



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

*October 9, 2008*

MR. CHRIS CHANEY  
WARRANTY AND CUSTOMER SUPPORT  
MATTHEWS SPECIALTY VEHICLES  
101 SOUTH SWING ROAD  
GREENSBORO NC 27409

NVS-215dgl  
08V-524

Subject: THRESHOLD WARNING SYSTEM/FMVSS 404/RICON

Dear MR. CHANEY:

This letter serves to acknowledge Matthews Specialty Vehicle's notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a safety noncompliance with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 404, "Platform Lift Installations in Motor Vehicles," in the products described below for which a safety recall campaign shall be conducted pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30119.

Please review the following information to ensure that it conforms to your records as this information is being made available to the public. If the information does not agree with your records, please contact us immediately to discuss your concerns.

**Makes/Models/Model Years:**

MATTHEWS/BLUEBIRD/1998  
MATTHEWS/CHEVROLET 5500/2007  
MATTHEWS/DODGE SPRINTER/2007  
MATTHEWS/FORD E450/2004  
MATTHEWS/FREIGHTLINER/2007  
MATTHEWS/INTERNATIONAL BUS/2006  
MATTHEWS/THOMAS BUILT BUS/2005-2006

**NHTSA Campaign Number:** 08V-524

**Mfg's Report Date:** October 2, 2008

**Components:** EQUIPMENT ADAPTIVE

**Potential Number of Units Affected:** 8

**Summary:**

MATTHEWS IS RECALLING 8 MY 1998 BLUEBIRD, MY 2004 FORD E450, MY 2005-2006 THOMAS BUILT BUS, MY 2006 INTERNATIONAL BUS, MY 2007 CHEVROLET 5500, FREIGHTLINER AND DODGE SPRINTER TRUCKS, TRANSIT BUSES, AND SPECIALTY VEHICLES EQUIPPED WITH RICON PLATFORM STYLE WHEELCHAIR LIFTS. THESE BUSES FAIL TO COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF FEDERAL MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY STANDARD NO. 404, "PLATFORM LIFT INSTALLATION IN MOTOR VEHICLES." THE THRESHOLD WARNING SYSTEM MAY NOT DETECT THE PRESENCE OF A WHEELCHAIR OR MOBILITY AID USER IN A CERTAIN SPOT WITHIN THE DEFINED THRESHOLD AREA.

**Consequence:**

THE USER OF THE LIFT COULD BE INJURED SHOULD THE LIFT MOVE UNINTENTIONALLY.

**Remedy:**

MATTHEWS IS WORKING WITH RICON TO CORRECT THE WHEELCHAIR LIFTS FREE OF CHARGE (PLEASE SEE 07E095). OWNERS MAY CONTACT RICON AT 1-818-267-3000 OR MATTEWS SPECIALTY AT 336-297-9600.

**Notes:**

CUSTOMERS MAY ALSO CONTACT THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION'S VEHICLE SAFETY HOTLINE AT 1-888-327-4236 (TTY 1-800-424-9153), OR GO TO [HTTP://WWW.SAFERCAR.GOV](http://www.safercar.gov).

This recall was the subject of an Equipment Query, EQ08-011, conducted by the Office of Defects Investigation.

Under 49 U.S.C. § 30112(a), it is illegal for anyone, including a manufacturer, distributor, dealer, or retailer to sell an item of equipment or vehicle that fails to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

Please provide the following additional information and be reminded of the following requirements:

Federal law requires that the vehicle manufacturer notify owners, dealers and distributors about the defect and offer a free remedy as well as other things. Also, manufacturers are required to submit a draft of their owner notification letter to the Recall Management Division at least 5 days prior to mailing it to owners, and to submit a representative copy of any communication about the recall that is sent to more than one owner, dealer or distributor within 5 days of mailing it. The owner notification must be mailed to current registered owners using State motor vehicle registration records, or, if State registration records fail to yield a usable address, to the most recent owner known to the manufacturer. The vehicle manufacturers must notify their dealers even though they may not be involved in this recall, since owners may contact them for information.

Copies of all notices, bulletins, dealer notifications, and other communications that relate to this recall, including a copy of the final owner notification letter and any subsequent owner follow-up notification letter(s), are required to be submitted to this office no later than 5 days after they are originally sent (if they are sent to more than one manufacturer, distributor, dealer, or purchaser/owner).

Matthews Specialty must file a sample of the envelope which you intend to use to mail the recall notice to owners. The words "SAFETY", "RECALL", "NOTICE" in any order must be printed on the envelope in larger font than the customers name and address.

As stated in your report, Ricon will be handling the remedy and quarterly reporting for this campaign. However, please be advised that 49 CFR 573.6 provides that the vehicle manufacturer is responsible for any safety related defect or any noncompliance in the vehicle or any item of original equipment. If Ricon's campaign is not satisfactory, you may be required to conduct a follow-up notification.

Your contacts for this recall will be Pat Wallace or Delia Lopez, who may be reached by phone at 202-366-5232 or 202-366-9525 or by email at [Patricia.wallace@dot.gov](mailto:Patricia.wallace@dot.gov), [Delia.lopez@dot.gov](mailto:Delia.lopez@dot.gov), or through the office email at [RMD.ODI@dot.gov](mailto:RMD.ODI@dot.gov). We look forward to working with you for successful completion of this recall campaign.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Person", written in a cursive style.

George H. Person  
Chief, Recall Management Division  
Office of Defects Investigation  
Enforcement