



51165 Greenfield Parkway \* Middlebury, Indiana 46540

Phone 574-825-1720 Fax 574-825-1750

November 17, 2010

Director, Office of Defects Investigation  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
400 Seventh St., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Part # 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report – All American Specialty Vehicles,  
LLC/ARBOC Mobility, LLC – Alternator Cable Routing

Dear Sirs;

All American Specialty Vehicles (AASV) and ARBOC Mobility have determined that a potential safety defect may exist on certain 2009 and 2010 MY Spirit of Mobility Transit Buses, models SOM 21, SOM 23 and SOM 26. These vehicles were manufactured at AASV's Middlebury, Indiana facility between January 1, 2009 and April 11, 2010. The affected vehicles were built with diesel engines and Penn Tex 200 amp alternators.

A total of 28 units that are potentially affected by this defect were shipped to U.S. customers.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF DEFECT**

On affected units, the positive cable from the rear of the alternator is routed over the transmission dipstick tube to the positive battery terminal. Due to engine roll, this cable can become pinched between the blower motor housing and the transmission dipstick tube. The pinching may cause the cables protective convolute and insulation to wear through to the wire. This cable is always "hot" (carrying electrical current). Should the exposed wire come in contact with the transmission dipstick tube, it could burn a hole through the outer surface of the dipstick tube. Should that occur there may be sufficient heat to ignite the transmission fluid within the tube which could result in a fire.

#### **DISCOVERY OF THE DEFECT**

This defect was discovered during the investigation of a unit that caught on fire at one of our customers.

#### **PRECLUSION OF POTENTIAL DEFECT**

The cable routing was changed on the production line as of April 11, 2010, to route the cable behind the blower motor assembly. When routed in this manner the potential for this failure does not exist.

For all affected units built prior to April 11, 2010, AASV will conduct a field service campaign to re-route the positive cable above the alternator and forward to the wiring harness bundle at the top of the engine compartment, thereby eliminating the potential defect.



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All purchasers and dealerships that received units with the potential defect will be advised by mail regarding this problem.

Also attached is a draft of our proposed owner notification letter. We can begin our mailing campaign within one week after your approval of this letter.

If you have any questions, or require further information, please advise.

Very Truly Yours,

Gary L. Duncan