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OFFICE OF  
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

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September 7, 2005

051-397 (2 pgs.)

Ron Medford  
Sr. Associate Administrator for Vehicle Safety  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

**Re: Defect Information Report FL-459, Thomas School Bus Emergency Door**

Mr. Medford:

In accordance with Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Freightliner LLC herewith reports a safety campaign to recall 116 Thomas Built Buses C2 Saf-T-Liner school buses manufactured December 17, 2004 through July 28, 2005 with a defect in the extension slide that holds the side emergency exit door open.

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

Enclosure

**Certified Mail Article Number:**

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A DaimlerChrysler Company

## Defect Information Report (Section 573.6)

September 7, 2005

**(c)(1) Manufacturer:** Freightliner LLC  
P.O. BOX 3849  
Portland, Oregon 97208  
(503) 745-5219

**Brands:** Thomas Built Buses

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

**Model(s) affected:** Saf-T-Liner C2 school bus

**Manufacture Dates:** December 17, 2004 through July 28, 2005

**Basis for determining population:** Saf-T-Liner C2 school buses with a 30" or 40" left side emergency door exits

**Component manufacturer if other than the vehicle manufacturer:** not applicable

**(c)(3) Total number of vehicles potentially affected:** 116

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

**(c)(5) Description of the defect:** On some buses, the telescoping slide that holds the side emergency door open is located such that it will move past its normal travel and the mechanism may latch on the end of the slide preventing the door from opening.

**(c)(6) Chronology of principal events:** On August 18, 2005, a Thomas dealer in New York reported a problem opening the side emergency door exit on a new C2 school bus. The problem was duplicated at Thomas August 22. Thomas Built Buses reviewed the installation of the door stop slide mechanism and found it would latch preventing the door from opening. All units at Thomas were corrected.

**(c)(7) Noncompliance-test or other data:** not applicable

**(c)(8) Remedial program:** Repairs will be performed by Thomas Built Buses dealerships and Direct Warranty customers, i.e., customers approved by Thomas to do their own warranty repairs. Buses will be modified to relocate the mounting point for the door end of the slide so the latch position does not line up with the door closed. The mounting bracket is relocated on the 30" door and a new bracket is required with the 40" door.

**Estimated Owner Notification Date:** Customer notification will be by first class mail using Thomas Built Buses records to determine the customers affected. This will be completed approximately October 24, 2005.

**Reimbursement Plan:** All prior repairs would be covered by warranty.

**(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-459