

December 2023
FL973 A-D
NHTSA #23V-333
Transport Canada #2023-276

Subject: TBB C2 Interior Side Sheet Joint

**Models Affected: Specific model years 2021-2024 Thomas Built
Buses Saf-T-Liner C2 school buses manufactured
January 24, 2020,through April 18, 2023.**

General Information

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

On the affected vehicles, the rear interior joint formed by the D-panel overlapping the side-sheet at the last rafter may have been manufactured incorrectly, resulting in insufficient joint strength, increasing the risk of injury in a crash.

A Daimler Truck North America authorized service facility will be adding additional mechanical fasteners to the joints on affected vehicles in order to bring the vehicles into compliance.

There are approximately 25,000 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 (PDC).

If our records show your dealership has ordered any vehicle(s) involved in campaign number FL973, a list of the customers and vehicle identification numbers will be available on the DTNA Portal via OWL. Please refer to this list when ordering parts for this recall.

Table 1 - Replacement Parts for FL973

| Campaign Number | Kit Number | Kit Description | Part Number | Qty. per Kit |
|-----------------|------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| FL973A, B | TBB 245015 | SERVICE KIT SCREW TAPPING NO 10X5/8 | TBB 69003099 | 48 ea |
| FL973C, D | TBB 245014 | SERVICE KIT SCREW TAPPING NO 10X5/8 | TBB 69003099 | 24 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 |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|------------|---------------------------|
| FL973A, B | Side-sheet joint repair two sides | 0.6 | 996-R2120B | 12-Repair Recall/Campaign |
| FL973C, D | Side-sheet joint repair one side | 0.3 | 996-R2120A | 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 (e.g. **FL973-A, FL973-B, etc.**).
- In the Primary Failed Part Number field, enter **25-FL973-000**.
- In the Parts field, enter the appropriate kit or part number(s) as shown in the Replacement Parts 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.

U.S. and Canadian dealers, if you need additional information, contact the Warranty Campaigns Department using the WSC (Warranty Support Center) app on the DTNA Portal. Export distributors, submit a WSC ticket 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: TBB C2 Interior Side Sheet 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 be non-compliant with the requirements of the Motor Vehicle Safety Regulations and that the non-compliance could affect the safety of a person.

Daimler Truck North America LLC (DTNA), on behalf of its wholly owned subsidiary, Thomas Built Buses (TBB), has decided that certain model years 2021-2024 Thomas Built Buses Saf-T-Liner C2 school buses manufactured January 24, 2020, through April 18, 2023, fail to conform to the **For the Notice to U.S. Customers:** Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 221, **For the Notice to Canadian Customers:** Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 221, "School bus body joint strength."

On the affected vehicles, the rear interior joint formed by the D-panel overlapping the side-sheet at the last rafter may have been manufactured incorrectly, resulting in insufficient joint strength, increasing the risk of injury in a crash.

A Daimler Truck North America authorized service facility will be adding additional mechanical fasteners to the joints on affected vehicles in order to bring the vehicles into compliance. The Recall will take approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour and will be **performed free of charge**.

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. 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 the following URL: <https://dtna-dlinfo.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. **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 go 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

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Repair of Interior Side Joint

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 from the batteries.

NOTE: One kit contains enough fasteners to complete the repair of the vehicle; use the vehicle identification number (VIN) to verify which kit is needed.

4. Remove the bottom seat cushion to gain access to the entire interior joint. **Figure 1** shows the left-hand and right-hand sections of the interior side joint.

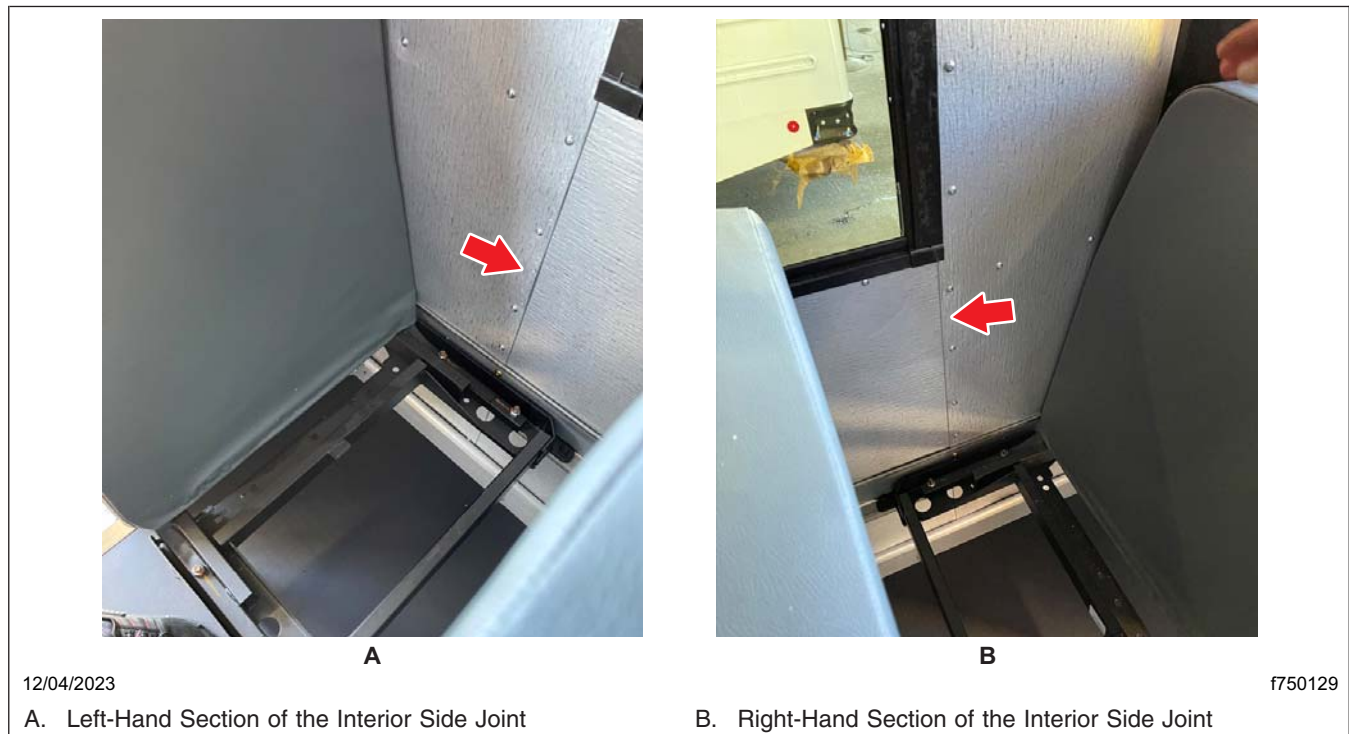


Fig. 1, Left-Hand and Right-Hand Sections of the Interior Side Joint

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NOTE: Depending on the vehicle and the side door configurations, on some vehicles (groups C and D), the repair will need to be performed on only one joint.

5. To identify the correct installation location for the new fasteners, locate the rear interior joint formed when the D-panel overlaps with the side-sheet at the last rafter as shown in **Fig. 2**, and mark the fastener locations as follows.

5.1 For the first new fastener location, locate the original factory fastener in the joint, and measure 1-1/8 inch upward, as shown in **Fig. 3**.

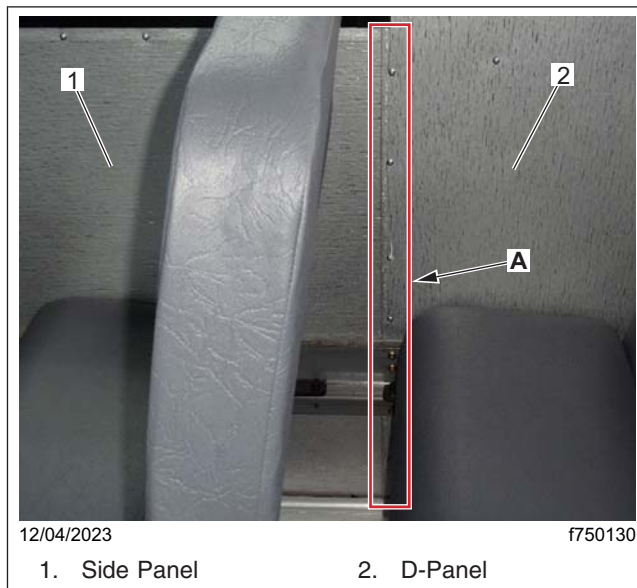


Fig. 2, Location of the Lap Joint

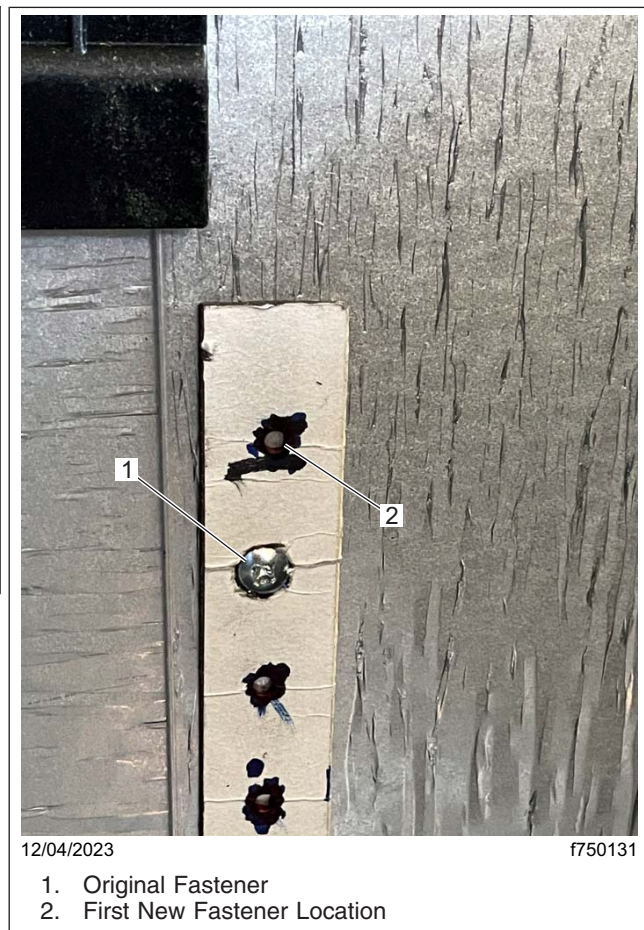


Fig. 3, Overlapped Joint Factory Original Fastener

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5.2 For the second fastener location, measure 1-3/16 inch downward from the original fastener. See [Fig. 4](#).

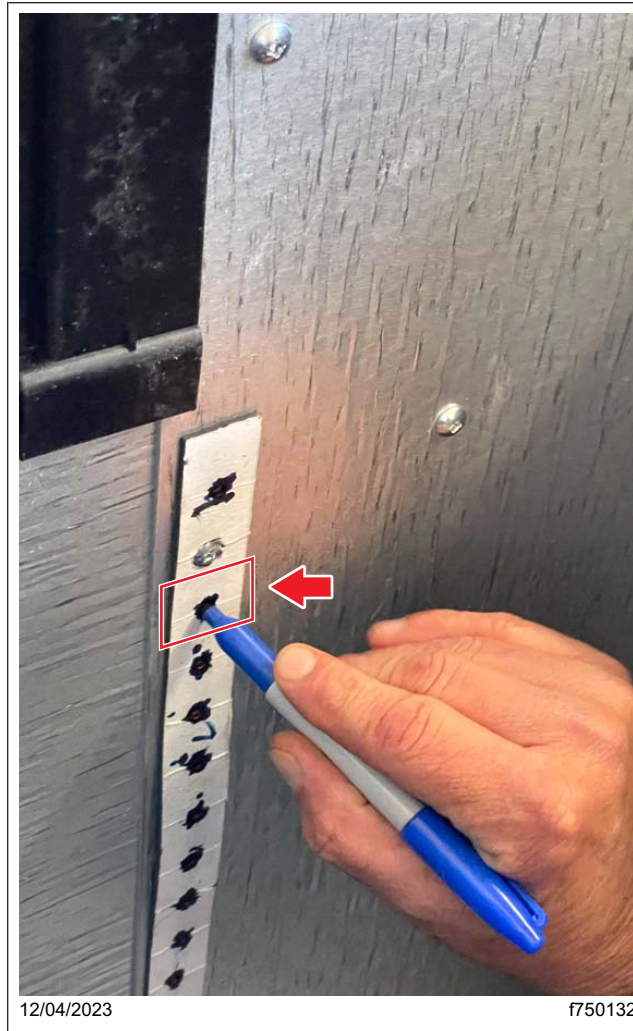


Fig. 4, Location of the Second Fastener

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NOTE: To easily identify the location of the new fasteners, a template made from Magnet-Mount®, 1/16-inch thick, general adhesive-backed magnet may be created and used with the measurements.

- 5.3 For the third and subsequent fasteners, continue to measure 1 inch downward from the second fastener for a total of 13 fasteners as shown in **Fig. 5**.

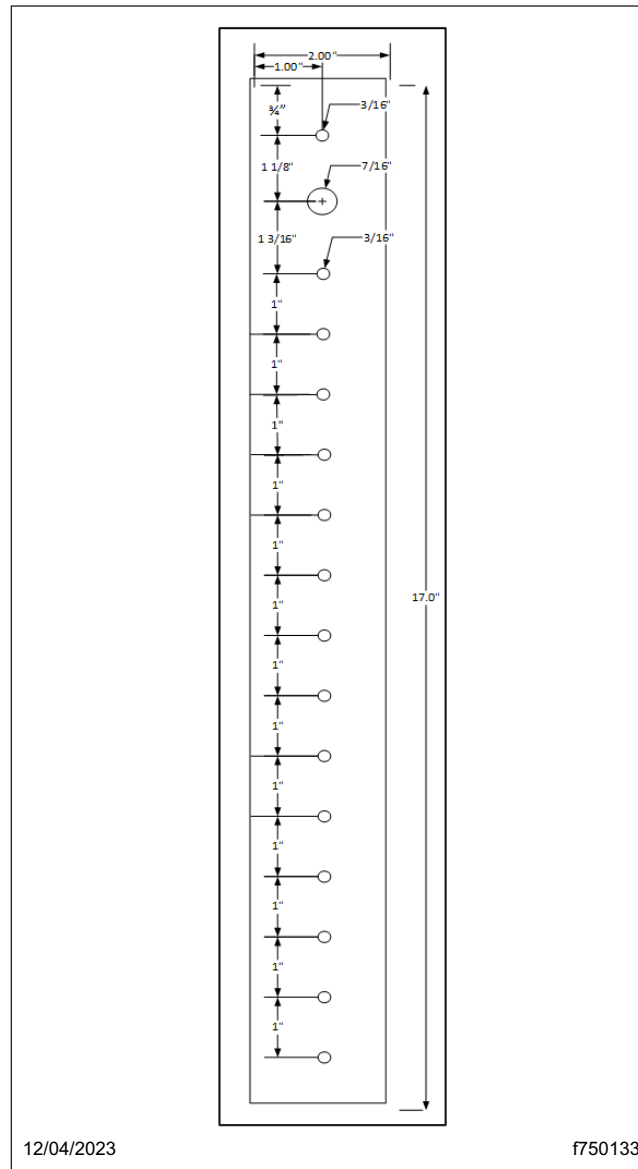


Fig. 5, Fastener Template

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6. Use a 1/8-inch (#19) drill bit to pre-drill a hole at each location identified in the previous step.
7. Install the fastener from kit (TBB 69003099) in each pre-drilled hole.
8. Remove any metal chips, and clean the surface with a clean cloth.
9. Install the bottom seat cushion.
10. Connect the negative battery cables to the battery.
11. Turn the MPDS to the ON position.