

R04HR

April 07, 2004

Dear Blue Bird Owner:

This notice is sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

Blue Bird Body Company has decided that a defect, which relates to motor vehicle safety exist in the following vehicles.

Certain 2003 and 2004 model year Blue Bird Wanderlodge M380 Motor Homes.
Certain 2003 and 2004 model year Blue Bird Express 4000 and 4500 Transit Coaches.

Incorrect torque may have been applied to the clamp bolts for the drag link, tie rods and torque rods which may result in either over or under torqued bolts. This can lead to the clamps becoming loose, causing motion between the mating parts, which could result in misalignment of the steering/axles and ultimately component damage. Blue Bird is conducting a recall to correct this defect.

Blue Bird Body Company's evaluation of the risk to motor vehicle safety reasonably related to this defect is the potential for loss of driver control, which could result in a vehicle crash without prior warning.

Wanderlodge M380 owners should contact their Blue Bird Wanderlodge dealer or Blue Bird Wanderlodge Customer Service and make arrangements to have the recall modifications performed as soon as possible. For Wanderlodge Customer Service you may contact Bennie Collier at 478-822-2572 or Glenn Rogers at 478-822-2361.

Express Coach owners should contact Blue Bird Express Coach Field Service Manager at 478-822-2279.

Your Blue Bird coach (es) affected by recall R04HR are identified by body serial number(s) on the enclosed reply sheets. If you no longer own the subject coach (es), please complete the appropriate section of the yellow reply sheet and return to Blue Bird in the enclosed pink postage prepaid envelope.

Federal law requires that any vehicle lessor receiving this recall notice must forward a copy of this notice to the lessee within ten days.

Upon completion of the recall, the owner or repairing dealer should complete and return the pink reply sheet in the postage prepaid envelope provided. The owner or repairing dealer may request reimbursement of labor costs by completing the appropriate section of the pink reply sheet.

If the modifications/repair directed by this modification was performed on your coach prior to the receipt of this recall notification, complete and sign the recall reply sheet and attached a copy of the work order/invoice. Mail the documents in the self-addressed postage paid envelope included with the recall notification to Blue Bird for warranty consideration. Reimbursements will be made in accordance with the requirements of the National Highway Transportation Safety Act, title 49 Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 573 and 577.

Time required to perform recall modifications on the Wanderlodge M380 Motor Home is 2 hours per coach. Time required to perform modifications on the Express 4000 or 4500 coach is 3 hours per coach.

Important: Your prompt return of the pink reimbursement sheet, complete with the correct Body Serial Numbers, permits Blue Bird to update the record indicating recall has been completed and prevents the mailing of a second notice. This is much appreciated. We regret any inconvenience this may have caused. Please review your mailing and shipping addresses and notify us of any correction. This permits us to assure the continued safety of your Blue Bird.

If Blue Bird Body Company should fail to or is unable to remedy this condition without charge to you, you may contact:

**ADMINISTRATOR
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590**

or you may call The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration toll free at:

1-888-327-4236

Questions regarding this recall campaign should be directed to me at (478) 822-2242.

Thank you,

Bill Coleman
Recall Administrator

RECALL R04HR INSTRUCTIONS
Axle and Suspension Bolt Torque
EXPRESS/M380

Date:		Body Number:	
Body type:			
Technician:			

NOTES:

1. Park unit on level surface and remove ignition key.
2. Use of four or six wheel type lifts, in ground service pits, floor type jacks or drive on blocks may be required. Chock any and all wheels to prevent movement while completing following procedures.
3. Turn all battery disconnect switches to the off position.

DRAG ROD:

BLUE BIRD SPECIFIC TORQUE REQUIREMENTS: 50-60 FT. LBS.
REFERENCE FIGURE 1

1. Check torque of clamps. **RECORD TORQUE:** _____ / _____ **FT. LBS.**
2. Measure drag rod length. **RECORD LENGTH:** _____

NOTE: WHEN REPLACING CLAMPS THE ORIGINAL DRAG ROD LENGTH MUST BE MAINTAINED. DRAG ROD LENGTH WILL BE CENTERLINE OF BALL STUD TO CENTERLINE OF BALL STUD.

3. Remove drag rod end from pitman arm. **Note: clamp orientations.**
4. Remove end from drag rod assembly.
5. Replace **ALL** bolts, nuts and clamps. Use only clamp assemblies supplied. The clamps should be .25" from end of tube. **Discard all parts removed.**
6. Reassemble end into tube.
7. Adjust drag rod length as recorded in Step 2.
8. Replace drag rod on unit. Install nuts on ball studs.
9. Torque ball stud nuts **100-125 FT LBS.**

10. Reinstall cotter pin. Continue tightening to ensure the alignment of the nut slot with the cotter pin hole. **DO NOT BACK OFF.**
11. Orient clamps so as not to interfere with other components.
12. Torque Clamp bolts and nuts to **55 FT LBS.**
13. **Mark** all torqued items with torque putty or equivalent marker.

STEER AXLE TIE ROD:

**BLUE BIRD SPECIFIC TORQUE REQUIREMENTS: 130-150 FT LBS.
REFERENCE FIGURE 2**

1. Check torque of clamps. **RECORD TORQUE:**

LH _____ FT. LBS.
RH _____ FT. LBS.

2. If torque is less than 200 FT LBS, replace bolts and nuts and torque to **140 FT LBS. STOP HERE- TORQUE REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN MET.**
3. If torque is more than 200 FT LBS, Replacement of steer axle tie rod will be required as following steps indicate.
4. Measure steering axle tie rod length. **RECORD TIE ROD LENGTH BELOW:**

LH TIE ROD _____
RH TIE ROD _____

**NOTE: STEER AXLE TIE ROD LENGTH WILL BE CENTERLINE
OF BALL STUD TO CENTERLINE OF BALL STUD.**

5. Remove steering axle tie rod(s).
6. Adjust new steering axle tie rod(s) to recorded length.
7. Reinstall tie rod assembly. Torque ball stud nuts to **250 FT LBS.** Continue tightening to ensure the alignment of the nut slot with the cotter pin hole. **DO NOT BACK OFF.**
8. Install cotter pin.

9. Torque Clamp bolts and nuts to 140 FT LBS.
10. Mark all torqued items with torque putty or equivalent marker.
11. Lubricate new steering axle tie rod ends.
12. Have front end checked for proper toe-in settings. Adjust as required per specification below:

Toe In	1/16" +/- 1/16"
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DRIVE/TAG AXLE TORQUE ARMS:**BLUE BIRD SPECIFIC TORQUE REQUIREMENTS: 85-100 FT LBS****EXPRESS COACH-REFERENCE FIGURES 3 AND 4****M380-REFERENCE FIGURE 3**

1. Check torque of clamps. **RECORD TORQUE BELOW:**

LH	_____	/	_____	FT LBS.-DRIVE AXLE
RH	_____	/	_____	FT LBS.- DRIVE AXLE
LH	_____	/	_____	FT LBS.-TAG AXLE
RH	_____	/	_____	FT LBS.-TAG AXLE

2. If less than 85 FT LBS, replace bolts and nuts and torque to 90 FT LBS.
STOP HERE-TORQUE REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN MET.
3. If torque is equal to 86 and less than 100 FT LBS, No further action required.
4. If torque is more than 100 FT LBS, replacement of the bolts, nuts and clamps will be required as following steps indicate.
5. Measure drive axle and tag axle torque arm length. **RECORD LENGTH BELOW:**

LH	_____	FT LBS.DRIVE
RH	_____	FT LBS.-DRIVE
LH	_____	FT LBS.-TAG
RH	_____	FT LBS.-TAG

NOTE: TORQUE ARM LENGTH WILL BE CENTERLINE OF BUSHING TO CENTERLINE OF BUSHING.

6. Remove torque arms from unit. **Note: Clamp orientations**
7. Remove end of torque arms as required to replace clamp, bolt and nut.
8. Remove and **discard** clamp, bolt and nut being replaced.
9. Reassemble torque arm and adjust to length required as indicated in Step 4.
10. Adjust torque arm to length and reinstall.

FOR BOLT AND WASHER ATTACHING END- REFERENCE
TORQUE ROD/V-ROD ATTACHMENT BOLTS INSTRUCTION
FOLLOWING.

FOR BOLT AND NUT INSTALLATION-Install bolt and new locking
nut. Torque nut to 150-190 FT LBS.

11. Orient clamps so as not to interfere with other components.
12. Torque clamp bolts to 90 FT LBS.
13. Mark all torqued items with torque putty or equivalent marker.
14. Have the drive and tag axle checked for proper rear axle alignment.

TORQUE ROD/V-ROD ATTACHMENT BOLTS

BLUE BIRD SPECIFIC TORQUE REQUIREMENTS: 138-159 FT LBS

EXPRESS COACH-REFERENCE FIGURES 5 AND 6

M380- REFERENCE FIGURE 7

NOTE: THIS PROCEDURE WILL REQUIRE THE REMOVAL OF ONE BOLT, LOCKWASHER AND FLATWASHER PER LOCATION AT A TIME. DISCARD REMOVED ITEMS AND REPLACE WITH BOLT AND FLATWASHER. RED LOCTITE WILL BE APPLIED TO BOLT BEING INSTALLED.

1. On M380 locate 4 V-rod mount locations on drive axle. On Express coaches locate 4 torque rod and 4 V-rod locations on the drive axle and 4 torque rod location on the tag axle.
2. Remove one bolt at time along with lock washer and **discard**.
3. Prepare to replace with like bolt and flat washer only.

4. Apply RED Loctite™ 271 to bolt threads.
5. Install bolt, flat washer and RED Loctite™ 271 in location bolt were removed and torque to 146 FT LBS.
6. Mark all torqued items with torque putty or equivalent marker.
7. Repeat steps 2-6 at all torque rod and V-rod locations.

Parts required:

Part Number	Description	Qty. M380	Qty. EXPRESS
0929018	Flat washer	4	12
1107895	2" Bolt	2	4
0939835	2.5" Bolt	2	8
NPN	RED Loctite™ 271 (ref BB part no.0969816)		