MOTOR COACH INDUSTRIES

09V-350
(7 Pages)

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September 8, 2009

BY EMAIL AND
BY CERTIFIED MAIL

Associate Administrator for Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Attention: Recall Management Division (NVS – 215)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE.
Washington, DC 20590

Re: PART 573 NOTICE RE TAG AXLE TIE ROD CLAMPS

Dear Sir or Madam:

I have enclosed Motor Coach Industries, Inc.'s ("MCI") Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report, proposed customer notification letter, draft Service Bulletin 331B, and sample envelope and mailing label to be used with the customer notification letters.

Please confirm receipt of this notice, provide NHTSA's reference number, and advise if the proposed customer notification letter, draft Service Bulletin 331B, and sample envelope and mailing label are satisfactory.

Thanks for your assistance with this matter.

Sincerely,
MOTOR COACH INDUSTRIES, INC.

By: Timothy J. Nalepka
Senior Vice President &
General Counsel

Enclosures

1700 East Golf Road, Suite 300
Schaumburg, Illinois 60173
847 285 2000 Phone
866 624 2622 Toll Free
www.mcicoach.com

Safety Defect and Noncompliance Report Guide for Vehicles

PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report

On August 28, 2009, Motor Coach Industries, Inc. decided that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in 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 Reports.

Date this report was prepared: September 8, 2009

Furnish the manufacturer's identification code for this recall (if applicable):

MCI Service Bulletin 331B

1. Identify the full corporate name of the fabricating manufacturer of the vehicle being recalled. If the recalled vehicle is imported, provide the name and mailing address of the designated agent as prescribed by 49 U.S.C. §30164.

Motor Coach Industries, Inc.
1700 E. Golf Road
Suite 300
Schaumburg, IL 60173

Identify the corporate official, by name and title, whom the agency should contact with respect to this recall.

Virgil Hoogestraat, Vice President, Engineering

Telephone Number: (204) 287-4447 **Fax No.:** (204) 478-2867

Name and Title of Person who prepared this report.

Timothy J. Nalepka
Senior Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary

Signed:

I. Identify the Vehicle Models Involved in the Recall

2. Identify the Vehicles Involved in the Recall, ***for each make and model or applicable vehicle line (provide illustrations or photographs as necessary to describe the vehicle), provide*****:**

Make(s): MCI

Model Years and Models Involved: 2009 D4500, D4505

Production Dates: Beginning: February 2009 **Ending:** April 2009

VIN Range: Beginning: 58892 **Ending:** 59018

58892	58949-58950	58953-58979	58990	58992-59000
59002	59004-59011	59013	59015	59017-59018

Descriptive information which characterizes /distinguishes the recalled vehicles from those model vehicles not included in the recall:

The vehicles that are the subject of the recall are the coaches manufactured with the Meritor FH 946 tag axle, which increased the tag axle rating from 12,000 to 14,000 lbs. This change on the D4500/4505 coach also increased the GVWR from 48,000 to 50,000 lbs. in February 2009.

Identify the approximate percentage of the production of all the recalled models manufactured by your company between the inclusive dates of manufacture provided above, that the recalled model population represents. For example, if the recall involved Widgets equipped with certain items of equipment from January 1, 1996 through April 1, 1997, then what was the percentage of the recalled Widgets of all Widgets manufactured during that time period.

Approximately 40% of the D 4500/4505 model coaches manufactured during the above time period were manufactured with the higher-rated steerable tag axles which are the subject of this recall.

II. Identify the Recall Population

3. Furnish the total number of vehicles recalled potentially containing the defect or noncompliance.

MODELS	MODEL YEARS	NUMBER OF VEHICLES POTENTIALLY INVOLVED
D 4500	2009	22
D 4505	2009	31

Total Number Potentially Affected by the Recall: 53

4. Furnish the approximate percentage of the total number of vehicles estimated to actually contain the defect or noncompliance:

100% of all D 4500/4505 model coaches built with the Meritor FH 946 tag axle.

Identify and describe how the recall population was determined--in particular how the recalled models were selected and the basis for the beginning and final dates of manufacture of the recalled vehicles:

MCI determined the vehicle recall population by identifying all coaches that were manufactured with the Meritor FH 946 steerable tag axle prior to MCI implementing a production change of removing the paint between the tie rod clamps and the cylinder lock plate.

III. Describe the Defect or Noncompliance

5. Describe the defect or noncompliance. The description should address the nature and physical location of the defect or noncompliance. Illustrations should be provided as appropriate.

The steerable tag axle is a self-steering system that caster steers the tag axle while the coach is operating below approximately 20 MPH, which improves the vehicle's turning radius. There is a tag axle locking system located on the front of the tag axle assembly. When the coach speed exceeds approximately 20 MPH, the axle automatically locks the wheels in a straight-ahead position by an air-operated locking pin that locks the tag axle tie rod to the tag axle, thereby eliminating the self-steering system. The locking occurs when the locking pin descends into and engages the air cylinder lock plate, which in turn is clamped to the tag axle tie rod. The location of the cylinder lock plate on the tie rod is set so that when the tag axle is locked, the wheels are in a straight-ahead position. Due to insufficient clamping force of the cylinder lock plate, it may move from its normal set position, which in turn could result in the tag axle not automatically locking, or locking with the wheels not in a straight-ahead position. If the tag axle does not lock above 20 MPH, there is a loss of lateral force control of the tag axle that can affect the steering of the vehicle. Also, if the tag axle does not lock above 20 MPH, during a turn the rear of the vehicle will swing further out in the opposite direction of the turn than anticipated, and could result in the coach striking another vehicle in an adjacent lane of traffic or otherwise causing an accident. If the tag axle does lock but with the locking plate in an incorrect position due to its movement on the tie rod, the wheels would not be in a straight-ahead position and could result in potential tire failure or premature tire wear.

Describe the cause(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

The cause of the defect is insufficient clamping force, due to paint on the clamping surfaces, between the tie rod and the cylinder locking plate on the tie rod with the Meritor FH 946 14000 lb. rated tag axle. This allowed relative movement of the cylinder locking plate on the tie rod, which resulted in the tag steering system either not automatically locking above approximately 20 MPH, or locking with the tag wheels not in a straight-ahead position.

Describe the consequence(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

The tag axle not locking above 20 MPH will cause a loss of lateral force control of the tag axle, which can affect the tag axle steering control. In turns above 20 MPH, the rear of the vehicle will swing further out in the opposite direction of the turn, which can cause the vehicle to strike another vehicle in an adjacent lane of traffic or otherwise cause an accident. If the tag axle does lock but with the wheels not in a straight-ahead position, it could result in potential tire failure or premature tire wear.

Identify any warning which can (a) precede or (b) occur.

The dash "tag lock" telltale will be illuminated if the tag is not locked, which would alert the driver of a tag locking failure. There is no indication if the tag axle locks but with the wheels not in a straight-ahead position

If the defect or noncompliance is in a component or assembly purchased from a supplier, identify the supplier by corporate name and address.

Not Applicable

Identify the name and title of the chief executive officer or knowledgeable representative of the supplier:

Not Applicable

IV. Provide the Chronology in Determining the Defect/Noncompliance

If the recall is for a defect, complete item 6, otherwise item 7.

6. With respect to a defect, furnish a chronological summary (including dates) of all the principal events that were the basis for the determination of the defect. The summary should include, but not be limited to, the number of reports, accidents, injuries, fatalities, and warranty claims.

MCI received two reports of tag axle locks malfunctioning and causing actuation of the tag lock fault indicator in the driver's dash. The first tag axle lock malfunction occurred on April 11, 2009 on vehicle unit number 59005, and the second on April 12, 2009 on vehicle unit 59006. Both tag lock incidents occurred during delivery of the bus from the MCI production facility to the customer, and an MCI service center repaired the coaches prior to customer delivery. MCI's inspection of those coaches revealed that the cylinder lock plates on both vehicles had moved from their original set position, resulting in the tag lock failure. Other than these two reports, MCI has not received any warranty claims or reports of accidents, injuries, or fatalities with respect to the tag axle locking system on the affected vehicles.

7. With respect to a noncompliance, identify and provide the test results or other data (in chronological order and including dates) on which the noncompliance was determined.

Not Applicable

V. Identify the Remedy

8. Furnish a description of the manufacturer's remedy for the defect or noncompliance. Clearly describe the differences between the recall condition and the remedy.

MCI will provide replacement clamps that do not have paint on the clamping surfaces, and clean, repair, and adjust as necessary the tag axle tie rod and cylinder plate. The non-painted replacement clamps provided in the recall will have sufficient clamping force to prevent the cylinder plate from moving on the tie rod.

Clearly describe the distinguishing characteristics of the remedy component/assembly versus the recalled component/assembly.

Please see above.

Identify and describe how and when the recall condition was corrected in production. If the production remedy was identical to the recall remedy in the field, so state. If the product was discontinued, so state.

The production remedy of changing the clamp to have the paint removed on the surface contacting the tie rod is the same remedy as used in this recall. The change was implemented in April 2009

VI. Identify the Recall Schedule

9. Furnish a schedule or agenda (with specific dates) for notification to other manufacturers, dealers/retailers, and purchasers. Please identify any foreseeable problems with implementing the recall.

MCI anticipates sending notifications to customers within one week after receiving approval by NHTSA of MCI's draft customer notification.

VII. Furnish Recall Communications

10. Furnish a final copy of all notices, bulletins, and other communications that relate directly to the defect or noncompliance and which are sent to more than one manufacturer, distributor, or purchaser. This includes all communications (including both original and follow-up) concerning this recall from the time your company determines the defect or noncompliance condition on, not just the initial notification. ***A DRAFT copy of the notification documents should be submitted to this office by Fax (202-366-7882) for review prior to mailing.***

MCI has attached its proposed customer letter and bulletin.

<u>Note</u> that these documents are to be submitted separately from those provided in accordance with Part 573.8 requirements.