

September 23, 2005



05V-440
(2pgs.)
RECEIVED
HVS-215

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

2005 SEP 29 P 12:14

OFFICE OF
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

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) Manufacturer's name:

Collins Bus Corporation, a division of Collins Industries, Inc.
P.O. Box 2946
Hutchinson, Kansas 67504-2946

573.6(c)(2) Identification of the vehicles potentially containing the defect:

The vehicles potentially containing the defect may be identified as Collins Bus Corporation "Bantam", "Super Bantam", and "Grand Bantam" school buses and "Super Omni" buses built between August 1, 2005 and September 15, 2005. The vehicles are constructed on Chevrolet or Ford "cutaway" van chassis and range in Gross Vehicle Weight Rating from 9,600 lbs. to 14,050 lbs.

573.6(c)(3) Total number of vehicles potentially containing the defect:

One hundred fifty (150) vehicles potentially contain the defect. Some vehicles are in the possession of end users. Some vehicles are in the possession of Collins Bus Distributors awaiting delivery to end-users.

573.6(c)(4) Approximate percentage of the total number of vehicles to actually contain the defect:

Approximately 20% of the recall population is believed to contain the defect.

573.6(c)(5) Description of the defect:

Seats and barriers in Collins Bus vehicles are attached to the wall with fasteners that lock into a continuous track on the wall. Nuts secure the seat to bolts protruding from the wall track. The nuts must be tightened to prevent the seat or barrier from moving relative to the vehicle wall in a crash.

On the vehicles in question, the fasteners securing the seats and barriers to the wall track may be inadequately tightened. This may allow the seat or barrier to move relative to the vehicle wall in a crash and compromise passenger crash protection offered by seat belts or the compartmentalization of school bus seating. Seats or barriers which are not adequately anchored to the vehicle wall may compromise FMVSS 210, seat belt assembly anchorages, or FMVSS 222, school bus passenger seating and crash protection.

573.6(c)(6) Chronology of events that were the basis for the determination of the defect:

On September 16, 2005, Collins Bus Corporation commissioned an outside service to conduct a "Pre-Delivery Inspection" of several completed vehicles which were to be delivered directly to end-users. During this inspection, the inspector determined some seat fasteners installed in the wall track of three (3) vehicles were not adequately tightened. Some nuts threaded onto bolts protruding from the wall track were visibly loose.

On September 16, 2005, Collins Bus Engineers concluded that some nuts that were temporarily installed on the bolts protruding from the wall track by hand but were not subsequently fully tightened with power tools to the design requirement of 40 to 45 ft-lbs.

On September 20, 2005, Collins Bus Corporation conducted an additional inspection of all completed vehicles still on Collins Bus property. This inspection of ninety-one (91) vehicles revealed an additional eighteen (18) vehicles

with improperly tightened seat fasteners. The dates of manufacture for defective vehicles ranged from August 9, 2005 to September 15, 2005.

On September 23, a survey of vehicles in the field manufactured near the date range in question indicated that no vehicles built before August 1 were found to have improperly tightened seat fasteners.

On September 23, 2005, Collins Bus Corporation determined that a safety recall was necessary to insure that vehicles in the field built between August 1 and September 15 had seat and barrier fasteners tightened to a torque reading of 40 to 45 ft-lbs.

573.6(c)(7) Test results considered in determining the existence of the defect or noncompliance:

Collins Bus Corporation determined the defect existed because the method of installation does not conform to the design requirements of the seat and barrier installation. The determination of the defect is not based on test results, though Collins Bus has determined seats or barriers which are not adequately anchored to the vehicle wall may compromise FMVSS 210, seat belt assembly anchorages, or FMVSS 222, school bus passenger seating and crash protection.

573.6(c)(8)(i) Description of the program for remedying the defect:

Rather than determine to what torque each of the seat fasteners were originally installed, all seat and barrier fasteners in the wall track of all vehicles in question will be tightened to the required torque. A hand-held torque wrench should be used to attain a torque reading of 40 to 45 ft-lbs. for each nut securing the seat or barrier to the wall track. This will insure that any fasteners that were not adequately tightened originally are tightened.

Most vehicle owners will be able to conduct this repair within their own facility. If an owner does not have the capability or desire to perform the required repair, they will be instructed to contact a Collins Bus Corporation Distributor or Collins Bus Corporation. No service parts are necessary to perform this repair. Normal warranty procedures will apply for owners or Distributors obtaining reimbursement for the repair.

Collins Bus Corporation will monitor the recall and file quarterly status reports.

573.6(c)(8)(ii) Estimated dates to begin and complete notification to Owners and Distributors:

Notification to Distributors and owners of the vehicles in question will begin October 3 and complete by October 14, 2005.

573.6(c)(10) Sample of the proposed Owner Notification Letter:

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

573.6(c)(11) Manufacturer's campaign number:

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

Should you need further information, my contact information is as follows:

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P.O. Box 2946
Hutchinson, KS 67504-2946

Sincerely,
COLLINS BUS CORPORATION

Steve Gladow
Engineering Manager