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Date: November 4, 2004

Kenneth N. Weinstein
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance (NSA-01)
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

04V-537
(3 pages)

Re: Defect Information Report FL-434

Mr. Weinstein:

In accordance with Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Freightliner LLC herewith reports a safety campaign to recall 45 Freightliner Unimog U500 vehicles equipped with Michelin 365/85 R20 tires and manufactured from November 2002 through September 2004. Michelin 365/85 R20 tires may not be compatible with the maximum load and maximum speed ratings of the Unimog U500 Vehicles.

Attached is Freightliner's Defect Information Report.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,

Timothy Blubaugh

Cc: Michael Mason, CAL-OSHA
DOSH, Legal Unit
10th Floor
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Certified Mail Article Number:

7002 3150 0004 1405 0641

Defect Information Report

(Section 573.6)

Date: November 4, 2004

(c)(1) **Manufacturer:** DaimlerChrysler AG (DCAG)
UNIMOG Division
70546 Stuttgart, Germany

Designated Agent: Freightliner LLC
4747 N. Channel Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97208-3849 (503) 745-5219

Brand: Unimog

(c)(2) **Vehicles identification:**

Model(s) affected: Unimog U500

Manufacture Dates: November 2002 through September 2004

Basis for determining population: All Unimog U500 vehicles produced for sale in the United States and equipped with Michelin 365/85 R20 tires. Unimog U500 vehicles equipped with other tire sizes are not affected.

Component manufacturer if other than the vehicle manufacturer:

Michelin Reifenwerke KGaA, Mr. Dieter Muehlhoff, PLE/SOE
Michelinstr. 4, Post Box 21 09 51, 76159 Karlsruhe, Germany
US-contact: Michelin USA, Mr. Robert Zielinski – Office # 001 864 422 4686

(c)(3) **Total number of vehicles potentially affected:** 45

(c)(4) **Percentage of vehicles estimated to contain the defect:** 100%

(c)(5) **Description of the defect:** The Michelin 365/85 R20 tires may not be compatible with the maximum load and maximum speed ratings of Unimog U500 vehicles. Although vehicle overloading and tire under-inflation are the suspected causes of recent tire failures, the root cause of these failures will not be determined until further evaluation of these events is completed.

(c)(6) **Chronology of principal events:** 54 Unimog U500 vehicles equipped with 365/85 R20 tires were imported into North America between November 2002 and September 2004. During September and October 2004, DCAG received notices of three separate events involving tire failures on these vehicles. Two of these events, one in the US and one in Canada, resulted in vehicle rollovers. Investigation into the root cause of these failures continues.

(c)(7) **Noncompliance-test or other data:** Not Available

- (c)(8) **Remedial program:** Michelin 365/85 R20 tires will be replaced with Michelin 395/85 R20, and an updated GAWR certification label will be affixed to the vehicle. Michelin 395/85 R20 tires are currently available as an option on the Unimog U500. Customer and dealer notification will be by phone and first class mail using Freightliner records to determine the customers affected. Repairs will be performed by Freightliner authorized service facilities at no charge to the customer. Until the root cause of these failures is determined, Michelin 365/85 R20 tires will not be offered on Unimog U500 Vehicles offered for sale in North America.

Estimated Notification Start Date: Phone: November 4, 2004 Mail: November 18, 2004

Estimated Notification End Date: November 19, 2004

Reimbursement Plan: Customers will be instructed to contact an authorized Freightliner LLC service facility and file a warranty claim for reimbursement of repairs performed prior to recall.

- (c) (9) **Communications sent to dealers and owners:** Copies will be submitted as a supplemental report when available.
- (c) (10) **Copy of proposed owner notification letter:** A draft will be sent for ODI review when available.
- (c) (11) **Manufacturer's campaign number:** FL-434