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14V-510
(4 pages)

August 19, 2014

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

Dear Ms. Lewis,

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

This report was emailed to Kelly Schuler at NHTSA on August 19, 2014.

If you should have any questions concerning the information submitted, please contact me at 478-822-2242.

Respectfully,

Bill Coleman
Corporate Recall Administrator

Enclosure:

49 CFR Part 573.6 Defect Reports for Recall R14XN Ricon S Series Platform Pivot Plate Cracks



49 CFR, PART 573.6 Defect and Noncompliance Reporting

Defect Report-School Bus

Report Date: August 19, 2014

1. Vehicles affected are manufactured by:

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

2. The defective component was manufactured by:

Ricon Corporation
A Wabtec Subsidiary
1135 Aviation Place
San Fernando, CA 91340
Phone: 818.267.3000
Stanton D. Saucier, PE
Vice President - Marketing and Product Planning

3. The following vehicles are being recalled:

Certain Blue Bird school bus models identified below equipped with a Ricon S Series wheelchair lift.

2007 through 2015 model year All American model school bus
2007 through 2011 model year Micro Bird model school bus
2007 through 2015 model year Vison model school bus
2007 through 2008 model year conventional model school bus

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

5,114 school bus models

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

Unknown

BLUE BIRD BODY COMPANY

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

6. The defect consists of:

Under certain conditions present in some applications, the platforms included on the subject S-Series model wheelchair lifts can exhibit cracking of the platform pivot plate while in the stowed position which, if left unchecked, can propagate to the point where separation of the rear portion of the pivot plate occurs rendering the lift potentially inoperable and possibly unsafe for the operator.

Ricon advises analysis of failed components indicates the aforementioned cracks are the result of high load, low cycle fatigue occurring in the stowed position. Ricon believes that the excitation frequency present in certain vehicles combined with a variety of other factors including but not necessarily limited to a drifting hydraulic system, a poorly adjusted or non-functional stow lock, bent vertical arms and/or a low hydraulic fluid level precipitate the conditions under which the lift pivot plates may crack.

In the event the aforementioned crack occurs on both sides of the platform and is allowed to propagate to the point of material separation on both sides it is possible for the lift platform to lean against the vehicle lift door(s) and fall out of the vehicle when the door(s) is(are) opened putting the lift operator at risk.

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

On August 11, 2014 Blue received notification from Ricon Corp of a potential defect that may be present in their S Series wheelchair lifts installed in certain Blue Bird buses.

On August 13, 2014 Blue Bird decided to conduct a recall campaign to correct this defect on affected model school buses.

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

Blue Bird will advise owners to contact their nearest Ricon Corp dealer or Ricon repair center to have this recall performed. Ricon will provide a field modification instruction and all material required to mitigate this recall at no charge.

9. Notification will be as follows:

Dealer notification is scheduled to be mailed on or about September 15, 2014.
Owner notification is scheduled to be mailed on or about September 15, 2014.
Parts are anticipated to be available at time of notification.

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

R14XN

11. Dealer and Owner Notification:

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

Questions regarding this recall should be directed to:

William P. Coleman
Corporate Recall Administrator
Blue Bird Body Company
P.O. Box 937
Fort Valley GA 31030
(478) 822-2242

Signed: _____



William P. Coleman, Corporate Recall Administrator