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November 9, 2004

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

04V-539

The following information is submitted in accordance with the requirements of 49 CFR Part 573.6 as it applies to a defect relating to motor vehicle safety.

573.6(c)(1)
Autocar, LLC
P.O. Box 190
Hagerstown, IN 47346-0190

573.6(c)(2)
Autocar WX, WXLL and WXR model, heavy-duty class 8 vehicles shipped between September 2003 and September 2004.

Identified vehicles fitted with light duty front axle brake assemblies require the ABS sensor wire and bracket to be relocated.

573.6(c)(3)
There are Twenty-eight (28) vehicles with serial numbers in the range 200076 to 201038.

573.6(c)(4)
Percentage of vehicles expected to contain the suspect defect is 30%.

573.6(c)(5)
A dealer called telling us he had a truck in his shop that was having brake drag problems on the front axle. He removed the front brake drums and found that one brake return spring was broken due to being rubbed against the S-cam and the other side was worn. Autocar Warranty asked for pictures and when they arrived they noticed that the ABS sensor bracket was not bolted in the proper location for this application. There are 4 bolt holes in the brake spider housing that can be used for mounting the brake sensor bracket and the ABS sensor bracket should have been using the 2nd and 4th holes for it's mounting bolts but was installed using the 1st and 3rd holes which raises the bracket too high causing an interference between the bracket and brake return spring. The brake return spring now contacts the ABS

sensor bracket causing it to be raised up. When the brake linings are new there is not a clearance problem between the S-cam and the brake return spring due to the limited motion required by the S-cam to apply the brakes, however, when the brake linings wear the brake shoes must travel further for the linings to make contact with the brake drum. For this to happen the S-cam must rotate more and when it does, it rubs against the brake return spring. Once repeated contact occurs between the brake spring and S-cam several things could possibly happen. If the driver makes a heavy brake application the S-cam could get wedged on the brake spring and ABS sensor bracket and not release when the brakes are released causing one or both of the front wheels to drag. Secondly, if over time the rubbing of the brake return spring against the S-cam causes the spring to break, the spring pieces which are now free to move within the brake drum could get trapped between the brake shoes and the brake drum causing an unexpected brake lock-up condition causing the truck to swerve either left or right depending upon which front wheel locks up and the forward speed of the truck.

573.6 (c)(6)

- 10/26/04 A dealer called saying that he had a truck in for a brake dragging problem on the front axle.
- 10/27/04 Pictures supplied by the dealer indicated that the ABS sensor bracket was not installed in its proper location.
- 10/28/04 A mockup of the front brakes with the ABS sensor bracket located in the incorrect position indicated that several modes of brake lockup could occur due to condition and they were deemed to be safety related.
- 10/29/04 A "where used" search indicated that thirty-two chassis cabs have had this light duty brake assembly installed over the past year, however, a check of warranty records revealed that no other dealer had filed warranty claims for repositioning the ABS sensor bracket.
- 11/1/04 The dealer in question inspected the three other trucks in the fleet and found them all with the ABS sensor bracket in the wrong position and was proceeding to repair them. An inspection of the trucks still at the factory revealed that there were three vehicles equipped with the light duty brakes and all three were properly assembled.
- 11/2/04 Autocar, LLC has determined that the condition described in this notification constitutes a product defect and that this defect is safety related.

573.6(c)(7)
Not applicable

573.6(c)(8)
Autocar, LLC will initiate a voluntary owner notification, and recall of all Autocar vehicles incorporating the above mentioned light duty brake assemblies.

Autocar, LLC reviewed warranty claims on this issue and found that no repairs were made on trucks outside of warranty and therefore no pre-notification repairs would have been made at the expense of the owner.

The recall will consist of the repositioning of the ABS sensor bracket into its proper location and the replacement of the brake return springs and S-cam rollers.

The number, which has been assigned to this recall by Autocar, LLC, is **A - 0403**.

Bulletins and owner's notices will be mailed as per the regulations as soon as they are completed and reviewed by NHTSA.

Very Truly Yours
AUTOCAR, LLC



Stan R. Gornick, P. Eng.
Manager, Compliance