

05V-251
SAFETY IMPROVEMENT

PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Reporting

Defect Report

Report Date: May 20, 2005

1. Vehicles affected are manufactured by:

Blue Bird Corporation
P. O. Box 937
Fort Valley, GA 31030

2. The following vehicles are being recalled:

Blue Bird 2002 through 2006 model year All American, Conventional, MiniBird and MicroBird model school buses.

Blue Bird 2004 through 2006 model year Blue Bird "Vision" conventional model school buses.

Blue Bird 2002 through 2004 TC/2000 model school buses.

3. The total number of vehicles recalled potentially containing the defect are:

16,256

4. The approximate percentage of the total number of vehicles estimated to actually contain the defect is:

Due to the nature of the defect and the extreme cold conditions required for the stop arm to not function properly the percentage of the total number of vehicles to actually contain the defect is unknown.

5. The defect consist of:

In extremely cold weather under certain conditions, the micro switches used internally to position the sign in the open position may malfunction, causing the sign to open or close to an improper position, or to not open at all. Also it has been determined that the heater section may not be connected in the proper manner. To date, no accidents or injuries have been reported as a result of this phenomenon. In nearly 100% of the occurrences this phenomenon is intermittent, and ceases to exist once the vehicle is no longer exposed to the extremely cold weather.

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DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

6. The following data is the basis for the determination of the defect.

Winter 2003- Blue Bird received reports of stop arms not performing adequately during extreme cold weather.

November 03, 2004-Blue Bird published Service Update S0408 advising Blue Bird distributors that Specialty had made available a microswitch heater which could be installed to prevent improper operation of the stop arm in extreme cold conditions.

January 25, 2005- Blue Bird was contacted by Sonny Murianka of ODI at NHTSA concerning the Service Update issued in November of 2004.

February 2005-Specialty Manufacturing Company advised Blue Bird that the Arcoelectric switches were being discontinued.

April 2005-Specialty Manufacturing Company advised Blue Bird that representatives of Specialty Manufacturing Company were to meet with NHTSA/ODI to discuss possible remedy and potential recall.

May 11, 2005-Blue Bird was advised by the Office of Defects Investigation at NHTSA that an agreement had been reached between ODI and Specialty Manufacturing Company that a regional recall would be conducted to change the suspect switches on buses operating in certain cold climate states and excluding certain warm climate states. Reference Specialty Manufacturing Company's CFR Part 573 notification for details of excluded states.

7. The defect will be corrected in the following manner:

This defect is corrected by replacing the original switch with a switch pack that is not as sensitive to extreme cold weather and to inspect to insure microswitch heater wiring is properly connected.

8. Notification will be as follows:

Distributor notification is scheduled to be mailed on July 12, 2005
Owner notification is scheduled to be mailed on July 19, 2005.
Parts are anticipated to be available at time of notification.

9. Blue Bird's identification number assigned to this recall is:

R05JV

10. A draft copy of the notification documents will be submitted to NHTSA for review prior to mailing.

Questions regarding this recall should be directed to:

William P. Coleman
Recall Administrator
Blue Bird Body Company
P.O. Box 937
Fort Valley GA 31030
(478) 822-2242

Signed: _____
William P. Coleman, Recall Administrator