

September 22, 2006

2006 SEP 27 PM 2:49

VIA E-MAIL

RECEIPT CONFIRMATION REQUESTED

Part of the information:

06 V-368
(2 Pages)

Mr. George H. Person
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation
400 7th Street, S.W. NSA-11
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Champion Bus
Defect and Non-Compliance Report

Dear Mr. Person:

Champion Bus ("Champion") has been notified by Vapor Bus International concerning the potential defect involving defective connecting rods supplied to Champion. Vapor Bus has already initiated a safety recall campaign with respect to this potential defect. NHTSA has assigned recall number 05E-030 to the Vapor Bus recall campaign.

Pursuant to Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, we are hereby notifying the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that certain buses manufactured by Champion were built with the defective connecting rods.

As more specifically set forth below, Vapor Bus has agreed to conduct the recall campaign involving these defective connecting rods. Champion has provided vapor Bus with a list of dealers and owners to assist them in remedying the defect. Vapor Bus will be filing the quarterly reports in connection with the recall campaign.

- A. Recall Population and Vehicle Identification. The defective connecting rods supplied by Vapor Bus have been used on certain 2000 Model Year Contender model buses, which were manufactured by Champion during the period from September 1999 through June 2000. The total number of buses subject to this recall campaign is 22. 100 percent of the buses included in this recall contain the defective part.
- B. Description of Defect. All of the buses subject to this recall campaign were built with the defective connecting rod supplied by Vapor Bus. The potential defect involves the external thread area of the connecting rod. 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 of the connecting rod assembly and malfunction of the door

actuation assembly. 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.

- C. Basis for Determining that a Defect Exists. All buses included in this recall contain the defect and must have it replaced.
- D. Remedying of Defect. As set forth in the notification issued by Vapor Bus in connection with recall campaign 05E-030, Vapor Bus will replace the connecting rod. The owner of the buses subject to this recall campaign was advised to contact Vapor Bus to implement the repair of the connecting rods. All of the buses subject to this recall have been fixed.
- E. Owner Notifications. Vapor Bus has notified the owner of the buses.
- F. Quarterly Reporting Requirements. Vapor Bus will be responsible for filing quarterly reports in connection with recall campaign 06E-030. Because the information included by Vapor Bus in their quarterly reports will encompass the remedying of the Champion buses subject to this recall campaign, Champion will not file quarterly reports to avoid duplication.
- G. Campaign Number. Champion does not have an internal campaign number for this recall. Champion will use the recall campaign number assigned by NHTSA.

The enclosed information should comply with the NHTSA regulations and satisfy the obligations of Champion with respect to this recall campaign. If you need any additional information regarding the participation of Champion in this recall campaign, please feel free to contact me at 937-596-6849, Ext. 7363.

Sincerely,



David M. Mihalick
Thor Industries
Standards Compliance Manager