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OFFICE OF
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

OSV-467 (6pgs.)

Timothy A. Blubaugh
Director
Government Technical Affairs

Freightliner LLC
4747 N. Channel Avenue
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503.745.6800 Facsimile
TimothyBlubaugh@Freightliner.com

September 23, 2005

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-460,
Meritor Spindle on Meritor and AAC Rear Axles**

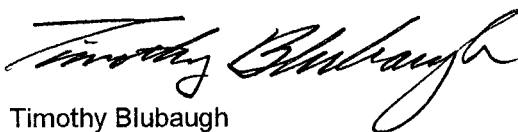
Mr. Medford:

In accordance with Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Freightliner LLC herewith reports a safety campaign to recall approximately 1,100 Freightliner Argosy, Columbia, Century ST, M2 Business Class trucks, and Thomas Built Buses C2 and FS-65 school buses, that may contain a defect in the rear axle housing.

Attached are Freightliner's Defect Information Report and the Defect information Report from ArvinMeritor

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:

7002 3150 0004 1405 0563



A DaimlerChrysler Company

Defect Information Report

(Section 573.6)

September 23, 2005

- (c)(1) **Manufacturer:** Freightliner LLC
P.O. BOX 3849
Portland, Oregon 97208
(503) 745-5219
Brands: Freightliner Trucks, Thomas Built Buses
- (c)(2) **Vehicles identification:**
Model(s) affected: Freightliner Argosy, Columbia, Century ST, M2 Business Class trucks, Thomas Built Buses FS-65 and C-2 school bus
Manufacture Dates: Approximately June 13, 2005 to July 8, 2005
Basis for determining population: Vehicles built with ArvinMeritor or AAC rear axle housings shipped by Meritor between June 4, 2005 and June 13, 2005. Vehicles with the suspect housings were built at Portland, Cleveland, Mt Holly, St Thomas, FCCC, and American LaFrance. Meritor has furnished a list of suspect housing serial numbers.
Component manufacturer if other than the vehicle manufacturer:
ArvinMeritor, Inc.
2135 West Maple Road
Troy, Michigan 48084-7186
- (c)(3) **Total number of vehicles potentially affected:** Approximately 1,100
- (c)(4) **Percentage of vehicles estimated to contain the defect:** Approximately 3.3%. See Attached ArvinMeritor Defect Information Report
- (c)(5) **Description of the defect:** Meritor has submitted a Defect information Report to NHTSA to recall rear axle housings that were manufactured with spindles that were overheated during the heat treat process. Incorrectly heat treated spindles could result in a fracture of the spindle. See Attached ArvinMeritor Defect Information Report. Reference NHTSA no. 05E-053
- (c)(6) **Chronology of principal events:** See Attached ArvinMeritor Defect Information Report. Reference NHTSA no. 05E-053
- (c)(7) **Noncompliance-test or other data:** not applicable
- (c)(8) **Remedial program:** Repairs will be performed by Freightliner dealerships and Direct Warranty customers. Vehicles will be inspected for the heat treat date code on the end of the rear spindles. Axle housings will be replaced on vehicles manufactured with spindles that have the subject date codes.

Estimated Owner Notification Date: Customer notification will be by first class mail using Freightliner records to determine the customers affected. This will be completed approximately November 25, 2005.

Reimbursement Plan: All prior repairs would have been completed under 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-460



2135 W. Maple Rd
Troy, MI 48084

arvinmeritoinc.com

September 1, 2005

Administrator of Enforcement
Office of Defects Investigation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Fax: 202-366-7882

Re: Defect Information Report, in accordance with 49 CFR §573.6, concerning certain ArvinMeritor, Inc. ("ArvinMeritor") Series 145 and 160 rear drive axles containing spindles heat treated by Bodycote Thermal Processing, Inc. ("Bodycote")

ArvinMeritor File: Unassigned

NHTSA File: Unassigned

Dear Sir /Madam:

ArvinMeritor submits this Defect Information Report in accordance with 49 CFR §573.6. The information is presented to correspond to the sub-paragraphs of section §573.6(c).

Information Requested under §573.6(c)(1)

This report is submitted by:

ArvinMeritor, Inc.
2135 West Maple Road
Troy, Michigan 48084-7186

Information Requested under §573.6(c)(2)

The affected motor vehicle equipment are ArvinMeritor Series 145 and 160 rear drive axles manufactured and shipped to customers between June 4, 2005 and June 13, 2005, that contain spindles heat treated by Bodycote, whose address is 8580 Haggerty Road, Canton, Michigan. These rear drive axles were shipped to customers listed in Appendix A of this notice.

The population of potentially affected axles was determined by manufacturing records maintained by ArvinMeritor's facility located in Asheville, North Carolina and by Bodycote's facility in Canton, Michigan.

Information Requested under §573.6(c)(3)

ArvinMeritor shipped 1,401 axles potentially containing suspect spindles. ArvinMeritor has determined that, of those axles, approximately 47 spindles were improperly heat treated.

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Information Requested under §573.6(c)(4)

ArvinMeritor estimates that 3.3% (47/1,401) of the above mentioned axles contain the manufacturing defect that is the subject of this report.

Information Requested under §§573.6(c)(5)

The suspect spindles were overheated during Bodycote's heat treat process, which negatively affected the microstructure (incipient melting of the grain boundaries). Such a condition compromises the overall structural integrity of the spindles, and could result in a fracture of the spindle.

Information Requested under §§573.6(c)(6)

- June 3, 2005 – Fletcher receives a production lot of 2039 spindles from Bodycote Inc. with Julian heat dates of B5129, B5130 & B5131.
- June 13, 2005 - Fletcher, NC has 9 spindles fracture during bend test and straightening operation on 3rd shift at 3:00AM.
- June 13, 2005 – Fletcher, NC identifies Bodycote supplied spindles to have incipient melting of the grain boundaries in addition to excessive grain size.
- June 13, 2005 – Fletcher, NC facilities notifies all affected ArvinMeritor facilities of the spindle condition and initiate containment to fully contain the 2039 suspect spindles.
- June 13, 2005 – Fletcher, NC facility communicates initial problem description to Bodycote.
- June 14, 2005 – All housing paid out or in-process from June 3 through June 14 were considered suspect.
- June 17, 2005 – Fletcher, NC facility expands previous containment action to the OEM locations affected including Volvo, Mack, PACCAR, Navistar, and Freightliner.
- July 13, 2005 – Fletcher, NC facility has contained 1992 of the 2039 suspect, thereby is missing 47 suspect spindles.
- August 22, 2005 – ArvinMeritor investigation concludes that the issue relates to potential motor vehicle safety

Information Requested under §573.6(c)(7)

This issue described herein does not relate to FMVSS noncompliance.

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Information Requested under §573.6(c)(8)

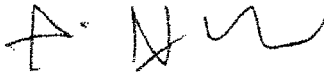
ArvinMeritor is working with vehicle manufactures to identify and notify owners of vehicles with suspect spindles, and to have axles with such spindles replaced. This program will be managed by vehicle manufacturers in cooperation with ArvinMeritor, and will be at no expense to customers. Replacement parts for this program are in process of being determined. ArvinMeritor is in process of the developing the Defect Information Notice to its customers and will submit that information to NHTSA as soon as available. ArvinMeritor is continuing to work with its suppliers and customers to determine availability of replacement product and the timing of customer notification.

In addition, ArvinMeritor currently believes that none of the axles potentially containing suspect spindles have been remedied prior to this notification and, therefore, that no general pre-notification reimbursement remedy program is required.

We trust that the information provided in this document is fully responsive to the requirements of 49 CFR §573.5. All additions or modifications to any of the information given will be reported promptly to NHTSA, as an amendment to this filing. Any questions with respect to the information provided should be directed to the undersigned.

Respectfully Submitted,

ArvinMeritor



Niran Audimoolam
Project Manger
Product Safety and Compliance

Enclosures

Appendix A: Summary of ArvinMeritor quantities supplied to affected customers



**APPENDIX A
LIST OF AFFECTED CUSTOMERS AND QUANTITIES**

Freightliner Corporation (includes AAC) Attn: Steve Payne P.O. Box 3849 Portland, Oregon 97208-3849 Phone: 503-745-5219	1374
Peterbilt Motors Company (PACCAR) Attn: Steve Wasson 3200 Airport Road Denton, TX 76202-0550 Phone: 425-254-4085	1
International Trucks Attn: Brandon L. Kibe 3033 Wayne Trace Fort Wayne, IN 46801-1109 Phone: 260-461-1890	11
Mack Trucks, Inc Attn: Tim L. Lafon 7900 National Service Rd. (27409) PO Box 26115 Greensboro, NC 27402-6115 Phone: 336-393-2233	4
Volvo Trucks North America Inc. Attn: Tim L. Lafon 7900 National Service Rd. (27409) PO Box 26115 Greensboro, NC 27402-6115 Phone: 336-393-2233	11