents whether verified by GILLIG or not. If a document is not in the English language, provide both the original document and an English translation of the document.

- **Other Terms:** To the extent that they are used in these information requests, the terms “claim,” “consumer complaint,” “dealer field report,” “field report,” “fire,” “fleet,” “good will,” “make,” “model,” “model year,” “notice,” “property damage,” “property damage claim,” “rollover,” “type,” “warranty,” “warranty adjustment,” and “warranty claim,” whether used in singular or in plural form, have the same meaning as found in 49 CFR 579.4.

In order for my staff to evaluate the alleged defect, certain information is required. Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30166, please provide numbered responses to the following information requests. Insofar as GILLIG has previously provided a document to ODI, GILLIG may produce it again or identify the document, the document submission to ODI in which it was included and the precise location in that submission where the document is located. When documents are produced, the documents shall be produced in an identified, organized manner that corresponds with the organization of this information request letter (including all individual requests and subparts). When documents are produced and the documents would not, standing alone, be self-explanatory, the production of documents shall be supplemented and accompanied by explanation.

Please repeat the applicable request verbatim above each response. After GILLIG’s response to each request, identify the source of the information and indicate the last date the information was gathered.

1. State the number of subject vehicles manufactured to date, grouped by vehicle make, model and model year. Also, for each vehicle make, model and model year grouping, state the number of subject vehicles where GILLIG installed the subject component(s) as original equipment.
2. State the number of subject vehicles GILLIG is aware of, that have experienced Level 3 damage to one or more subject components, grouped by vehicle make, model and model year. Multiple incidents involving the same vehicle are to be counted together as one.
3. State the number of subject components GILLIG has installed as original equipment on subject vehicles, sold for service replacement and/or aftermarket installation to date, grouped by calendar year of vehicle production (for original equipment) or calendar year of fuel container sale (for service replacement and/or aftermarket installation), and by fuel container designation (Type 1, Type 2, Type 3 or Type 4).
4. State the number of subject components GILLIG is aware of, that have experienced Level 3 damage. For each such container, please provide:

- a. Calendar year of vehicle production (for original equipment) or calendar year of fuel container sale (for service replacement and/or aftermarket installation);
 - b. End-of-life date;
 - c. Calendar year the fuel container was condemned;
 - d. Fuel container designation (Type 1, Type 2, Type 3 or Type 4); and
 - e. Summary description of damage that condemned the cylinder (i.e. object impact or abrasion; fire exposure; chemical exposure; improper repair attempt).
5. State the number of each of the following, received by GILLIG, or of which GILLIG is otherwise aware, which relate to, or may relate to, the integrity of the subject components:
- a. Reports involving a crash;
 - b. Reports involving a fire or explosion;
 - c. Reports involving injury or fatality;
 - d. Property damage claims;
 - e. Third-party arbitration proceedings where GILLIG is or was a party to the arbitration; and
 - f. Lawsuits, both pending and closed, in which GILLIG is or was a defendant or codefendant.

For subparts “a” through “f,” state the total number of each item (e.g., crash reports, injury reports, etc.) separately. Multiple incidents involving the same vehicle are to be counted separately. Multiple reports of the same incident are also to be counted separately (i.e., a crash report and an injury report involving the same incident in which a crash occurred are to be counted as a crash report, an injury report and a lawsuit report).

In addition, for each incident related to items “a” through “f,” provide a summary description of the alleged problem and causal and contributing factors and GILLIG’s assessment of the problem, with a summary of the significant underlying facts and evidence. For items “e” and “f,” identify the parties to the action, as well as the caption, court, docket number, and date on which the complaint or other document initiating the action was filed.

6. Describe all assessments, analyses, tests, test results, studies, surveys, simulations, investigations, inquiries and/or evaluations (collectively, “actions”) that relate to, or may relate to, the integrity (including crashworthiness) of the subject components or the fuel systems they are part of, that have been conducted, are being conducted, are planned, or are being planned by, or for, GILLIG. For each such action, provide the following information:
- a. Action title or identifier;
 - b. The actual or planned start date;
 - c. The actual or expected end date;
 - d. Brief summary of the subject and objective of the action;
 - e. Engineering group(s), supplier(s) and/or third-party provider(s) responsible for designing and for conducting the action; and
 - f. A brief summary of the findings and/or conclusions resulting from the action.

For each action identified, provide copies of all documents related to the action, regardless of whether the documents are in interim, draft, or final form. Organize the documents chronologically by action.

Legal Authority for This Request

This letter is being sent to GILLIG pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30166, which authorizes NHTSA to conduct any investigation that may be necessary to enforce Chapter 301 of Title 49 and to request reports and the production of things. It constitutes a new request for information.

Civil Penalties

GILLIG's failure to respond promptly and fully to this letter could subject GILLIG to civil penalties pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30165 or lead to an action for injunctive relief pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30163. (Other remedies and sanctions are available as well.) The Vehicle Safety Act, as amended, 49 U.S.C. § 30165(a)(3), provides for civil penalties of up to \$21,000 per violation per day, with a maximum of \$105,000,000 for a related series of daily violations, for failing or refusing to perform an act required under 49 U.S.C. § 30166. *See* 49 CFR 578.6 (as amended by Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (the "FAST Act"), Pub. L. 114-94, § 24110(a)(2), 129 Stat. 1312 (Dec. 4, 2015)). This includes failing to respond completely, accurately, and in a timely manner to ODI information requests.

If GILLIG cannot respond to any specific request or subpart(s) thereof, please state the reason why it is unable to do so. If on the basis of attorney-client, attorney work product, or other privilege, GILLIG does not submit one or more requested documents or items of information in response to this information request, GILLIG must provide a privilege log identifying each document or item withheld, and stating the date, subject or title, the name and position of the person(s) from, and the person(s) to whom it was sent, and the name and position of any other recipient (to include all carbon copies or blind carbon copies), the nature of that information or material, and the basis for the claim of privilege and why that privilege applies.

Confidential Business Information

All business confidential information must be submitted directly to the Office of Chief Counsel as described in the following paragraph and should not be sent to this office. In addition, do not submit any business confidential information in the body of the letter submitted to this office. Please refer to EA16-001 in GILLIG's response to this letter and in any confidentiality request submitted to the Office of Chief Counsel.

If GILLIG claims that any of the information or documents provided in response to this information request constitute confidential commercial material within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4), or are protected from disclosure pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1905, GILLIG must submit supporting information together with the materials that are the subject of the confidentiality request, in accordance with 49 CFR Part 512, as amended, to the Office of Chief Counsel (NCC-100), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room W41-227, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20590. GILLIG is required to **submit two copies of the**

documents containing allegedly confidential information (except only one copy of blueprints) and one copy of the documents from which information claimed to be confidential has been deleted. Please remember that the phrase "ENTIRE PAGE CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION" or "CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION" (as appropriate) must appear at the top of each page containing information claimed to be confidential, and the information must be clearly identified in accordance with 49 CFR 512.6. If you submit a request for confidentiality for all or part of your response to this IR, that is in an electronic format (e.g., CD-ROM), your request and associated submission must conform to the new requirements in NHTSA's Confidential Business Information Rule regarding submissions in electronic formats. *See* 49 CFR 512.6(c) (as amended by 72 Fed. Reg. 59434 (October 19, 2007)).

If you have any questions regarding submission of a request for confidential treatment, contact Otto Matheke, Senior Attorney, Office of Chief Counsel at otto.matheke@dot.gov or (202) 366-5253.

Due Date

GILLIG's response to this letter, in duplicate, together with a copy of any confidentiality request, must be submitted to this office by Tuesday, **November 13, 2018**. GILLIG's response must include all non-confidential attachments and a redacted version of all documents that contain confidential information. If GILLIG finds that it is unable to provide all of the information requested within the time allotted, GILLIG must request an extension from Mr. Bruce York of my staff at (202) 366-6938 no later than five business days before the response due date. If GILLIG is unable to provide all of the information requested by the original deadline, it must submit a partial response by the original deadline with whatever information GILLIG then has available, even if an extension has been granted.

Please send email notification to Mr. Kyle Bowker at kyle.bowker@dot.gov and to ODI_IRresponse@dot.gov when GILLIG sends its response to this office and indicate whether there is confidential information as part of GILLIG's response.

If you have any technical questions concerning this matter, please call Mr. Kyle Bowker of my staff at (202) 366-9597.

Sincerely,



Stephen A. Ridella, Ph.D.

Director

Office of Defects Investigation