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DEFECTS INVESTIGATION  
RECALL MGMT DIV.

December 11, 2007

Mr. Ron Medford  
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
400 Seventh Street  
Washington DC 20590

In accordance with the requirements of CFR 49 Part 573, Blue Bird Corporation is submitting the attached defect report. This report was emailed to NHTSA on December 11, 2007 to the attention of Pat Wallace.

If you should have any questions concerning the information submitted, please contact me at 478-822-2242.

Respectfully,



Bill Coleman  
Corporate Recall Administrator

Enclosure: 49 CFR Part 573 Notification: Blue Bird Recall R07MT Wanderlodge 450  
LXi Increased Front Axle Ratings

**BLUE BIRD CORPORATION**  
402 Blue Bird Blvd. PO Box 937 • Fort Valley, Georgia 31030  
(478) 825-2021

## Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Reporting

### Defect Report

**Report Date:** December 11, 2007

**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 front axle curb weight may exceed the specified 16,000 pounds weight rating.

**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.

**8. Notification will be as follows:**

Owner notification date is to be determined.

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

R07MT

**9b. NHTSA campaign number:**

Please provide to the undersigned.

**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  
William P. Coleman, Corporate Recall Administrator