

Request 19:

19. Furnish Thor's assessment of the alleged defect in the subject vehicles, including:
- a. The causal or contributory factor(s);
 - b. The failure mechanism(s);
 - c. The failure mode(s);
 - d. The risk to motor vehicle safety that it poses;
 - e. What warnings, if any, the operator and the other persons both inside and outside the vehicle would have that the alleged defect was occurring, or subject component was malfunctioning; and
 - f. The reports included with this inquiry.

Response:

- a. The causal or contributory factors.
 - Overloading of the rear hitch by means of excessive trailer tongue weight.
 - Trailer brakes not being used.
 - Improper towing of a flat-towed vehicle, which creates irregular side-to-side cyclic loading of the hitch or excessive longitudinal loading of the hitch during deceleration and braking. Such as a locked steering wheel of a towed vehicle, or flat towing a vehicle without any brakes being used at all.
- b. The failure mechanism.
 - Fatigue.
- c. The failure mode.
 - Tearing of the steel. Either at the frame extension or within the hitch receiver.
- d. The risk to motor vehicle safety that it poses.
 - If the fatigue and tearing of the hitch go unnoticed and the hitch separates entirely from the motorhome, then the loose trailer or towed vehicle can result in a crash.
- e. What warnings, if any, the operator and the other persons both inside and outside the vehicle would have that the alleged defect was occurring, or subject component was malfunctioning.
 - The visual orientation of the hitch would change; it would bend downward as exhibited in some of the VOQ's where the owner noticed the problem before the hitch had separated.
- f. The reports included with this inquiry.
 - Located in Appendix 1 are the 5 VOQs referenced by PE24023. Those VOQs are:
 - 11437860
 - 11508906
 - 11510061
 - 11553386
 - 11562420
 - The above VOQs were printed from THOR's VOQ database.

Source: TMC Safety Committee

This information was gathered on October 10, 2024.