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

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

ODI RESUME

Investigation: AQ20001
Prompted By: DI18-101 Sequence 10, DI19-027 Sequence 59
Date Opened: 07/20/2020 **Date Closed:** 01/16/2025
Investigator: Bernard Hardgrave **Reviewer:** Jeff Quandt
Approver: Tanya Topka
Subject: Timeliness of 49 CFR 579 Reporting (EWR)

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer:	Harmony Juvenile Products
Products:	Harmony Optyma, Harmony Dreamtime, Harmony Defender, and other Harmony Child restraints
Population:	84,432 (Estimated)
Problem Description:	NHTSA opened this audit query to determine whether Harmony has complied with its obligations under the Safety Act and related regulations to report death and injury claims relating to the child seats it manufactures and to report foreign safety recalls involving substantially similar products to those sold in the United States.

ACTION/SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: This (AQ) Audit Query is closed without a manufacturer action.

Summary:

On July 20, 2020, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) opened an Audit Query (AQ) to investigate Harmony Juvenile Products' (Harmony) reporting of death and injury claims and foreign recalls under 49 CFR Part 579. NHTSA's investigation was prompted by a fatal incident involving child restraints manufactured by both Harmony and another manufacturer for which NHTSA received death and injury reports from the involved vehicle manufacturer and the other child restraint manufacturer. NHTSA did not receive a report from Harmony until after NHTSA contacted the company. NHTSA was also aware of foreign recalls of Harmony products that NHTSA believed may have been substantially similar to products sold in the United States but were not reported to the Agency.

In response to NHTSA's information request issued during this investigation, Harmony asserted that because of the unique requirements for service of process for foreign entities (Harmony is located in Canada) and the limited information available to the company, Harmony did not have enough information regarding the fatal incident to submit a report to NHTSA under Part 579 until after Harmony was contacted by NHTSA. Harmony also responded that there were no foreign recalls involving substantially similar products that Harmony did not report to NHTSA.

After NHTSA opened this AQ, Harmony improved its processes for compliance with Part 579 by taking the following actions: (1) formalizing its previously unwritten procedures for reviewing communications to help ensure that future communications would be reported to NHTSA pursuant to 49 CFR 579.5; (2) auditing customer contracts to determine whether any may have met the reporting requirements for consumer complaints under 49 CFR 579.25(c); (3) auditing its records to see whether there were analyses of field incidents that meet the definition of a “field report,” which Harmony is required to report to NHTSA; and (4) reviewing charge-back information provided by U.S. retailers to determine whether Harmony had any information that would qualify as a paid warranty claim, which Harmony is required to report to NHTSA.

In May 2022, Harmony stopped selling child restraints in the U.S. However, in July 2024, Harmony notified NHTSA that the company had re-entered the U.S. market during the second quarter of 2024 and that it conducted internal training about the early warning reporting requirements for manufacturers of child restraint systems in in 49 CFR 579.25.

Given the information obtained through the investigation and Harmony’s compliance efforts that are described above, continuing this investigation into Harmony is not warranted and this investigation is closed. The Agency will continue to monitor Harmony’s reporting pursuant to 49 CFR Part 579. The Agency reserves the right to take further action if warranted by the circumstances.