

November 2022  
FL953A  
NHTSA #22V-688 (School Bus)  
Transport Canada #2022-516 (School Bus)

## Subject: Thomas Built Buses Saf-T-Liner HDX Exterior Side Joint

**Models Affected: Specific model years 2020-2023 Thomas Built Buses Saf-T-Liner HDX school buses manufactured March 25, 2019, through July, 11, 2022.**

### General Information

Daimler Truck North America LLC (DTNA), on behalf of its wholly owned subsidiary, Thomas Built Buses, has decided that a defect that relates to motor vehicle safety exists on the vehicles mentioned above.

The rear exterior side sheet joints on certain Thomas Built Buses Saf-T-Liner HDX school buses built with 20-gauge side sheet panels and certain fastener configurations.

Additional mechanical fasteners will be added to the joints on affected vehicles. Repairs will be performed by Daimler Truck North America authorized service facilities.

There are approximately 1,289 vehicles involved in this campaign.

#### Additional Repairs

Dealers must complete all outstanding Recall and Field Service campaigns prior to the sale or delivery of a vehicle. A Dealer will be liable for any progressive damage that results from its failure to complete campaigns before sale or delivery of a vehicle.

Owners may be liable for any progressive damage that results from failure to complete campaigns within a reasonable time after receiving notification.

### Work Instructions

Please refer to the attached work instructions.

### Replacement Parts

Replacement parts are now available and can be obtained by ordering the kit and/or part number(s) listed below from your facing Parts Distribution Center.

If our records show your dealership has ordered any vehicle(s) involved in campaign number FL953, a list of the customers and vehicle identification numbers will be available on DTNA Portal. Please refer to this list when ordering parts for this recall.

**Table 1** - Replacement Parts for FL953

Campaign Number	Part Description	Part Number	Qty.
FL953A	TAPPING SCREW	TBB 69003249	22 ea
	BLANK COMPLETION STICKER	WAR260	1 ea

**Table 1**

### Removed Parts

U.S. and Canadian Dealers, please follow Warranty Failed Parts Tracking shipping instructions for the disposition of all removed parts. Export distributors, please destroy removed parts unless otherwise advised.

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## Labor Allowance

Table 2 - Labor Allowance

Campaign Number	Procedure	Time Allowed (hours)	SRT Code	Corrective Action
FL953A	Install fasteners to rear upper and middle side sheet joints	0.5	996-R160A	12-Repair Recall/Campaign

Table 2

## Claims for Credit

You will be reimbursed for your parts, labor, and handling (landed cost for Export Distributors) by submitting your claim through the Warranty system within 30 days of completing this campaign. Please reference the following information in OWL:

- Claim type is **Recall Campaign**.
- In the Campaign field, enter the campaign number and appropriate condition code (**FL953-A**).
- In the Primary Failed Part Number field, enter **25-FL953-000**.
- In the Parts field, enter the appropriate part number as shown in the Replacement Parts Table.
- In the Labor field, first enter the appropriate SRT from the Labor Allowance Table.
- The VMRS Component Code is **F99-999-005** and the Cause Code is **A1 - Campaign**.
- **U.S. and Canada -- Reimbursement for Prior Repairs.** When a customer asks about reimbursement, please do the following:
  - Accept the documentation of the previous repair.
  - Make a brief check of the customer's paperwork to see if the repair may be eligible for reimbursement. (See the "Copy of Owner Letter" section of this bulletin for reimbursement guidelines.)
  - Submit an OWL Recall Pre-Approval Request for a decision.
  - Include the approved amount on your claim in the Other Charges section.
  - Attach the documentation to the pre-approval request.
  - If approved, submit a based on claim for the pre-approval.
  - Reimburse the customer the appropriate amount.

**IMPORTANT:** OWL must be viewed prior to performing the recall to ensure the vehicle is involved and the campaign has not been previously completed. Also, check for a completion sticker prior to beginning work.

U.S. and Canadian dealers, contact the Warranty Campaigns Department via Web inquiry at [DTNACconnect.com/WSC](http://DTNACconnect.com/WSC), if you have any questions or need additional information. Export distributors, submit a Web inquiry or contact your International Service Manager.

U.S. and Canadian Dealers: To return excess kit inventory related to this campaign, U.S. dealers must submit a Parts Authorization Return (PAR) to the Memphis PDC. Canadian dealers must submit a PAR to their facing PDC. All kits must be in resalable condition. PAR requests must include the original purchase invoice number. Export Distributors: Excess inventory is not returnable.

The letter notifying U.S. and Canadian vehicle owners is included for your reference.

Please note that the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act, as amended (Title 49, United States Code, Chapter 301), requires the owner's vehicle(s) be corrected within a reasonable time after parts are available to you. The Act states that failure to repair a vehicle within 60 days after tender for repair shall be prima facie evidence of an unreasonable time. However, circumstances of a particular situation may reduce the 60 day period. Failure to repair a vehicle within a reasonable time can result in either the obligation to (a) replace the

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vehicle with an identical or reasonably equivalent vehicle, without charge, or (b) refund the purchase price in full, less a reasonable allowance for depreciation. The Act further prohibits dealers from selling a vehicle unless all outstanding recalls are performed. Any lessor is required to send a copy of the recall notification to the lessee within 10 days. Any subsequent stage manufacturer is required to forward this notice to its distributors and retail outlets within five working days.

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## Copy of Notice to Owners

### Subject: Thomas Built Buses Saf-T-Liner HDX Exterior Side Joint

**For the Notice to U.S. Customers:** This notice is sent to you in accordance with the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act. **For the Notice to Canadian Customers:** This notice is sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the Motor Vehicle Safety Act. This is to inform you that your vehicle may contain a defect that could affect the safety of a person.

Daimler Truck North America LLC (DTNA), on behalf of its wholly owned subsidiary, Thomas Built Buses, has decided that certain model years 2020-2023 Thomas Built Buses Saf-T-Liner HDX school buses manufactured March 25, 2019, through July, 11, 2022.

The rear exterior side sheet joints on certain Thomas Built Buses Saf-T-Liner HDX school buses built with 20-gauge side sheet panels and certain fastener configurations.

Additional mechanical fasteners will be added to the joints on affected vehicles. Repairs will be performed by Daimler Truck North America authorized service facilities.

Please contact an authorized Daimler Truck North America dealer to arrange to have the Recall performed and to ensure that parts are available at the dealership. The Recall will take approximately a half hour and will be performed at no charge to you. To locate an authorized dealer, search online at <https://northamerica.daimlertruck.com/contact-us/>. Scroll down to "Locate a Dealer," and select the appropriate brand. You may also confirm your vehicle's involvement in this recall at this URL: <https://dtna-dlrinfo.prd.freightliner.com:48518/VinLookup/vin-module/getVinLookupPage>.

You may be liable for any progressive damage that results from your failure to complete the Recall within a reasonable time after receiving notification.

If you do not own the vehicle that corresponds to the identification number(s) which appears on the Recall Notification, please return the notification to the Warranty Campaigns Department in the postage-paid envelope with any information you can furnish that will assist us in locating the present owner. If you have leased this vehicle, Federal law requires that you forward this notice to the lessee within 10 days. If you are a subsequent stage manufacturer, Federal law requires that you forward this notice to your distributors and retail outlets within five working days. If you have paid to have this recall condition corrected prior to this notice, you may be eligible to receive reimbursement. Please see the reverse side of this notice for details.

If you have questions about this Recall, please contact the Warranty Campaigns Department at (800) 547-0712, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Pacific Time, Monday through Friday, e-mail address [dtna.warranty.campaigns@daimlertruck.com](mailto:dtna.warranty.campaigns@daimlertruck.com). **For the Notice to U.S. Customers:** If you are not able to have the defect remedied without charge and within a reasonable time, you may wish to submit a complaint to the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590; or call the Vehicle Safety Hotline at (888) 327-4236 (TTY: 800-424-9153); or to <http://www.nhtsa.gov>. **For the Notice to Canadian Customers:** If you wish to submit a complaint about this recall, you can contact Transport Canada road safety, 80 rue Noel, Gatineau, Quebec J8Z 0A1 or call (800) 333-0510.

We regret any inconvenience this action may cause but feel certain you understand our interest in motor vehicle safety.

WARRANTY CAMPAIGNS DEPARTMENT

Enclosure

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## **Reimbursement to Customers for Repairs Performed Prior to Recall**

If you have already **paid** to have this recall condition corrected you may be eligible to receive reimbursement.

Requests for reimbursement may include parts and labor. Reimbursement may be limited to the amount the repair would have cost if completed by an authorized Daimler Truck North America LLC dealer. The following documentation must be presented to your dealer for consideration for reimbursement.

Please provide original or clear copies of all receipts, invoices, and repair orders that show:

- The name and address of the person who paid for the repair
- The Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) of the vehicle that was repaired
- What problem occurred, what repair was done, when the repair was done
- Who repaired the vehicle
- The total cost of the repair expense that is being claimed
- Proof of payment for the repair (such as the front and back of a cancelled check or a credit card receipt)

Reimbursement will be made by check from your Daimler Truck North America LLC dealer.

Please speak with your Daimler Truck North America LLC authorized dealer concerning this matter.

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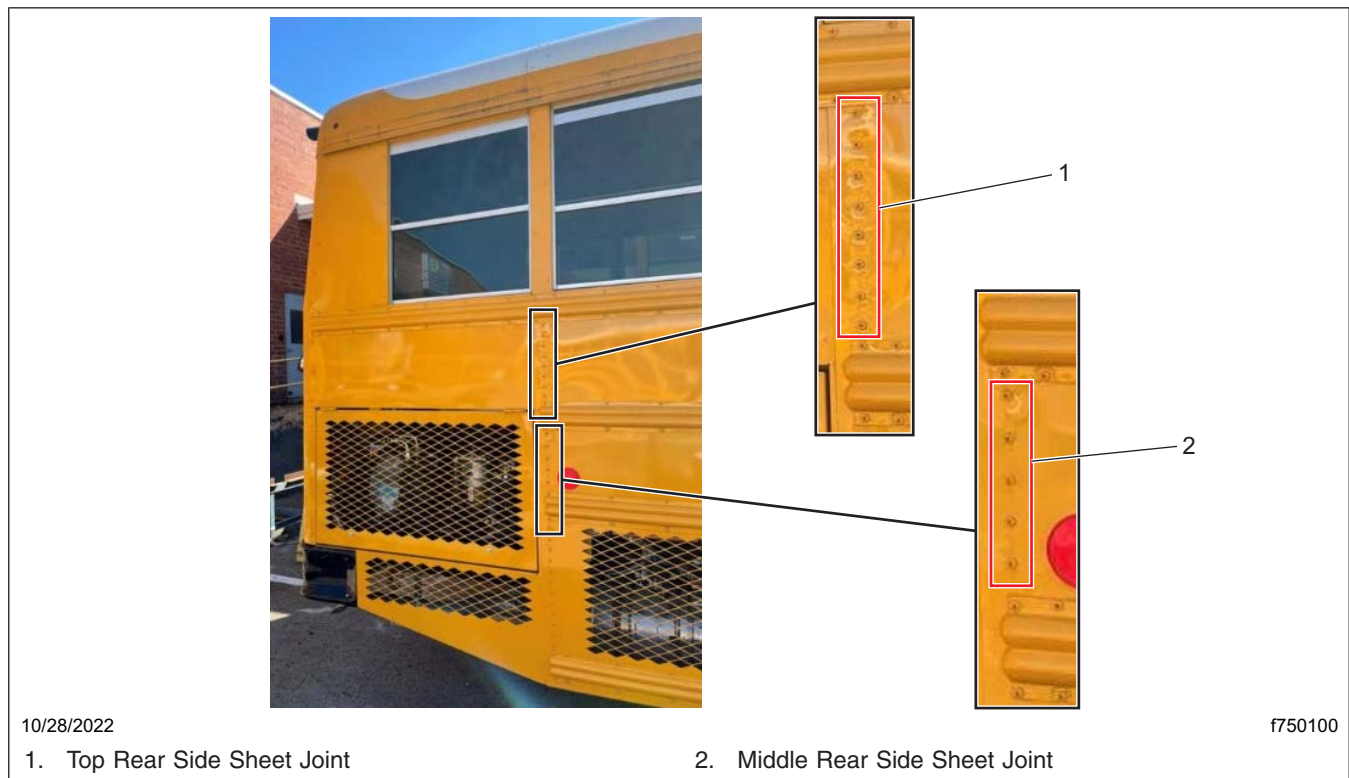
## Work Instructions

### Subject: Thomas Built Buses Saf-T-Liner HDX Exterior Side Joint

**Models Affected:** Specific model years 2020-2023 Thomas Built Buses Saf-T-Liner HDX school buses manufactured March 25, 2019, through July, 11, 2022.

### Exterior Side Sheet Joint Reinforcement

1. Park the vehicle on a level surface, shut down the engine, and set the parking brake. Chock the tires.  
NOTE: The main power disconnect switch (MPDS) is located in the battery box compartment.
2. Turn the MPDS to the OFF position.
3. Disconnect the negative battery cables at the batteries.
4. Locate the rear upper exterior side sheet joints. See **Fig. 1**.

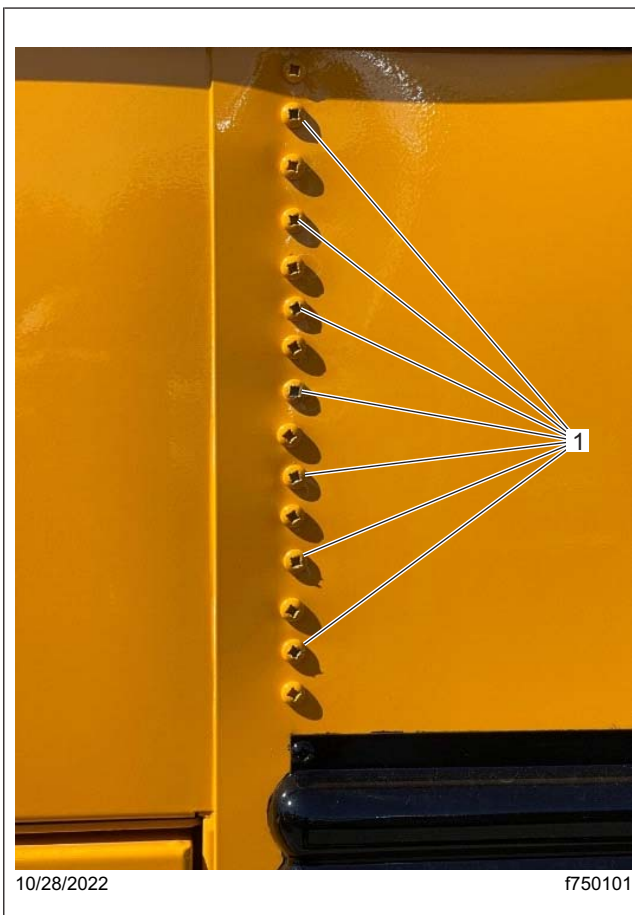


**Fig. 1, Rear Exterior Side Sheet Joints**

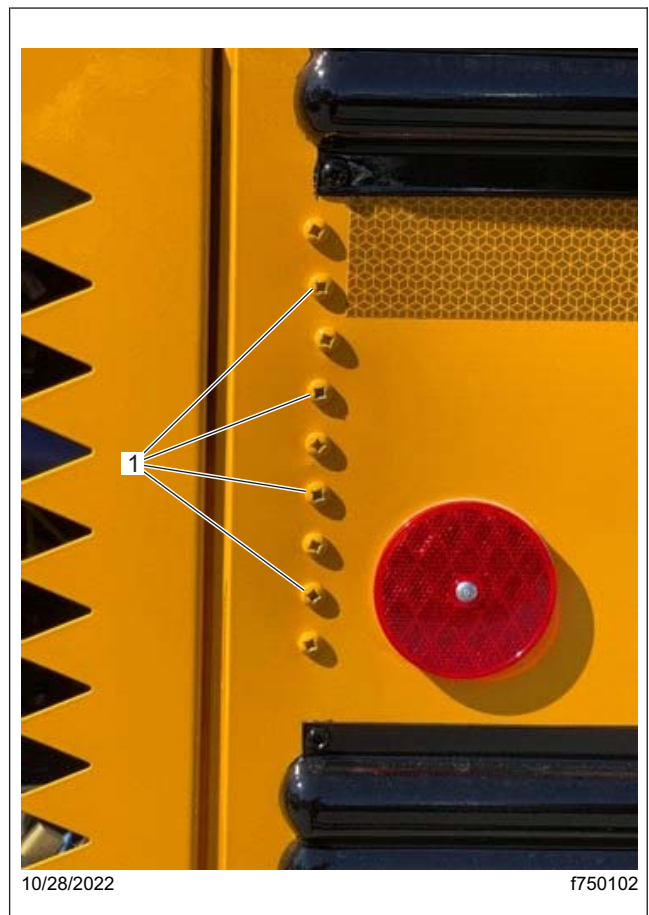
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**IMPORTANT:** Seven screws are to be installed on the rear top side sheet joint. **Figure 2** shows the locations of the additional screws.

5. Starting with the top joint, place a straight edge vertically along the centerline of the existing screws, and mark the center point between each screw. Make sure that each mark is in the exact center, and vertically in alignment with the existing screws.
6. Use a number-19 drill bit to drill seven holes in the marked locations.
7. Paint the screws (69003249) with the same colour (school bus yellow, typical) as that of the vehicle body.
8. Install the seven screws, shown in **Fig. 2**. Tighten the screws so they are fully seated.
9. Repeat the steps 5 through 8 to install **four** screws on the middle rear side sheet joint, as shown in **Fig. 3**.



**Fig. 2, Top Rear Side Sheet Joint, Additional Screws**



**Fig. 3, Middle Rear Side Sheet Joint, Additional Screws**

10. Repeat the steps 5 through 9 to install the screws on the other side of the vehicle.
11. Connect the negative battery cables to the battery.
12. Turn the MPDS to the ON position.