



October 3, 2011

Han T. Dinh,  
Program Director – Vehicle Engineering,  
United States Postal Service  
8403 Lee Highway,  
Merrifield, VA  
22082-8101

**Reference: NHTSA Campaign No. 11E-034 - Long-Life Vehicle (LLV) Service Replacement Frames  
Supplied by AM General**

Dear Mr. Dinh:

This notice is being sent to you in accordance with requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

AM General has determined that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in certain LLV Service Replacement Frames P/N 8012400 supplied to the USPS between February 18, 2010 and January 31, 2011. There are 1513 frames in total. It is our understanding that the USPS has already installed these frames into select LLVs. This work was conducted at 115 Vehicle Maintenance Facilities (VMFs).

For this population of 1513 Service Replacement Frames, cracks may develop in the welds that attach the steering gear bracket to the frame. Cracking can progress to the point where the steering gear bracket separates from the frame but remains attached to the vehicle via the stabilizer bar bracket. If this condition was to occur, vehicle steering response would be diminished and this could lead to loss of vehicle control and a motor vehicle accident.

AM General is requesting that the USPS direct the applicable VMFs mentioned above to perform an inspection and repair of any LLVs that have had their original frame replaced with a P/N 8012400 frame supplied to that VMF between February 18, 2010 and January 31, 2011. The Recall Service Procedure will involve inspection of the bracket to determine the extent (if any) of cracking in certain zones. Where there is no cracking or cracking is of a limited extent, new bolt-on reinforcement brackets should be installed. Where the cracking has progressed beyond a specific point, or if the frames are part of our Low-Rate Initial Production Run (LRIP), new weld-on brackets will be required. Attached with this letter is a copy of the AM General Product Recall Bulletin #U11-09-01 "Safety Recall Campaign AMG R1101 LLV Service Replacement Frame Steering Gear Bracket Reinforcement" for use by your VMFs.

AM General has developed three Kits that are required for the execution of Product Recall Bulletin #U11-09-01 – "VMF Kit P/N 5746853", "Bolt-On Reinforcement Kit P/N 8012709" and "Weld-On Bracket Kit P/N 5746865"

- **VMF Kit:**
  - Each of the involved VMFs will receive one VMF Kit. This kit contains all of the necessary special tools required for vehicle inspection and, installation of either the Bolt-On or Weld-On Kit.



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- **Bolt-On Reinforcement Kit:**
  - One kit is required for each vehicle that is inspected and deemed to be suitable for the Bolt-On Reinforcement Procedure. AM General will provide to each involved VMF a quantity of Bolt-On Kits equal to the number of Replacement Frames under the control of that VMF. Along with all of the necessary hardware, each Kit contains a copy of the Product Recall Bulletin #U11-09-01.
  - Labor Time to inspect and install Bolt-on Reinforcement Kit is **1hr 30 minutes**
- **Weld-On Bracket Kit**
  - AM General has identified approximately 50 LRIP frames that will require new weld-on brackets. These frames were supplied to 11 VMF Locations. AM General will ship to each of the 11 involved VMFs the required quantity of Weld-On Bracket Kits. Instructions for the installation of this Kit are also covered in Product Recall Bulletin #U11-09-01. Additionally, AM General will provide on-site training-support to any VMF which requests training/instruction prior to installation of its first Weld-On Bracket Kit.
  - Labor Time to inspect and install the Weld-On Kit is **3 hrs**
- Each Kit is composed of a number of items and associated part numbers. AM General will maintain a stock of these parts at its SPLO Warehouse. VMFs can order additional Kits as required and/or individual components to supplement their initial supply.
- All Kits will be supplied to VMFs free-of-charge.

AM General is required to report to NHTSA every Calendar Quarter the number of vehicles that have received the Recall Service Procedure. This will occur for 6 consecutive Quarters following the initiation of the Recall at your VMFs. In order to assist us in developing and reporting the required data to NHTSA, we are requesting that you direct the VMFs to fill-in a "**Proof of Completion Certificate**" which is provided at the end of the Product Recall Bulletin #U11-09-01 (Page 18 of 18). For convenience, we are also providing an electronic version of the Certificate. This form can be either e-mailed or faxed to AM General using the Contact Information provided on the Certificate. Monthly, we will review with the Postal Service the Completion Rates as reported to us by your VMFs.

All parts and special service-tools required for both the VMF Kit and the Bolt-On Kit have been procured and are being prepared for shipment. The parts for the Weld-On Kit are still in the process of being procured and will not be available for several weeks. We intend to begin mailing the VMF Kits to the involved VMFs on or about October 4, 2011. Mailing of an initial supply of the Bolt-On Kit to each VMF will follow approximately 3 days later. We are expecting that Weld-On Kits will be available on or about October 19<sup>th</sup> 2011.

AM General is committed to ensuring that the required Recall Service Procedure is conducted as quickly as possible and with minimum disruption to USPS delivery operations. To help meet these commitments, we have established a Toll-free Phone Number that can be used by the individual VMFs to contact AM General for assistance or to order parts and/or Kits. This number is: **1-877-782-0466**.

If you have any questions on the foregoing, please contact me at 734-523-8134 or Mr. Phil Potter at 574-254-2215

Sincerely,

Jeffrey T. Dowell  
Director, Product Assurance



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