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DEFECTS INVESTIGATION  
RECALL MGMT DIV.



Nasser Zamani  
Manager  
Compliance and Regulatory Affairs

07V-343  
(3 Pages)

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July 23, 2007

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-509, ZF 8018 Steering Gear Spacer**

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 6,227, Freightliner Custom Chassis, XC Chassis, CX-R Chassis, VCL Chassis, XC-F Chassis, XC-L Chassis, XC-P Chassis, & XB-R Chassis manufactured June 13, 2002 through June 13, 2007 with a potential defect in the ZF model 8018 steering gear.

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#

7003 2260 0001 3403 4964

**Defect Information Report**  
(Section 573.6)

July 23, 2007

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

**Brands:** Freightliner Custom Chassis

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

**Model(s) affected:** XC Chassis, CX-R Chassis, VCL Chassis, XC-F Chassis, XC-L Chassis,  
XC-P Chassis, & XB-R Chassis

**Model Years affected:** 2003 through 2008

**Manufacture Dates:** June 13, 2002 through June 13, 2007

**Basis for determining population:** All ZF 8018 steering gears with date codes prior to 270407 45 5B. These Steering gears were delivered to Freightliner as components of Independent Front Suspension Assemblies with date codes prior to K149-005.

**Component manufacturer if other than the vehicle manufacturer:**Steering Gear

ZF Heavy Duty Steering Inc.

50 Harwill Road  
St. Thomas, ON N5P 4M6  
David Peno 847-478-6754Independent Front Suspension AssembliesZF Commercial Suspension Systems  
& Components, LLC.946 Quality Drive  
Lancaster, SC 29721  
Greg Henderson 803-416-8957

**(c)(3) Total number of vehicles potentially affected:** Approximately 6,227

**(c)(4) Percentage of vehicles estimated to contain the defect:** Unknown

**(c)(5) Description of the defect:** Certain ZF model 8018 steering gears may have been assembled with the incorrect recirculating ball spacer potentially allowing the recirculating balls to escape from the recirculating ball circuit resulting in a loss of steering. On affected units the operator may notice higher required steering wheel inputs, or the need for more steering wheel adjustments while driving in a straight line in combination with metallic cracking noises prior to a loss of steering.

**49CFR Section 577.5(f) Evaluation of the risk to motor vehicle safety:** Loss of steering could result in a vehicle crash.

**(c)(6) Chronology of principal events:** On July 2, 2007 ZF Commercial Suspension Systems & Components, LLC. notified Freightliner that certain Independent Front Suspension assemblies provided to Freightliner contained potentially defective steering gears manufactured by ZF Heavy Duty Steering Inc.

**(c)(7) Noncompliance-test or other data:** Not Applicable

**(c)(8) Remedial program:** The steering gear date code on potentially affected vehicles will be reviewed to determine if the gear is part of the suspect population. Suspect steering gears will be replaced. Repairs will be performed by Freightliner dealerships and Direct Warranty customers, i.e., customers approved by Freightliner to do their own warranty repairs. *Estimated dealer notification will be completed by September 18, 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 September 23, 2007.

**Reimbursement Plan:** Copies will be submitted as a supplemental report when available.

**(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-509