

FREIGHTLINER
LLC

A DaimlerChrysler Company

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November 6, 2007

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

07V-530
(3 pages)

**Re: Defect Information Report FL-514,
Holland Simplex Fifthwheel Lever Pivot Bolt**

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 38,000 Freightliner, Sterling, and Western Star truck-tractors manufactured January 2006 Through May 2007 with Holland Simplex fifthwheels that may have a defect in the lever arm pivot bolt assembly.

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 1239

Defect Information Report

(Section 573.6)

November 6, 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 – Argosy, Columbia, Century ST, Coronado, Classic, Classic XL FLD, FLD-SD,
Business Class M2

Sterling - Acterra, A-Line, L-Line

Western Star - 4900

Model Years affected: 2006, 2007, 2008

Manufacture Dates: January 2006 through May 2007

Basis for determining population: Truck-tractors manufactured January 2006 to May 2007
with Holland Simplex SE or SE II fifthwheels.

Component manufacturer if other than the vehicle manufacturer:

SAF Holland USA, Inc.
467 Ottawa Avenue
P.O. Box 2099
Holland, MI 49422-209

(c)(3) Total number of vehicles potentially affected: approximately 38,000

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

(c)(5) Description of the defect: On certain trucks, manufactured with Holland Simplex Fifthwheels, the latch lever pivot bolt assembly may have been over-tightened which could distort the pivot bolt spacer sleeve. Corrosion or contaminates in the pivot may cause it to bind and prevent the fifthwheel jaw from latching securely around the trailer king pin. The incomplete latch condition is detectable by looking at the fifthwheel coupling indicator on the side of the fifthwheel and inspecting the fifthwheel jaws after coupling to the trailer.

49CFR Section 577.5(f) Evaluation of the risk to motor vehicle safety: There is a possibility that the fifthwheel may fail to latch without the driver's knowledge. When this occurs, the driver could drive away and the trailer could become disengaged increasing the risk of a crash.

(c)(6) Chronology of principal events:

May 4, 2007 – Freightliner Quality received reports from a fleet customer that two trailers had been dropped on tractors with equipped Holland Simplex Fifthwheels. Field Service received a report from 2 additional fleets.

May 23, 2007 – Holland met with Freightliner to review the latch mechanism and binding in the lever arm pivot bolt bushing that may prevent the fifthwheel latch from locking completely.

June 2007 – Freightliner reviewed the available information and determined the defect was not safety related. Available reports did not contain information that indicated trailers could become disconnected on the road or with the truck in motion. Field Service initiated work to release a Field Service Campaign to replace the pivot bolt assembly.

September 14, 2007 - The NHTSA Office of Defect Investigations initiated an inquiry based on a Vehicle Owner Questionnaire that reported a dropped trailer. ODI has identified 8 alleged partial or complete separations. Although the reports lack specific detail, NHTSA believes a trailer may become uncoupled on the road when the truck is moving and considers the defect safety related.

November 1, 2007 – Freightliner decides to initiate recall campaign.

(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. Dealers will replace the pivot bolt and sleeve with a hex head shoulder bolt and washer. Dealers will be notified approximately November 30, 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 November 30, 2007.

Reimbursement Plan: All prior repairs have been completed under warranty.

(c)(9) Information for tire recalls: not applicable

(c)(10) Communications sent to dealers and owners: Copies will be submitted as a supplemental report when available.

(c)(11) Copy of proposed owner notification letter: A draft will be sent for ODI review when available.

(c)(12) Manufacturer's campaign number: FL-514