



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 17-006

Date Opened: 09/25/2017

Investigator: Ryan Rahimpour

Approver: Stephen Ridella

Subject: Seat belt latch failure

Date Closed: 04/04/2018

Reviewer: Bruce York-B

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: Van Hool N.V.

Products: 2015-2018 Van Hool Buses

Population: 1,475

Problem Description: Seat belt latch casing failure resulting in potential latch/buckle failure.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	0	0	0
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
Other*:	7	96	96**

***Description of Other:** Field Reports and Warranty Data

**** Total eliminates duplicates received by ODI and manufacturer.**

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: The PE is closed. See Safety Recall 18V-209.

Summary:

Through Early Warning Reporting (EWR) data review of 2016 Q1-Q3, several field reports were found that identified failures of seat belt latch casings on MY 2016 Van Hool motorcoaches.

While reviewing the EWR data related to the latch issue, ODI was contacted by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) regarding seat belt latch issues they discovered while investigating a crash between a train and a 2016 Van Hool bus in Biloxi, Mississippi. Through inspections of buses similar to the bus involved in the crash, the NTSB found that casing failures were occurring on seat belt latches manufactured by Fasching Salzburg. These concerns were forwarded to ODI suggesting the latch casing failures may be a wide spread problem found on MY 2016 Van Hool buses.

As a result of the information provided by the NTSB along with the related EWR field reports, ODI opened a defect investigation (PE17-006) on the subject vehicles. The intent of the investigation was to better understand if there was a safety related defect involving the latches.

During the investigation ODI reviewed warranty claims submitted by VAN Hool and found that many identified situations where passengers could not get the seat belt buckles to latch or in some case unlatch. This presented a situation where passengers were either unrestrained during a potential crash or could not get out of their seats to exit the vehicle in a potential emergency.

With recall action 18V-209 taken by Van Hool this investigation is closed. Further use of agency resources does not appear to be warranted. The closing of this investigation does not constitute a finding by NHTSA that a safety-related

defect does not exists on other model or MY vehicles outside of the recall scope. The agency reserves the right to take further action if warranted by the circumstances.