



Land Rover North America

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DEFECT INVESTIGATION

05V-501

(3 pages)

October 28, 2005

Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Subject: Land Rover Safety Recall B021– Certain 2006 Model Year LR3 & Range Rover Sport Vehicles – Second Row Seat Belt Buckle Mounting

Summary

Land Rover Action – Land Rover is conducting a Safety Recall involving certain 2006 model year Land Rover LR3 and Range Rover Sport vehicles built at the Solihull (UK) Assembly Plant from August 22 through September 6, 2005 to have the left hand second row seat belt buckle inspected and, if required, replaced.

Number of Vehicles Involved – 548 vehicles in the United States and Federated Territories.

Affect on Vehicle Operation – Some vehicles may have been manufactured with a seat belt buckle mounting with a tensile strength below the required standard. In the event of an accident, where the rear left hand second row seat belt was being used, the buckle may not be fully retained.

Service Program – The Dealers will be instructed to inspect the second row seat left hand seat belt buckle and where the batch number is found to be within the suspect population, replace the seat belt buckle.

Attached is the detailed information required by the applicable portions of 49 CFR Part 573 - Defect and Non-Compliance Information Report.

Should there be any questions regarding this notice, please feel free to contact me by phone on 201-818-8379 or by email at djohns58@landrover.com

Sincerely,

Dennis T. Johnston
Manager, Product Compliance

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49 CFR Part 573 - DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT
RECALL B021 – Certain 2006 Model Year LR3 and Range Rover Sport Vehicles – Second Row
Seat Belt Buckle Mounting

Pursuant to Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Defect and Noncompliance Reports, Land Rover submits the following information concerning a safety recall action that it is voluntarily initiating.

573.6 (c) (2) - Potentially Affected Vehicles

Certain 2006 model year LR3 and Range Rover Sport vehicles built at the Solihull (UK) Assembly Plant from August 22 through September 6, 2005: Select vehicles in the following VIN ranges

Range Rover Sport SALSF25456A911094 to SALSH23406A919925
LR3 SALAB24486A355694 to SALAB24456A357354

573.6 (c) (3) -- Estimated Population of Vehicles Potentially Affected

548 vehicles in the United States and Federated Territories.

573.6 (c) (4) - Estimated Percentage of Affected Vehicles with the Condition

Approximately 60% of the 548 vehicles may contain an under strength seat belt buckle mounting.

573.6 (c) (5) -- Description of the Defect

Some vehicles may have been manufactured with a seat belt buckle mounting with a tensile strength below the required standard. In the event of an accident, where the rear left hand second row seat belt was being used, the buckle may not be fully retained.

573.6 (c) (6) -- Chronology of Events

On September 2, 2005, through supplier testing, Land Rover was notified of a concern with the tensile strength of the material used to manufacture the mounting of the second row seat, left hand side, seat belt buckle. Land Rover implemented a plant Stop Shipment on September 2, 2005 and initiated an investigation to determine the scope of the issue, and to determine if there were any vehicles potentially affected by this concern that were outside of the control of the assembly plant.

On September 7, 2005, it was determined that there was a risk that some potentially affected vehicles had been released for onward distribution and were outside of the assembly plants control. A Quarantine Notice was issued requesting that potentially affected vehicles be held within the Port of Entry pending further instruction.

This issue was raised on September 7, 2005 to the Land Rover Critical Concerns Review Group (CCRG) for investigation. The investigation was further reviewed at the Land Rover CCRG through September where it was determined that a batch of steel was used in the manufacture of the suspect mounting brackets that was susceptible to cracking.

A further series of communications was sent on September 9 and 14 respectively detailing the inspection and repair instructions.

The investigation was reviewed at Land Rover's TRG in on October 19, 2005 where the full failure modes and the scope of the affected vehicle population were reviewed, and at the Land Rover Field Review Committee of October 21, 2005, where Land Rover management decided to voluntarily recall these vehicles to inspect the seat belt buckles fitted and replace where required.

There have been no reports of any accidents, fires, or injuries as a result of this concern.

573.6 (c) (8) Service Program

The dealers will be instructed to inspect the second row seat left hand seat belt buckle and where the batch number is found to be within the suspect population, replace the seat belt buckle.

Land Rover plans a notification to dealers on November 2, 2005

A notification to owners will commence by the end of November.

In accordance with Part 573.13(d)(1), Land Rover is excluding reimbursement for costs incurred by owners for repair of this problem because Land Rover's original new vehicle warranty program would provide for a free repair of this concern for any affected customers.

573.6 (c) (9) -- Press statement and Dealer/Owner Letters

Land Rover does not plan to make a public statement concerning the subject matter of this action. A copy of the notification letters to dealers and owners from Land Rover will be forwarded when available.

573.6 (c) (11) -- Recall Number

Land Rover has assigned recall number B021 to this action.