



05V-011 (2 pgs)

January 21, 2005

Associate Administrator for Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 7th Street, S.W. Suite 5319
Washington, D.C. 20590

Pursuant to Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations - Defect and Noncompliance Reports, Collins Bus Corporation is submitting information relating to a safety recall we are conducting. Specific information is as follows:

573.6(c)(1)

Collins Bus Corporation, a division of Collins Industries, Inc., is the manufacturer of the vehicles affected by this safety recall.

573.6(c)(2)

This recall affects Collins school buses built on Ford 9,600# GVW single rear wheel and 11,500# dual rear wheel E-350 cutaway van chassis manufactured between September 18, 2002 and January 17, 2005 at the South Hutchinson, Kansas assembly plant. The vehicles are identified as "Bantam" or "Super Bantam" school bus models with 138" wheelbase utilizing a "standard" floor design with wheel housings protruding from the floor over the rear wheels. Collins vehicles with this specific floor design on these specific chassis are constructed with floor structure in close proximity to fuel lines drawing fuel from the rear-mounted tank.

573.6(c)(3)

Collins Bus Corporation built 108 (one hundred-eight) vehicles with the potential defect before the problem was recognized and corrected. The majority of the buses are in the possession of end users. Some buses are in the possession of Collins Bus distributors awaiting delivery to end users.

573.6(c)(4)

An estimated 50% of the recall population includes the defect.

573.6(c)(5)

The vehicles in question are constructed with the floor structure in close proximity to fuel lines drawing fuel from the top of the rear-mounted fuel tank. The flexible fuel lines located above the fuel tank may come into contact with metal edges on the floor structure. These metal edges are regularly covered with protective rubber parts to prevent contact with the fuel lines and these protective parts may be missing. Absence of the protective parts, along with vehicle movement and vibration, may eventually lead to damage to the fuel lines. This may lead to spillage of fuel which may result in a vehicle fire and harm to the passengers in the vehicle.

573.6(c)(6)

On January 17, 2005, a non-routine Engineering review of Collins vehicle production procedures revealed fuel lines above a fuel tank in contact with metal edges on the floor structure above the fuel tank. Protective rubber pieces, intended to prevent contact of the fuel lines to the metal structure, were missing. Subsequent inspection of all production vehicles with the same floor design revealed that protective rubber pieces were consistently not installed, and that fuel lines could come in contact with the metal floor structure.

Collins determined a proactive safety recall was necessary to insure vehicles in the field do not encounter damage to the fuel lines due to contact with metal edges on the floor structure.

No previous warranty claims or reports of damage to fuel lines exist. This is a proactive safety recall campaign. The defect was not identified earlier because it is specific to models with very low production volumes when compared to other Collins models. Additionally, the defect exists in an area that is not readily visible.

573.6(c)(7)

The determination of this potential safety concern was not based on test data. The basis of the campaign is not noncompliance.

573.6(c)(8)

All vehicle owners will be notified the week of January 24, 2005. Notification will consist of a description of the defect, a brief description of the repair procedure and where to take the vehicle to have it inspected and/or repaired. The owner will be instructed to take their vehicle to the nearest Collins distributor for inspection and/or repairs.

Collins distributors will be instructed on how to inspect the vehicles for defects and how to repair defects if found. Inspection will consist of inspection for the presence of protective rubber parts covering the floor structure as well as inspection for possible damage to the fuel lines. Repairs will consist of the installation of protective rubber parts if these parts were not installed at the Collins factory. The protective rubber parts will prevent contact of the fuel line with the metal floor structure and will prevent damage to the fuel lines. If the fuel lines are damaged, repairs will also include replacement of the fuel lines.

An Owner Response Postcard will be provided to the owner to confirm if the repair is completed or not required. The proposed Owner Notification letter and Owner Response Postcard samples are attached.

573.6(c)(9)

Attached is a copy of the correspondence to notify Collins Bus Corporation distributors of the safety recall.

573.6(c)(10)

Attached is a copy of the proposed Owner Notification letter and Owner Response Postcard which Collins Bus Corporation will send to the vehicle owners.

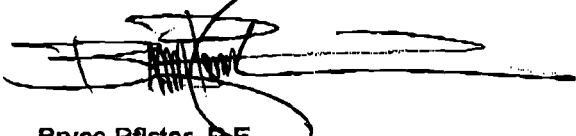
573.6(c)(10)

Collins Bus Corporation will use the campaign identification number assigned by NHTSA.

Should you need further information, please contact me at ⁶²⁰316-862-9000. X 479

Sincerely,

COLLINS BUS CORPORATION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryce Pfister', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Bryce Pfister, P.E.
Director of Operations