



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 21-002
Date Opened: 01/15/2021
Investigator: Ryan Rahimpour
Approver: Stephen Ridella
Subject: Trolley bus circuit breaker fires
Reviewer: Bruce York-B

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: ARBOC Specialty Vehicles, LLC
Products: 2018-2020 Arboc Spirit of America trolley buses
Population: 121 (Estimated)
Problem Description: Improperly secured 30 amp recessed circuit breaker can short resulting in key-on and key-off fires.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	0	TBD	TBD
Crashes/Fires:	0	TBD	TBD
Injury Incidents:	0	TBD	TBD
Number of Injuries:	0	TBD	TBD
Fatality Incidents:	0	TBD	TBD
Number of Fatalities:	0	TBD	TBD
Other*:	1	TBD	TBD

***Description of Other:** Correspondence letter from Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) describing 3 separate fire incidents with 8 subject vehicles involved.

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: Open a Preliminary Evaluation (PE).

Summary:

By letter submitted July 7th 2020, Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) informed the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of three separate fire incidents resulting in the total loss of eight of its Spirit of America trolley buses. These buses were manufactured by Arboc SV LLC on incomplete chassis from Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation (FCCC). Considering the safety concerns and substantial losses, LAWA grounded the remaining buses in their fleet and requested NHTSA to conduct an investigation on the vehicles destroyed in the fires.

NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation (ODI), contacted both the manufacturer and the fleet to obtain the necessary information needed to understand the problem and take appropriate actions. Evidence provided by LAWA points to an improperly secured 30 amp recessed circuit breaker which can short circuit resulting in key-on and key-off fires. Unlike the fleet, the manufacturer believes that the three fires are not related and have nothing to do with the 30 amp breaker.

This Preliminary Evaluation has been opened to determine if a defect in the subject vehicles represents an unreasonable risk to motor vehicle safety.