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DEFECTS INVESTIGATION
RECALL MGMT DIV.

PREVOST

August 29, 2008

VIA FAX (202)366-7882

Ms. Kathleen DeMeter
Chief, Office of Defects Investigation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NSA-10)
1200 New-Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington D.C., 20590

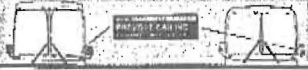
RE: Part 573 and Noncompliance Information Report
Prevost Safety recall SR08-12: Escape Hatch Fixation

08V-448
(3 pages)

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

Prevost has determined that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exits in the item of a the motor vehicles listed below, and is furnishing notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573, "Defect and Noncompliance Information Reports".

1. The name of the Manufacturer is Prevost
The item of equipment subjected to this recall is supplied by:
SMI
10200 Pineville Road
Pineville, NC 28134
Phone: 1 704 889 7518 x3005
Fax: 1 704 889 2760
Eric Swanger, Engineering Manager
2. The item of equipment that contains the defect is the escape hatch retaining bolts. Due to improper installation of the retaining bolts. The inclusive dates of manufacture of the potentially affected hatches are February 19, 2008 through August 11, 2008 involving **378** hatches. August 11, 2008 is the last date that Prevost tested the shoulder bolts up to 200 in-lb before the bolts were sent to the production floor. Unfortunately, the tested bolts did not remain with the hatch that they were originally assembled on at SMI. Since there was no maintained relationship of the tested bolts to their original hatches it is possible that overtorqued bolts from the period of February and March were put with hatches produced in May or June (which were torqued properly at SMI). Prevost has determined the range of vehicles that potentially has this escape hatch installed. The range is greater than the number of hatches because many hatches' serial numbers were removed at cleaning department at Prevost which has increased the range of affected vehicles. The range is as follow:

Model	VIN	
MTH XL2-45, MTH XL2 45E and X3-45 Model: 2008-2009	From 2PCG334928C729461 up to 2PCG334959C729584	
Model	VIN	
H3-41 & H3-45 coaches Model year: 2008-2009	From 2PCH334158C711213 up to 2PCH334919C711376	

- The total number of vehicles recalled potentially containing the defect or non-compliance is approximately 189. The approximate percentage of the production of all the recalled models between the inclusive dates of manufacture provided above is 100%.
- On March 30, Prevost production line noticed that retaining bolts of the escape hatches were breaking during Prevost's internal verification. On March 31, supplier was informed about the failures. Supplier made some investigations and provided to Prevost on April 10 with a list of escape hatches that need to be verified on the line. At the same time, the root cause was defined. According to the supplier, the retaining bolts were subjected to an excessive torque. On April 15, Prevost has then implemented retrofit R439 in order to fix all vehicles on the line. All escape hatches included in suppliers listing had their retaining bolts replaced and torque according to suppliers' specifications. Vehicle 8-1227 was part of the first list of vehicle to be retrofitted and all the bolts were replaced prior delivery. Prevost was notified on May 20, 2008 that one of its escape hatches fell down on the road. On June 20, more escape hatches bolts broke on the line during Prevost's internal verification. Supplier was advised again about those new events and came back with a bigger listing of potentially defective escape hatches (also new escape hatch models were added in the list). On June 27, Prevost has then decided to certify 100% of the bolts. This test was implemented at Prevost prior to supplier's concurrence. Supplier subsequently agreed, for a temporary time of period, with Prevost's test method that 200 in-lb's would provide a 2.6 times safety margin. The supplier was then advised of this new retrofit made at Prevost. On July 14, Prevost organized a meeting with SMI at Prevost. Prevost showed the bolt testing. Supplier then agreed to implement the 200 in-lb inspection testing at their location prior parts delivery to Prevost. On August 11, Prevost has found more broken bolts on production line. Supplier was advised and new bolts were shipped to Prevost. New bolts were grade 2 bolts and did not passed Prevost testing. Supplier shipped grade 8 bolts on August 27, 2008. Prevost again tested those bolts and they meet expectations. All escape hatches retaining bolts are replaced with the new grade 8 bolts.
- After the first breaking bolt event at Prevost, SMI informed us about the over-torquing problem. The root cause of the problem was that a temporary air ratchet, that had the incorrect torque rating, was briefly used during initial hatch assembly. This temporarily incorrect torque setting caused excessive torquing on Xenoy frame related hatches. As a permanent corrective action supplier bought a new back up air ratchet with a torque limiter,

added work instructions, and confirmed training on line personnel. SMI also confirmed that this solution was effective at the beginning of March at their facility. They have completed and added inspection with a torque tester to verify the effectiveness of this action. Supplier has found no issues with torque equipment in 30 days since this change was made. The approximate percentage of the total number of vehicles estimated to actually contain the defect or non-compliance is 2%. There have been no reports of any injuries related to this problem.

The grade 8 bolt provided to Prevost on August 27, 2008 is an interim solution until a long term shoulder bolt is available. The first bolt production should be available by the end of September, 2008. The new bolt will be produced in a grade 5 steel as opposed to the current 410 stainless steel. The design will also incorporate a relief groove between the threaded portion and the shoulder. This groove does not currently exist.

6. Prevost will ask their customers to perform the escape hatch safety recall (SR08-12). On the potentially affected vehicles, all escape hatch retaining bolts will be changed at no charge and torque according to suppliers' specifications.
7. The following is the agenda for the notification to the Prevost customers:
 - March 30, 2008: Prevost found escape hatches retaining bolt failures on the line
 - April 10, 2008: Supplier provided to Prevost a list of escape hatches with potential bolt defect
 - May 20, 2008: Prevost found more retaining bolts failure on production line
 - June 20, 2008: Supplier added more escape hatches in the list and also include new hatches design
 - June 27, 2008: Prevost then decide to test 100% of the bolts
 - July 14, 2008: Meeting at Prevost with Supplier and solution agreement
 - August 27, 2008: Final solution implemented at Prevost
 - August 29, 2008: Defect Notification report submitted to NHTSA
 - September 5, 2008: Safety Recall documents are prepared.
 - September 5, 2008: Replacement parts to be in stock in Prevost warehouses.
 - September 12, 2008: Safety Recall to be mailed to customers.

Please let us know the NHTSA notification campaign number assigned to this matter.

Best Regards.



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