



U.S. Department
of Transportation

400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

September 28, 2006

DAVID M. MIHALICK
STANDARDS COMPLIANCE MANAGER
CHAMPION BUS, INC.
331 GRAHAM ROAD
IMLAY MI 48444

NVS-215
06V-368

Subject: DOOR OPERATOR CONNECTING ROD/VAPOR BUS

Dear MR. MIHALICK:

This letter is to acknowledge your recent defect information report. Please review the following information to ensure that it conforms to your records as this information is being made available to the public. If the information does not agree with your records, please contact us immediately to discuss your concerns.

Makes/Models/Model Years:
CHAMPION/CONTENDER/2000

NHTSA Campaign Number: 06V-368

Mfg's Report Date: September 22, 2006

Components: STRUCTURE: BODY: DOOR

Potential Number of Units Affected: 22

Summary:

ON CERTAIN BUSES EQUIPPED WITH VAPOR BUS CONNECTING RODS, WHEN THE CONNECTING ROD IS SUBJECTED TO CERTAIN LOAD COMBINATIONS AND CUMULATIVE CYCLING, INITIATION AND PROPAGATION OF FATIGUE CRACKS ARE SEEN AT THE EXTERNAL THREAD ROOTS. IF THE CRACK INITIATES AND PROPAGATES THROUGH THE CROSS SECTION OF THE CONNECTING ROD, IT MAY RESULT IN THE BENDING OR THE CONNECTING ROD ASSEMBLY AND MALFUNCTION OF THE DOOR ACTUATION ASSEMBLY.

Consequence:

IF THE CRACK PROPAGATES THROUGH THE ENTIRE CROSS SECTION OF THE CONNECTING ROD, THE CONNECTING ROD MAY BREAK AND THE ASSOCIATED DOOR PANEL MAY BE ABLE TO MOVE FREELY IN AN UNCONTROLLED MANNER, LEAVING PASSENGERS INSIDE THE BUS UNPROTECTED BY THE DOOR PANEL AND POSSIBLY ENABLING A PROTRUDING DOOR PANEL TO STRIKE PERSONS OR OBJECTS OUTSIDE THE BUS.

Remedy:

VAPOR BUS IS CONDUCTING THIS RECALL (PLEASE SEE 05E-030). DEALERS WILL REPLACE THE CONNECTING ROD. OWNERS MAY CONTACT VAPOR BUS AT 847-777-6400 OR CHAMPION BUS AT 937-596-6849.

Notes:

CUSTOMERS MAY ALSO CONTACT THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION'S VEHICLE SAFETY HOTLINE AT 1-888-327-4236 (TTY 1-800-424-9153), OR GO TO [HTTP://WWW.SAFERCAR.GOV](http://www.safercar.gov).

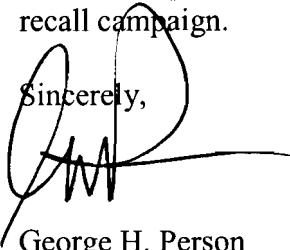
Please be reminded of the following requirements:

Copies of all notices, bulletins, dealer notifications, and other communications that relate to this recall, including a copy of the final owner notification letter and any subsequent owner follow-up notification letter(s), are required to be submitted to this office no later than 5 days after they are originally sent (if they are sent to more than one manufacturer, distributor, dealer, or purchaser/owner).

As stated in your report, Vapor Bus will be handling the owner notification, remedy, and quarterly reporting for this campaign. However, please be advised that 49 CFR 573.6 provides that the vehicle manufacturer is responsible for any safety related defect or any noncompliance in the vehicle or any item of original equipment. If Vapor Bus's campaign is not satisfactory, you may be required to conduct a follow-up notification.

Your contacts for this recall will be Pat Wallace or Delia Lopez, who may be reached by phone at 202-366-5232 or 202-366-9525 or by email at patricia.wallace@dot.gov or delia.lopez@dot.gov. We look forward to working with you for successful completion of this recall campaign.

Sincerely,



George H. Person
Chief, Recall Management Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement