



BLUE BIRD

June 06, 2008

Mr. Ron Medford
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
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's email address rmd.odi@dot.gov on June 06, 2008.

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 R08ND Tie Rod
Assembly Replacement

**PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Reporting
Defect Report**

Report Date: June 06, 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:

Certain 2006 and 2007 model year Blue Bird Express "4500" model transit coaches manufactured from August 05, 2005, through May 25, 2007.

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

33

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

Unknown

5. The defect consists of:

The steel used in the manufacture of the tie rod assemblies did not meet design specifications. As a result, the left and/or right tie rod assembly may fracture at high mileage.

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

The Tier 2 supplier of the tie rod assemblies changed steel suppliers (MAC) and did not perform the required production validation tests. Tie rods produced with steel from the new source were incorporated into the independent front suspension assemblies that were eventually installed on the subject 4500 Express Coaches. Subsequent testing by the Tier 1 supplier of the independent front suspension determined that tie rod assemblies produced from the new steel did not complete the required 300,000 cycle axial loading durability test. The suspect tie rods experienced fractures of the tie rod tube, as well as, deformation and fracture at the tie rod ends. As a result, the tie rods produced with MAC steel did not meet the performance specifications.

The Tier 2 supplier has redesigned the left and right-hand tie rod assemblies. Subsequent testing by the Tier 1 supplier confirms that the redesigned tie rod assemblies produced with MAC steel meet the performance specifications.

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

Both left and right-hand tie rod assemblies will be replaced with redesigned tie rod assemblies.

8. Notification will be as follows:

Owner notification is scheduled to be mailed on June 27, 2008. Parts are anticipated to be available at time of notification.

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

R08ND

10. 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
Recall Administrator
Blue Bird Body Company
P.O. Box 937
Fort Valley GA 31030
(478) 822-2242

Signed: William P. Coleman
William P. Coleman, Corporate Recall Administrator