

Safety Defect and Noncompliance Report Guide for Vehicles
PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Responsibility and Reports¹

06V-010
(23 pages)

On January 5, 2006, Travis Body & Trailer, Inc. decided that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exits in the motor vehicles listed below, and is furnishing notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573 **Defect and Noncompliance Responsibility and Reports.**

Date this report was prepared: January 9-11, 2006

Furnish the manufacturer's identification code for this recall (if applicable): n/a

1. Identify the full corporate name of the fabricating manufacturer of the vehicle being recalled. If the recalled vehicle is imported, provide the name and mailing address of the designated agent as prescribed by 49 U.S.C. §30164.

Travis Body & Trailer, Inc

Identify the corporate official, by name and title, whom the agency should contact with respect to this recall.

Jason Backs, Vice President

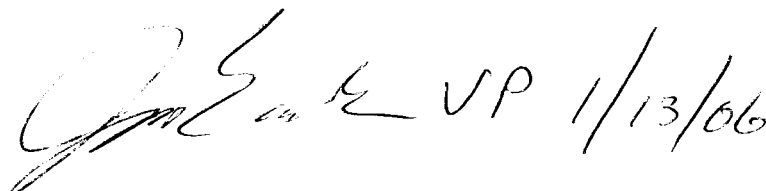
Telephone Number: 713 466-5888 Fax No.: 713 466-3238

Name and Title of Person who prepared this report.

Jason Backs, Vice President

Steve Retzliff, Chairman

Signed:


Jason Backs, Vice President 1-13-06

¹ Each manufacturer must furnish a report, to the Associate Administrator for Enforcement, for each defect or noncompliance condition which relates to motor vehicle safety.

This guide was developed from 49 CFR Part 573, "Defect and Noncompliance Responsibility and Reports" and also outlines information currently requested. Any questions, please consult the complete Part 573 or contact Mr. George Person at (202) 366-5210 or by FAX at (202) 366-7882.

I. Identify the Vehicle Models Involved in the Recall

2. Identify the Vehicles Involved in the Recall, for each make and model or applicable vehicle line (provide illustrations or photographs as necessary to describe the vehicle), provide:

Make(s): Travis **Model Years Involved:** 2005, 2006

Model(s): All Frameless and Quarter-frame End Dump trailers including all body types: Classic, Power-Lite, Wedge, Wave, Aero-Lite, SST or SST Aerodyne.

Production Dates: Beginning: July 1, 2004 **Ending:** December 22, 2005

VIN Range: Beginning: 2844 **Ending:** 4556, plus # 7737

Vehicle Type: Trailer **Body style:** End Dump

Descriptive information which characterizes/distinguishes the recalled vehicles from those model vehicles not included in the recall:

All Frameless and Quarter-frame End Dump trailers including all body types. Does not apply to frame-type trailers, tipper trailers, dump bodies, walking floor trailers or bottom dump trailers. It only applies to those units that received a rocking coupler plate.

Identify the approximate percentage of the production of all the recalled models manufactured by your company between the inclusive dates of manufacture provided above, that the recalled model population represents. For example, if the recall involved Widgets equipped with certain items of equipment from January 1, 1996 through April 1, 1997, then what was the percentage of the recalled Widgets of all Widgets manufactured during that time period.

60%

II. Identify the Recall Population

3. Furnish the total number of vehicles recalled potentially containing the defect or noncompliance.

Total Number Potentially Affected by the Recall: 639

4. Furnish the approximate percentage of the total number of vehicles estimated to actually contain the defect or noncompliance: 2 to 3%

Identify and describe how the recall population was determined--in particular how the recalled models were selected and the basis for the beginning and final dates of manufacture of the recalled vehicles:

The recall results from the fact that Travis received a bad batch, a bad portion of a batch or possibly even more than one bad batch of coupler castings. We believe that some of these castings were not properly heat-treated. The design of the castings has been unchanged for over 15 years with no prior history of any problems with the castings, so we are comfortable with the design. However, we recently became aware that several trailers experienced failures in the small outer bushing portion of the castings. Because of these facts and based on a visual inspection of the breaks that have been experienced, we have concluded that (some of) the castings failed to be properly heat treated. The result of a failure in this component can be a SERIOUS ACCIDENT as it is possible that the draft arm pin could come out, resulting in a disconnection between truck and trailer. It is important to note that it is not possible to visually determine which castings are defective. Regardless of the cause (heat treating or metallurgy), as we await the design and completion of further testing, we are taking immediate steps to eradicate the problem (or potential problem). Given that the earliest production date of any trailer that has exhibited the defect was September, 2004 and that we are uncertain if any recently produced trailers could have received a bad component, we have decided to include ALL trailers (that use this component) produced since July 1, 2004 and December 22, 2005. The serial numbers of 639 trailers have been identified to be included in the recall. On December 22, 2005 we began reinforcing all new production and performed the herein described retrofit on all finished inventory and work in process.

III. Describe the Defect or Noncompliance

5. Describe the defect or noncompliance. The description should address the nature and physical location of the defect or noncompliance. Illustrations should be provided as appropriate.

The defect involves the *coupler plate castings*. These are the large castings that are welded to the top of the coupler plate of the trailer. Each coupler plate contains two of these castings, a left and a right. Each casting includes the large 5" wide lower saddle and ***a small outer bushing***. There are three large 2" pins that link the coupler plate to the trailer. The center pin attaches the bottom of the hoist (hydraulic cylinder) to the coupler plate. This pin is held in place by two breakaway bolts, one on either end. Each outer pin (left & right) attaches the end of the draft arms (left and right) to the coupler plate. These pins are inserted through ***a small outer bushing*** (part of the coupler casting) through the draft arm bushing and into a machined hole in the large lower saddle. ***There is a potential for a catastrophic failure in the small outer bushing.*** See Photos attached

Describe the cause(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

We have concluded that (some of) the castings failed to be properly heat treated.

Generally speaking, heat treating is a process that takes the cast material from a very high yield strength and very hard to a slightly lower yield strength but with greater elasticity. The lower elasticity provides function as the casting can now undergo some degree of deflection (movement, bending, stretching, etc.) prior to cracking. Assuming that some of our castings were not properly heat treated, the large lower saddle would continue to work well (in fact the surface would be harder), however the small outer bushing, that is part of the same casting, could crack during flexure in the small, neck portion (see photo). The cases where we have become aware of a failure have all been at this point.

Describe the consequence(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

The result of a failure in this component can be a SERIOUS ACCIDENT as it is possible that the draft arm pin could come out, resulting in a disconnection between truck and trailer.

Identify any warning which can (a) precede or (b) occur.

It is important to note that it is not possible to visually determine which castings are defective. Also, because the material appears to be failing due to low elasticity, it is quite possible that a complete break or failure may develop quickly (if not instantly) after the appearance of the first sign of a crack, even if only a hairline.

If the defect or noncompliance is in a component or assembly purchased from a supplier, identify the supplier by corporate name and address.

Pace International Import Company
Paul Ekeberg, President
2701 NE 148th St.
Vancouver, WA 98686

360 574-6286 Phone
360 574-2987 Fax
pacel@msn.com

Identify the name and title of the chief executive officer or knowledgeable representative of the supplier:

Paul Ekeberg, President

IV. Provide the Chronology in Determining the Defect/Noncompliance

If the recall is for a defect, complete item 6, otherwise item 7.

6. With respect to a defect, furnish a chronological summary (including dates) of all the principle events that were the basis for the determination of the defect. The summary should include, but not be limited to, the number of reports, accidents, injuries, fatalities, and warranty claims.

Historical Time-line:

8/5/02 – The first order was received from a new supplier, Pace International (Pace), for coupler castings (same design as the prior vendor).

At the time this was received, we had numerous pieces in inventory from the prior vendor as well as additional inventory from the prior vendor already being machined and yet to be delivered from a local machine shop.

11/11/02 – The second order was received, 400 pieces, from Pace. This 400 piece order, along with the first Pace order and the existing inventory, was enough to last through the entire year, 2003. Trailers produced in 2003, used castings from either the old or the new suppliers. As the castings contained no vendor identification markings, it is impossible to tell, by inspection, which trailer received parts supplied from which vendor. Also, as coupler plates are produced as sub-assemblies, and pulled on a batch basis to production, no written record is kept as to which is used on which specific trailer.

Note: no incident of casting failure has been reported on trailers produced in 2002 or 2003.

1/21/04 – The third order of castings was received from Pace (600 pieces)

7/14/04 – The fourth order of castings was received from Pace (500 pieces)

Sept, 2004 – A **Sunset Transportation** trailer was produced

April 2005 – A **Cowboy Trucking** trailer produced.

May, 2005 – **Ocean Gold** trailers produced (10 trailers)

5/24/05 – The fifth order of castings was received from Pace (600 pieces)

June/July, 2005 – **Penny's Concrete** trailers produced

7/6/05 – The sixth order of castings was received from Pace (167 pieces)

Early July, 2005 – **Ocean Gold** reported a failure in two trailers (S/N 3758, 3753) no accident.

To be expedient, cautious (and to allay customer concerns) Travis simply replaced all 10 coupler plates with new plates. This was done on the basis of two possible theories. First, that this was a fluke occurrence (this theory, while not proved wrong at that time was generally dismissed). The second theory was that perhaps a few of the castings were not heat treated properly. Not knowing if other castings in our inventory were improperly heat treated, Travis sent all remaining castings in our inventory out to be heat treated at a local shop, Flame Metallurgical. The general consensus was that the bad castings were likely from a single shipment and that future problems were now averted with the re-heat treating. Also, we instituted a impact testing procedure that was based on conversations with Pace representatives. Prior to heat treating, a casting is very strong (high yield strength) but has little elasticity. Heat treating reduces the yield strength a bit (still in the design range) but increases the elasticity. One crude, but reliable, test for heat treating is to hit the material with a steel hammer. The heat treated material will dent. Repeating the impact on a non-heat treated material results in no dent. The failure at Ocean Gold appeared to be the result of poor heat treating. The replacement couplers for Ocean Gold were built with 100% hammer tested coupler plate castings.

Immediately, Travis instituted a policy of impact testing coupler plate castings. This was performed by spot checking casting from each pallet as they were used. Spot checking was used under the theory that if some of the pallet appears to be properly heat treated, then the entire batch must be good.

July/Aug., 2005 – **Mine Services** trailers produced (18 units)

8/10/05 – The seventh order of castings was received from Pace (500 pieces)

October 14, 2005 – **Penny's Concrete** reports a failed unit. Photos indicate a similar break to the Ocean Gold trailer. The coupler plate was replaced. As both Mine Services and Penny's were produced in the same time period, it was decided that the policy of impact testing should continue. The warranty department was told to be watchful for any additional occurrences.

12/14/05 – **Mine Services** reports an exact same casting failure as with Ocean Gold, no accident. Travis sent a coupler plate for the failed unit and developed a version of a lower side plate to reinforce the other Mine Services trailers (17) and was designed to prevent a

failure (even if a poorly heat treated casting remained in this populous). The customer installed these plates.

Travis instituted 100 % impact testing on all production. Spot-checking was no longer presumed to be adequate. It was decided that we should conduct field inspections of trailers produced during the late spring/ summer of 2005. This third incident was indicative of a broader problem.

12/21/05 – **Sunset Transportation** reports 2 failures (one week after the Mine Services report) with one non-injury accident. The trailer fell down suddenly while dumping, damaging the hoist and draft arms. The cause of this appeared to be that the coupler casting had broken at the small outer bushing (in a similar fashion as Ocean Gold & Mine Services) resulting in the loss of the front draft arm pin connections. The next day, Sunset, aided by the Travis dealer in their area (Fort Worth, TX.) conducted a 100% inspection of their entire fleet of Travis trailers. They found 2 other coupler plates, among over 50 inspected, that had cracked coupler plate castings at the small outer bushing location. The oldest of the failed couplers was manufactured in September, 2004.

The same day, Travis produced several hundred of the reinforcement plates and four replacement coupler plate assemblies, with the lower reinforcement plates installed, to deliver to Sunset. The next day (12/23/05), a representative from Travis delivered these to Sunset for the purpose of replacing the failed components and retrofitting the remaining fleet. He inspected the damaged trailers and interviewed the customer. An arrangement to immediately complete the retrofit at Sunset was made with a local mobile welding service (after a trial welding test was performed). Travis agreed to perform all repairs and retrofits at no cost to the customer. It was noted that the oldest of the failed units was produced in September 2004.

One of the failed couplers was brought back to the Travis manufacturing headquarters for later review.

Immediately, Travis decided that a larger, more extensive recall program was in order.

12/23/05 Travis began the project of compiling a database of all trailers manufactured since July of 2004 (three months prior to the oldest known failed unit). The decision was made to perform the recall (a retrofit installation of a *lower* reinforcing plate) on all trailers manufactured and delivered between July 1, 2004 and December 23, 2005. Also, all new, finished trailers remaining on the yard, undelivered and all new production were immediately slated to receive the *lower* retrofit plate as a precautionary measure. Initial communication with NHTSA representatives was made (a request for guidelines).

1/3/05 **Cowboy Trucking** reported an accident to a trailer while driving. This trailer flipped while completing a tight 360 degree turn. Both truck and trailer turned over. The driver sustained minimal injuries (We currently have not formal, written report, however, the owner stated “He got bounced around a bit but was lucky he didn’t get hurt bad.”) It

remains uncertain as to the actual cause of the accident. It could have simply been due to excessive speed in a tight radius curve. Yet, the small outer bushings on both sides were broken after the accident. The breaks in the casting were fresh. Were the breaks caused by the accident or contributory toward it? The answer to this question is yet to be determined, however as Travis already was in process on the Recall Plan, this incident served as additional incentive to complete Phase I of the recall quickly.

1/5/05 – The retrofit plan was completed and ready to be implemented after receiving instruction from the NHTSA and completing the customer contact information database. The plan calls for a 100% recall of these trailers beginning with a telephone campaign to each customer (requiring an immediate trailer inspection) with written follow-up, scheduled repairs and repair confirmations.

Given the perceived risk of injury that could result, Travis revisited the retrofit plate design that had been considered. While the *lower plate* clearly added significant reinforcement to the cast material, an additional *upper* reinforcing plate was determined to be appropriate and would provide an added layer of comfort or safety for both Travis and our customers. It was decided that this *upper* plate would be added to the retrofit or repair procedure and placed on all affected trailers including those recently delivered with the lower plate only as well as the Sunset trailers currently being retrofitted. All new production and trailers on the yard (built since July 2004) will receive both the lower and upper weld on plates.

Additional follow-up testing will be performed as determined necessary.

7. With respect to a noncompliance, identify and provide the test results or other data (in chronological order and including dates) on which the noncompliance was determined.

V. Identify the Remedy

8. A description of the manufacturer's program for remedying the defect or noncompliance. This program shall include a plan for reimbursing an owner or purchaser who incurred costs to obtain a remedy for the problem addressed by the recall within a reasonable time in advance of the manufacturer's notification of owners, purchasers and dealers, in accordance with §573.13 of this part. A manufacturer's plan may incorporate by reference a general reimbursement plan it previously submitted to NHTSA, together with information specific to the individual recall. Information required by §573.13 that is not in a general reimbursement plan shall be submitted in the manufacturer's report to NHTSA under this section. If a manufacturer submits one or more general reimbursement plans, the manufacturer shall update each plan every two years, in accordance with §573.13. The manufacturer's remedy program and reimbursement plans will be available for inspection by the public at NHTSA headquarters.

To correct this condition, the dealer, customer shop or Travis shop will follow the repair procedure as described in the attached drawings and photos by adding an upper reinforcing plate and a lower reinforcing plate. The installation should require no more than one hour to complete including cleaning the area, positioning the reinforcement pieces, welding in place and painting.

However, additional time may be required depending on how dealer appointments are scheduled and processed. To obtain this **free** service, customers are being instructed to contact their Travis dealer, or call our warranty/service department at their earliest convenience at 800 535-4372 to arrange for inspection and correction.

There are 4 ways to complete the repairs:

1. Return to the dealer – Travis will send the parts to the dealer.
2. Go to a non-dealer welding shop – Travis will send the parts to the *customer at address provided*. Travis will need to contact the welding shop to provide a temporary repair authorization and detailed repair instructions. Provide their name, number and contact person.
3. The Customer has it's own welder, asserts competency, and wishes to perform repairs on their own. Travis will send parts to the *customer at address provided*.
4. The Customer wishes to take the trailer to a Travis manufacturing repair shop in Houston or Atlanta. The customer is to schedule an appointment, the parts will already be there. It is a free service. Contact Steve Adams, Houston (713 466-5888). Gary Nichols, Atlanta (404 627-2350).

If the customer no longer owns this vehicle, he is asked to please inform us of this and provide the contact information for the new owner.

In cases where the customer has the repairs completed at a dealer location, Travis will pay the dealer for his time and materials as a warranty claim with no charge to the customer. No customer will be charged if the work is performed by a Travis shop (Houston or Atlanta). In the event of a third party welder, or if the customer uses his own qualified welder, 100% reimbursement will be provided (\$50/hr estimated). The customer is being instructed to make these arrangements through their salesman and the Travis warranty manager. In essence, the matter is being handled as a 100% covered warranty claim. Prior to reimbursement (where practical), Travis will require that the retrofit completion card be returned or faxed back to Travis for our records.

In the event that the customer incurred direct expenses prior to the recall related to the problem, their costs will be reimbursed 100% as per our normal warranty procedure. All of the trailers in the recall populous fall within the 100% warranty period.

9. Furnish a description of the manufacturer's remedy for the defect or noncompliance. Clearly describe the differences between the recall condition and the remedy.

Travis will install the additional parts as retrofit components on each of the 639 trailers identified as being produced between July 1, 2004 and December 22, 2005 and on all existing inventory (since December 22, 2005) until a redesigned casting can be procured. The present design has 1.3 sq. in. of material connection between the outer bushing and the triangular support underneath. We are adding two reinforcement plates. The upper plate adds an effective material area of 1.25 sq. in. which transmits load through an effective weld area of 0.44 sq. in. The lower plate adds an effective material area of 1.6 sq. in. which transmits load through an effective weld area of 0.55 sq. in. The combination of the two plates gives a 220% increase in load carrying capacity. This increased load carrying capacity will reduce the stress in the original casting such that if the physical properties of the casting are not as expected (designed), the casting will no longer fail under normal operations.

The future redesigned casting will have 7.2 sq. in. of material connection (550% greater). Both the bushing length and thickness will be increased. Gussets will also be added to increase the connection. Please see the attached drawings for the details of the changes being considered. The old design is shown in c-107, c-108. The redesigned casting is shown in c-107b, c-108b.

Clearly describe the distinguishing characteristics of the remedy component/assembly versus the recalled component/assembly.

See attached photos and drawings

Identify and describe how and when the recall condition was corrected in production. If the production remedy was identical to the recall remedy in the field, so state. If the product was discontinued, so state.

On December 22, 2005 we began reinforcing all new production and performed the herein described retrofit on all finished inventory and work in process. A redesign of the casting is currently being considered. The concept for this new design will be to provide adequate mass so that the casting would not fail, even in the event of improper heat-treating. The retrofit design will continue to be applied to all new production until such time as the new design is complete and tested

VI. Identify the Recall Schedule

10. Furnish a schedule or agenda (with specific dates) for notification to other manufacturers, dealers/retailers, and purchasers. Please, identify any foreseeable problems with implementing the recall.

The recall plan involves three readily identifiable steps.

Step I. Immediate Notification, Inspection and Active Individual Customer

Response:

Travis is treating the recall with utmost urgency. Due to the fact that the database of all trailers produced between July 1, 2004 and December 22, 2005 contains a relatively small, finite number of units (639) and that many of these were sold as multiple units to the same customer, we are dealing with roughly 250 required communications. It has been determined that the originating salesman (Travis employee or dealer representative) will be asked to contact each customer by phone. To attain accurate, complete communication to the customer, a telephone script (attached) was prepared for each of these to follow in making this call. The intent of this call is to have each trailer be inspected for cracks, fault or failure immediately and to begin making arrangements for the completion of the repairs to each trailer. With 5 Travis salesmen and numerous dealers, the number of calls and repair arrangements to be completed by each individual salesman/ representative is small. Travis created a database (Excel) listing each trailer by serial number that requires service in the recall effort. Each salesman will report to a single individual at Travis who will maintain this database, noting the status of the contacts and repair effort for each trailer. Space is provided for updated customer contact information and for making general notations. The project will not be complete until 100% of the trailers identified are verified/ certified to have received the retrofit.

Step II. Formal (written) Notification, Documentation and Reimbursement

In addition to the telephone contact campaign being completed in Phase I, Travis will mail each customer a formal notice as is attached and has now been approved by NHTSA

representative. Included in the mailing will be photographs, repair instructions (with drawing) and a reply card.

Travis will maintain a record of communications sent to each customer and will retain hard copy files of all written communication with each customer. In the event of multiple trailers sold to a single customer, Travis will reference all of the trailers in a single, cross referenced communication.

Step III. Follow up Verification (efficacy of retrofit), Component Supplier Notifications
Clearly, the immediate attention must be placed on prevention and safety in the field.
Yet, Travis does plan to conduct additional engineering review and testing of samples from failed units as well as the retrofit/ repairs.

Proper communication with the supplier will be completed in a timely fashion (as soon as Phase I repairs are complete). Travis will retain samples of failed components.

While the retrofit design could be continued for new production indefinitely, work toward a new, modified design has already begun. The new design will benefit from the experience and knowledge of the facts to date. The new design will consider the possibility of improper heat-treating in the future.

VII. Furnish Recall Communications

11. Furnish a final copy of all notices, bulletins, and other communications that relate directly to the defect or noncompliance and which are sent to more than one manufacturer, distributor, or purchaser. This includes all communications (including both original and follow-up) concerning this recall from the time your company determines the defect or noncompliance condition on, not just the initial notification. *A DRAFT copy of the notification documents should be submitted to this office by Fax (202-366-7882) for review prior to mailing.*

Note that these documents are to be submitted separately from those provided in accordance with Part 579.5 requirements.

The following will be sent at the beginning of Phase II. The initial notification letter has been approved. In general the Recall Completion Form will be required prior to reimbursement for the repairs (faxed forms are allowed). Travis will provide additional customized communication to each customer or dealer representative as needed to assure 100% compliance with the recall.

INITIAL TELEPHONE CONTACT PROCEDURE & SCRIPT

The phone can be faster than mail and provides positive contact confirmation.

Each customer must be contacted by telephone starting as quickly as possible between Jan. 6 and 14, 2006.

The customers are to be contacted by the initial selling party (dealer or Travis salesman). The selling party will be provided a list of the trailers sold by them that were produced between the dates of July 1, 2004 and December 22, 2005 and the name of each customer.

Once contact is made, the selling party must report back to Randy Weaver (800 535-4372) of Travis that the contact is complete and what follow-up steps are being followed. Randy will coordinate the steps required for completing the repairs, sending out parts, notices, reimbursements, etc. The selling party must be prepared to always communicate the serial number of the trailer being reported on.

SCRIPT (provided to allow for consistency and completeness in the desired communication to the customer – please cover all points.)

Hello.....

I am I sold you a Travis dump trailer(s) (or several) over the past 18 months.

The records indicate that the trailer(s) has (have) the following serial number(s):

S/N list...

I am calling to inform you that Travis is conducting a critical recall on the trailers. Let me explain.

Over the past year, Travis has received a few reports from customers that the small outer bushings (left and right) on the coupler plate have cracked which allows the pin that attaches the draft arms to the coupler plate to slip out. If this occurs, the result could be an accident or injury. Your trailer could turn over while dumping or even become disconnected from the truck when driving.

While the casting is the same design that has been used for over 15 years, with no prior failures, we believe that we received one or more batches of casting during late 2004 or 2005 that were improperly heat-treated. The result would be a casting that is more brittle than is acceptable.

Because it is not possible to visually inspect for the presence of this condition, we are conducting a recall of every trailer built since July of 2004 until December of

2005. While our purpose is to be as safe as possible, please be sure that if yours trailer contains this flaw, it is a VERY DANGEROUS CONDITION and must be repaired at once.

Your trailer must be inspected at once! IMMEDIATELY! If you are driving, pull over and make the inspections or have your dispatcher contact your drivers right away.

Describe the inspection.....

If you see a crack, take the trailer out of service right away.

If not, good, but continue to inspect several times daily and each time you dump and let's get the repairs completed right away.

There are 4 ways to complete the repairs:

1. Come back to the dealer – Travis will send the parts to the dealer.
2. Go to a non-dealer welding shop – Travis will send parts to the *customer at address provided below*. Travis will need to contact the welding shop to provide temporary repair authorization and detailed repair instructions. Provide their name, number and contact person.
3. Customer has own welder, asserts competency, and wishes to perform repairs on their own. Travis will send parts to the *customer at address provided below*.
4. Customer wishes to take trailer to Travis manufacturing repair shop in Houston or Atlanta. Call to schedule an appointment, the parts will be there. It is free. Contact Steve Adams, Houston (713 466-5888). Gary Nichols, Atlanta (404 627-2350).

Obtain correct Customer Contact Information:

Name

Phone

Mobile Phone

e-mail address

Physical Mailing Address for UPS

Mailing Address for Correspondence

Date Contacted

If the Trailer is sold, get information of new owner.

Travis will be sending a formal, written notice of this to you soon. All of the costs will be covered by Travis. The repairs are simple and take no more than about an hour.

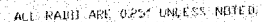
Thanks -- and please call me back immediately if your inspection (repeat the need for an immediate inspection) indicates a possible crack.

End of Script.

Upon completion of your calls, contact Randy Weaver with the desired repair strategy, updated contact information (if needed) and the selected repair strategy.

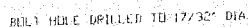
KEEP A LOG of all of your contacts regarding this recall (a separate file or journal, etc.) so that when asked about each particular serial number trailer in the future, you can recite the exact status information.

consideration



COUPLER CASTING
TOP VIEW

15-1 7/11/82 XXXXX343XX

50. $\times (4)$

MODEL FRAMELESS TRAILERS

MATERIAL	(A) CX	DATE	5/1/58
TESTS	(A) 4/1/58	NAME	ROBERTS, R.H.
CLASS	1/1/58	REF.	C-100B

14-00000

Customer Notice Letter

Dear Customer:

This notice is sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

Travis Body & Trailer, Inc. has decided that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in certain trailers that were manufactured between the dates of July 1, 2004 and December 31, 2005. The models involved include all Frameless and Quarter-frame End Dump trailers including all body types; Classic, Power-Lite, Wedge, Wave, Aero-Lite, SST or SST Aerodyne. The defect involves the *coupler plate castings*. These are the large castings that are welded to the top of the coupler plate of the trailer. Each coupler plate contains two of these castings, a left and a right. Each casting includes the large 5" wide lower saddle and a small outer bushing. There are three large 2" pins that link the coupler plate to the trailer. The center pin attaches the bottom of the hoist (hydraulic cylinder) to the coupler plate. The pin is held in place by two breakaway bolts, one on either end. Each outer pin (left & right) attaches the end of the draft arms (left and right) to the coupler plate. These pins are inserted through a small outer bushing (part of the coupler casting) through the draft arm bushing and into a machined hole in the large lower saddle. **There is a potential for a catastrophic failure in the small outer bushing.** Such failure could result in an accident, including a crash or trailer tip over. It is possible that such failure could occur without warning. The result of any such accident could be serious injury or a fatality to the operator, bystanders or other motorists.

INSPECTION: You must inspect your trailer immediately checking for cracks in the small outer bushing casting. (see attached diagram labeled "Inspection Procedure") Such inspection will require that you clean the area well to be able to visually determine if a crack is present. While in most cases, no visible crack will be apparent, the decision to complete the recommended repairs or retrofit is not optional. A crack could develop with little or no notice. **YOU MUST HAVE THE REPAIRS COMPLETED IMMEDIATELY. ALSO, YOU MUST CONTINUE TO REPEAT THE INSPECTION AT FREQUENT INTERVALS (several times daily and prior to every dumping operation) UNTIL THE REPAIRS ARE COMPLETED.**

We believe that you currently have or have previously owned one of these units. For this reason we ask that you arrange for your dealer to correct your vehicle without delay. The service and required parts will be provided free of charge.

To correct this condition, your dealer will follow the repair procedure as described in the attached drawing by adding a top reinforcing plate and a bottom reinforcing plate. The installation should require no more than one hour to complete including cleaning the area, positioning the reinforcement pieces, welding in place and painting.

However, additional time may be required depending on how dealer appointments are scheduled and processed. To obtain this free service, contact your Travis dealer, or call our warranty/service department at your earliest convenience at 800 535-4372 to arrange for inspection and correction. **If you no longer own this vehicle, please inform us of this when you call.**

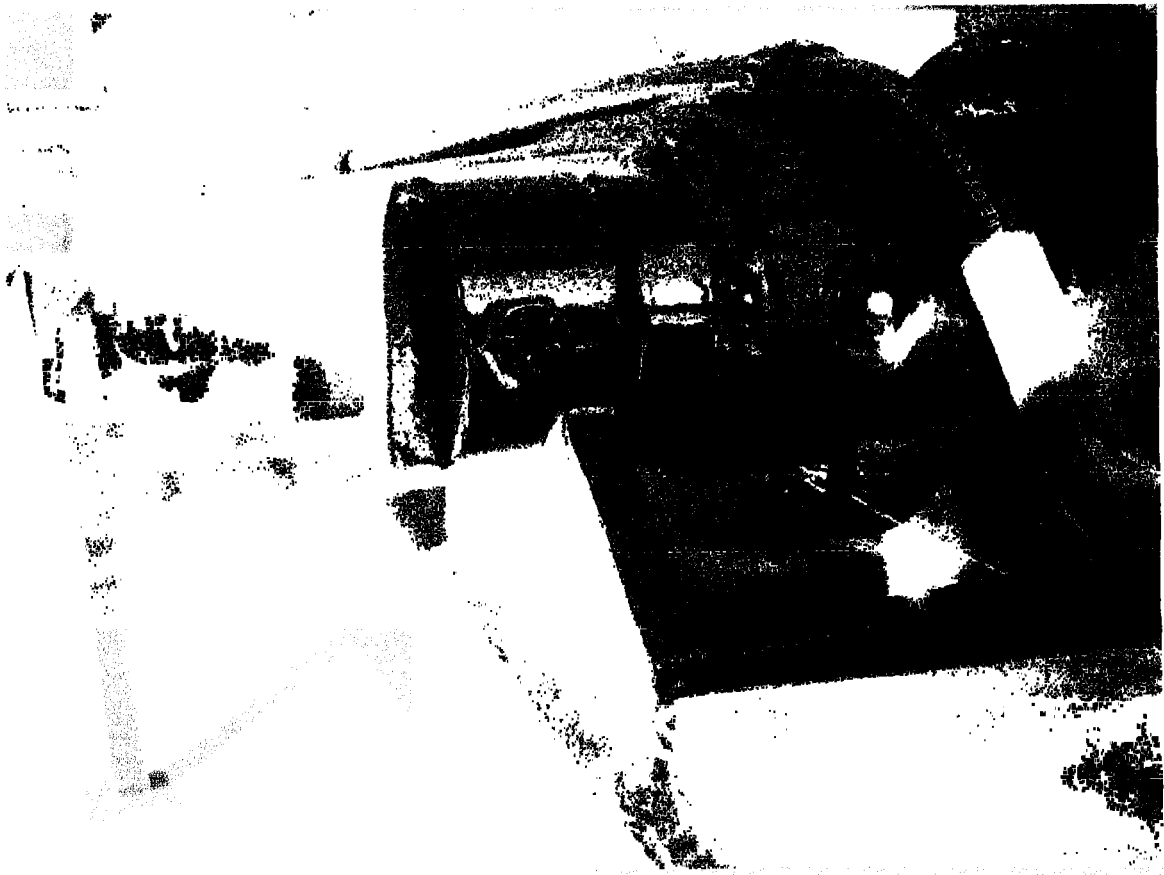
Federal regulations require that any vehicle lessor receiving this recall notice must forward a copy of this notice to the lessee within ten days.

If you had this repair performed before you received this letter, you may be eligible to receive reimbursement for the cost of obtaining a pre-notification remedy of the problem associated with this recall. For more information contact Randy Weaver, our warranty manager at 800 535-4372.

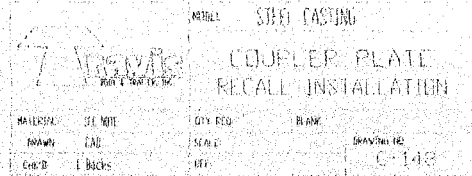
We regret any inconvenience that this action may cause you. However, we are concerned about your safety. If your dealer fails or is unable to remedy this defect without charge and within a reasonable time, you may submit a written complaint to the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590, or call the toll-free Vehicle Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236; (TTY: 1-800-424-9153); or go to <http://www.safercar.gov>.

Thank you for your patience and support in helping us to keep you safe.









Printed Name _____



1/9/06

Dear Customer:

After receiving the repair parts for the coupler plate recall, you should follow the guidelines below for proper installation.

1. Clean the sides of the coupler castings so they are free of grease, dirt, etc.
2. Position the parts as shown in the accompanying photos.
3. Using an all purpose 70 yield filler material, weld the parts with a minimum ¼" fillet weld per the accompanying drawing and photos.
4. Clean the welds, prime and paint to protect.
5. Please fill out the enclosed card completely and return it for payment. We expect the repairs to be completed in an hour or less per trailer. Upon receiving the enclosed card, Travis will reimburse you for the repairs at the typical / internal shop labor rate.

Should you have any problems or any further questions, please call.

Respectfully,

Jason Backs, VP, M.E.
Travis Body & Trailer
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Houston, TX 77041
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(713) 896-8951 [fax]
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