

Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Reporting

Defect Report

Original Report Date: December 11, 2007
Revised Report Date: March 11, 2008

1. Vehicles affected are manufactured by:

Blue Bird Body Company
P. O. Box 937
Fort Valley, GA 31030

2. The following vehicles are being recalled:

All 2005 through 2007 model year Blue Bird Wanderlodge Model M450 motor homes (marketed as "450 LXi") manufactured from March 10, 2004 through September 27, 2006.

3. The total number of vehicles recalled potentially containing the defect is:

58

4. The approximate percentage of the total number of vehicles estimated to actually contain the defect is:

Unknown. All vehicles will be campaigned.

5. The defect consists of the following:

- A. The tie rod assemblies supplied by Arvin/Meritor on the front suspension were produced with steel tubing that did not meet design specifications which could result in failure of the tie rod assembly when coach mileage approaches or exceeds 100,000 miles.
- B. The front axle curb weight may exceed the specified 16,000 pounds weight rating.
- C. Insufficient front tire inflation pressure reduces the weight rating of the front tires.
- D. Improper alignment of the front suspension can cause premature tire wear and subsequent degradation of the structural integrity of one or both of the front tires.

6. The following data is the basis for the determination of the defect:

On September 11, 2007, Complete Coach Works (CCW), the purchaser of Blue Bird Coachworks operations (manufacturer of Wanderlodge motor homes), notified Blue Bird that certain 2004 through 2007 model year 450 LXi motor homes may have been produced with a front axle curb weight that exceeded the specified 16,000 pounds front axle weight rating.

On September 12, 2007, CCW and Blue Bird engineering initiated an investigation to reconstruct production and test records related to the subject motor homes.

In summary, Blue Bird learned:

- (1) Some LXi motor homes were produced with front axle weights exceeding 16,000 pounds beginning in October 2004.
- (2) In 2006 Blue Bird Coachworks had advised TRW, its Tier 2 supplier of tie rod ends, of failures of some tie rod ends in tests conducted by its Tier 1 axle supplier, ArvinMeritor. Coachworks then learned from TRW of a steel supplier change in June 2005. This sourcing change was made by TRW without advising Coachworks or ArvinMeritor and without TRW conducting any tie rod end production validation steering cycle tests on the subject motor home design.
- (3) Thereafter, TRW redesigned its tie rod ends and ArvinMeritor testing confirmed test results supporting a front suspension rating to 17,000 pounds.
- (4) The recall population in this campaign captures all of the 450 LXi motor homes produced with the 16,000 pounds front axle weight ratings.

Due to the recent sale of the Blue Bird Coachworks operations to CCW, responsibility for any potential field action(s) that may relate to this concern was unclear. However, on December 4, 2007, Blue Bird Body Company approved a safety recall to remedy this concern.

7. The defect will be corrected in the following manner:

The original TRW left and right-hand front tie rod ends will be replaced with the redesigned TRW tie rod ends. New certification labels showing a 17,000 pounds front GAWR, new labels stating weight limits for each of the three front storage bays, and instructions for the application of these labels will be issued.

Appropriate replacement tires will be provided and the front steering alignment will be checked and corrected, if necessary. New tire data decals will be supplied requiring 130 PSI tire inflation pressure.

8. Notification will be as follows:

Owner notification letters are scheduled to be mailed on March 14, 2008.

9a. Blue Bird's identification number assigned to this recall is:

R08MW

9b. NHTSA campaign number:

07V-586

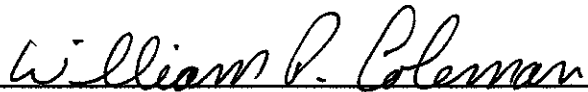
10. Dealer and/or Owner notification:

A draft copy of the notification documents will be submitted to NHTSA for review prior to mailing.

Questions regarding this recall should be directed to:

William P. Coleman
Corporate Recall Administrator
Blue Bird Corporation
P.O. Box 937
Fort Valley GA 31030
(478) 822-2242

Signed: _____



William P. Coleman, Corporate Recall Administrator