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DEFECTS INVESTIGATION  
RECALL MGMT DIV.

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July 5, 2007

07V-316  
(2 Pages)

Dan Smith  
Associate Administrator for Vehicle Safety  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

**Re: Defect Information Report FL-502, TufTrac Center Suspension Casting**

Mr. Smith:

In accordance with Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Freightliner LLC herewith reports a safety campaign to recall approximately 1,200 Freightliner, Sterling, and Western Star vehicles manufactured November 2006 through January 2007 with a defect in the TufTrac rear suspension center casting.

Attached is Freightliner's Defect Information Report.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,

Nasser Zamani

Cc: Michael Mason, CAL-OSHA

Enclosure

Certified Mail#

7004 2890 0004 1202 0638

**Defect Information Report**

(Section 573.6)

July 5, 2007

**(c)(1) Manufacturer:** Freightliner LLC  
P.O. BOX 3849  
Portland, Oregon 97208  
(503) 745-5219

**Brands:** Freightliner, Sterling, Western Star

**(c)(2) Vehicles identification:**

**Model(s) affected:** Freightliner: Columbia, Business Class M2, FLD120SD, FLD120 Military  
Sterling: Acterra, A-Line  
Western Star: 4900

**Model Years affected:** 2007, 2008

**Manufacture Dates:** November 2006 through 2007

**Basis for determining population:** Vehicles manufactured with certain TufTrac rear suspensions with center casting brackets that may be out of specification.

**Component manufacturer if other than the vehicle manufacturer:** not applicable

**(c)(3) Total number of vehicles potentially affected:** Approximately 1,200

**(c)(4) Percentage of vehicles estimated to contain the defect:** less than 5%

**(c)(5) Description of the defect:**

The flange, crossmember, and web mounting surfaces of the center suspension mounting bracket casting may not be perpendicular. An out of square casting may have unacceptable stresses in the bracket when it is installed and may cause it to crack in service.

**49CFR Section 577.5(f) Evaluation of the risk to motor vehicle safety:** The drive axle may not be held in position if a cracked bracket fractures completely. This will affect vehicle control and may cause a crash without warning.

**(c)(6) Chronology of principal events:**

In January 2007, Cleveland truck plant QA identified TufTrac suspension brackets that were out of square and difficult to install. The supplier initiated corrective action. Freightliner Engineering reviewed the suspect parts and determined excessive stresses may exist in incorrectly manufactured brackets which may cause them to crack in service.

**(c)(7) Noncompliance-test or other data:** not applicable

**(c)(8) Remedial program:** Repairs will be performed by Freightliner dealerships and Direct Warranty customers, i.e., customers approved by Freightliner to do their own warranty repairs. The TufTrac suspension center casting will be inspected. Castings that are out of spec will be replaced. Dealer notifications will be posted August 24, 2007.

**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 August 24, 2007.

**Reimbursement Plan:** All prior repairs 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-502