

June 2, 2011

Mr. Daniel Smith
Associate Administrator for Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Defect Report Pursuant to 49 CFR Part 573

Dear Mr. Smith:

Kawasaki Motors Corp., U.S.A. (KMC) has determined that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in certain 2011 model year Kawasaki VN900D "Vulcan Classic LT" Motorcycles. The following information, constituting a Defect Report, provides the information immediately available. Additional information needed to fully comply with the reporting requirements of 49 CFR Part 573.5(c) will be submitted in a subsequent report.

- 1) The manufacturer's name: the vehicles in question were manufactured by Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd., of Akashi, Japan (KHI), and imported to the U.S. by KMC, which will be responsible for conduct of this recall campaign.
- 2) Identification of the affected vehicles potentially containing the defect: potentially affected vehicles are the 2011 model year Kawasaki VN900D (Vulcan Classic LT) motorcycles.
- 3) The total number of vehicles potentially containing the defect: an estimated 436 units are affected.
- 4) The percentage of vehicles or items of equipment estimated to actually contain the defect: for purposes of this recall, 100% of the vehicles will be eligible for inspection; an estimated 0.6% of the vehicles might evidence damage to the tire inner tube.
- 5) A description of the defect including both brief summary and a detailed description, with graphic aids as necessary, of the nature and physical location of the defect: Summary: the tire inner tube might experience a sudden loss of air pressure. Detailed: the tire inner tube might have been pinched during tire mounting. Damage to the inner tube could result in loss of air pressure. Loss of tire air pressure could result in degraded handling of the motorcycle, leading to the possibility of a crash.
- 6) A chronology of all principal events that were the basis for the determination that the defect related to motor vehicle safety, including a summary of all warranty claims, field or service reports, and other information with their dates of receipt:

March 4, 2011 - Japanese domestic Kawasaki distributor (KMJ) advises KHI that an EJ800 model experienced a spontaneous loss of air pressure while being used as a static display bike. The EJ800 model is equipped with wire spoke wheels and a tube/tire combination.

March 2011 - KMJ reports two additional cases of sudden loss of air pressure.

April 2011 - KHI investigates and identifies a possible range of production for the affected units of the EJ800 model (12-01-2010 to 02-01-2011).

April 27, 2011 - KHI directs other markets distributing the EJ800 model to suspend distribution pending inspection. The EJ800 model is not distributed in the U.S.

May 1-12, 2011 - KHI examines units held in European and Japanese distributor warehouses and identifies significant number of pinched inner tubes in the affected models. It is determined the trouble is due to operator error at the point of tire and tube installation. Additional models using wire spoke wheels and inner tubes are identified as potentially affected.

May 25, 2011 - KHI advises KMC of its intent to conduct recall action.

- 7) The manner in which and the date when the information about the defect was obtained: see above
- 8) A description of the manufacturer's program for remedying the defect. The estimated date on which it will begin sending notifications to owners that there is a safety-related defect: KMC plans to send a recall service bulletin to all Kawasaki authorized motorcycle dealers, beginning June 9 (electronic distribution) with hard copies of the bulletin mailed beginning June 10. Customer Recall letters will be mailed to all owners, as indicated by KMC warranty registration data, on June 13. Customers will be advised to return the motorcycle to their dealer. Dealers will be instructed to remove the wheels and dismount the tires in order to examine the inner tube for signs of damage. Damaged inner tubes will be replaced.
- 9) A representative copy of all notices, bulletins and other communications that relate directly to the defect or noncompliance. A copy of the customer letter will be provided to NHTSA for review and approval as soon as it is available. Final copies of the recall service bulletin and customer letter will be sent to NHTSA after they have been finalized.

Please contact the undersigned if there are any questions in this matter.

Sincerely,
KAWASAKI MOTORS CORP., U.S.A.

Roger F. Hagie
Director Public Affairs