STRICK CORPORATION
225 Lincoln Highway
Fairless Hills
Pennsylvania, USA
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215.949.3600

May 19, 2004

04V-265/04V-266
(4 pages)

Associate Administrator for Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator:

Pursuant to Title 49 – Transportation of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 573, Sec. 573.5, please be advised as follows:

1. Strick Corporation
   301 Polk Street
   Monroe, IN 46772

2. Vehicles:

   (i) Body style/type: converter dollies model no. 0400CD
   (ii) The parts involved are (a) the loop for the safety chain part #24750 and (b) a check valve between the air reservoir and the booster valve.

3. Total number of vehicles: 935

4. Estimated percent with problems: 100%.

5. Description of defects:

   (i) There is a clearance problem between the loop on the trailer and the loop on the dolly. The hook on the end of the chain will not pass between the loop and the pintle hook.

LEONARD BARKAN
Special Counsel
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(ii) The check valve between the air reservoir and the booster valve was installed in the reverse position with the arrow on the valve pointing towards the air reservoir resulting in low air pressure to the booster valve. This also creates a brake timing issue to the trailing unit(s).

6. Chronology of events:

(i) Strick was first notified of the safety chain loop problem on April 2, 2004 via e-mail from Ray Williams with Estes. This is a no work day for us and we did not review the e-mail until Monday, April 5. Discussed the problem with the customer and found out that they had eight out of service that had cracks in them. Our Engineering Department went to work on a way to modify the safety chain loop. We inspected dollies at the Estes terminal in Charlotte, North Carolina. We found that the loop did not have ample clearance between it and the loop on the trailer. The dolly loop had to be relocated to provide clearance. On April 15 I met with Ray Williams with Estes in Richmond. We discussed the modification to correct the loop clearance. We decided that all would be inspected and if a crack was found in the safety chain loop the dolly would be put out of service until modification kits could be made and shipped. Orders for the modification kits were placed on April 19 to correct all 935 dollies built for Estes. Started shipping parts to Estes locations during the week of May 3 and set up vendors to do the repairs. All but 36 of the repair kits have been shipped to date and vendors have been set up to do the modification. All dollies that were inspected and found to have cracked loops have been modified and put back in service. All 935 dollies will be modified, we have completed approximately 100 of them to date.

(ii) On the evening of April 22 Jim Jackson, our engineering manager in our Monroe IN plant, received a memo via e-mail from Rick Mello with Haldex informing Strick that the check valve between the tank and booster valve was incorrectly installed. Our plant was closed Friday. On Monday, April 26, Jackson sent the e-mail to our warranty department. After reviewing the report and discussing it with Haldex, Estes was contacted by Strick Warranty on the evening of April 26. Estes had already started changing the check valve. On the morning of April 28 Estes was told by Strick not to operate the equipment until the valve was corrected. On the evening of April 28 a total of 435 had been corrected and Estes took the remaining units out of service until they were corrected. On Monday, May 17, Estes reported that fewer than 100 units remained to be corrected

throughout their system. These units are out of service per Estes until corrected.

7, 8, 9, 10 and 11.
Remedy: See enclosed letter to Estes Express Lines dated April 27, 2004 from Jerry Clontz, Warranty Manager.

12. Manufacturer's campaign number: not yet assigned.

Very truly yours,

Leonard Barkan
Special Counsel

LB:dd
Enc.

STRICK

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April 27, 2004

Mr. Ray Williams
Estes Express Lines
P.O. Box 25612
3901 W. Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23230

Subject: Dolly Issues

Dear Ray

This letter will confirm our agreement where Strick will do modifications as follows to satisfy obligations on the 935 Strick dollies in your fleet. The serial numbers involved are as follows: 480807 thru 481106, 481120 thru 481169, 493215 thru 493264, 494720 thru 494804, 495429 thru 495678, 494805 thru 494904, and 498891 thru 498990. One issue involves the loop for the safety chain part # 24750. We will remove the damaged portion of the loop leaving the section that is welded to the frame. We will modify and shorten the front gusset of the dolly leg to clear the new loop we are installing. The handles will be relocated back behind the old loop, mounted directly to the frame. We will weld in place a new loop part # 55939 per engineering drawing identified as Estes Dolly drawing. Outside vendors will be used to perform the modification for Strick.

The new safety chain loop will locate the attachment of the safety chain and hook in the center of the dolly just behind the dolly eye. The front of the loop will be approximately 4 inches back and 2 inches higher giving clearance between the dolly loop and the trailer loop. This will allow the single safety chain hook to clear and not bend the loops during turns. The single safety chain and hook can be attached to the trailer loop on either side of the pintle hook horn. This meets with the SAE standards.

We believe it is appropriate to report this modification to NHTSA as a safety related recall. We are in the process of making this notification now. We will do everything in our power to assist in making this modification quickly. During this process, we understand that you are inspecting dollies at each location and sidelining any that show signs of cracks or breaks in the loop.

The other issue involves the dolly brake system on these same 935 units. There is a check valve between the air reservoir and the booster valve. It appears this valve has been installed in the reverse position, arrow on valve pointing towards air reservoir, resulting in low air pressure to the booster valve. This can also create a brake timing issue to the trailing unit (s). Following our discussion and those with Haldex, the check valve must be re-plumbed, arrow pointing towards the booster valve, to provide correct air flow. This must be done as soon as possible to insure proper braking to the dolly and trailing unit (s).

We will of course assist in any way possible and will reimburse for all reasonable expenses related to this check valve modification.

We apologize for any inconvenience and appreciate your business.

Sincerely
Jerry Clontz

Jerry W. Clontz
Warranty Manager

5/17/04
5/26/04