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By Recall Management Division at 7:09 am, Feb 05, 2013

February 4, 2013

Nancy L. Lewis
Associate Administrator for Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Subject: Blue Bird Safety Recall R13WA

Dear Ms. Lewis,

In accordance with the requirements of CFR 49 Part 573.6 Blue Bird Corporation is submitting the attached defect report.

This report was emailed to Kelly Schuler at NHTSA on February 4, 2013.

If you should have any questions concerning the information submitted, please contact me at 478-822-2077.

Respectfully,



Bruce Miles
Engineering Manager, Policy & Validation

Enclosure:

49 CFR Part 573.6 Defect Report for Recall R13WA Ultra LF Steering Gear Bracket



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By Recall Management Division at 3:37 pm, Feb 04, 2013

49 CFR, PART 573.6 Defect and Noncompliance Reporting

Defect Report

Report Date: February 4, 2013

1. Vehicles affected are manufactured by:

Blue Bird Corporation
P. O. Box 937
Fort Valley, GA 31030

2. The following vehicles are being recalled:

Certain 2003-2007 model year Blue Bird produced Ultra LF non-school transit buses manufactured from March 14, 2003 to March 12, 2007.

3. The total number of vehicles recalled potentially containing the defect are:

152

4. The approximate percentage of the total number of vehicles estimated to actually contain the defect is:

Unknown

5. The defect consists of:

Cracks may develop in the bracket that secures the power steering gear to the bus frame. Cracks may also develop in the bus frame around the bolts that attach the steering gear bracket to the bus frame. If left unchecked, the cracks may propagate resulting in a partial separation of the steering gear from the bus frame. Should this occur, a loss of steering control could occur resulting in a vehicle accident.

BLUE BIRD BODY COMPANY

P.O. Box 937 – 402 Blue Bird Blvd – Fort Valley, Georgia – (478) 825-2021



BLUE BIRD

6. The following data is the basis for the determination of the defect.

In November 2012 North American Bus Industries (NABI) notified Blue Bird of reports that some cracks were observed in both the chassis frame around some of the bolts that hold the steering gear bracket to the chassis frame and the steering gear bracket on some NABI produced Ultra LF transit buses. An investigation into the cause of the cracks was underway to determine if these cracks may propagate and result in an unsafe condition.

In December 2012, Blue Bird began initiating inspections of Ultra LF transit buses manufactured by Blue Bird.

In January 2013 Blue Bird was notified by NABI that they had determined that a field campaign should be initiated on NABI produced Ultra LF units to ensure the cracks will not propagate further and result in a separation of the steering gear bracket from the bus frame. There have been no reports of separation of the steering bracket from the bus frame.

As a result of inspections conducted on Blue Bird produced Ultra LF transit buses, Blue Bird decided on January 31, 2013 to issue a recall campaign to correct this defect.

7. The defect will be corrected in the following manner:

Owners will be provided reinforcement plates for both the frame and the steering gear mounting bracket along with installation instructions.

8. Notification will be as follows:

Dealer notification is scheduled to be mailed to affected dealers on March 8, 2013.
Owner notification is scheduled to be mailed to affected owners on March 8, 2013.

9. Blue Bird's identification number assigned to this recall is:

R13WA

10. Dealer and Owner Notification:

A draft copy of the notification documents will be submitted to NHTSA for review prior to mailing.



BLUE BIRD

Questions regarding this recall should be directed to:

Bruce Miles
Engineering Manager, Policy & Validation
Blue Bird Corporation
P.O. Box 937
Fort Valley GA 31030
(478) 822-2077

Signed: _____

Bruce Miles, Engineering Manager, Policy & Validation