

DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT

January 23, 2013

1. **Manufacturer's name/address:** Vision Wheel Inc., 3512 6th Avenue SE, Decatur, AL 35601
2. **Equipment involved in this defect notification:** Aftermarket wheels, model "Prado," Style Numbers 901 (18" & 20" Sizes), 902 (20" & 22" Sizes), 903 (18" & 20" Sizes).
3. **Total number of vehicles or items of equipment:** Approximately 2,155 items / wheels.
4. **Approximate percentage of vehicles or equipment estimated to actually contain the defect:** The percentage is unknown at this time, but assumed to be 100% based on laboratory testing.
5. **Description of the defect:** After diligent evaluation and laboratory testing, it was determined that the final condition of the cast aluminum material of the Prado wheel line is suspect, specifically in the area of the elongation values. Inadequate elongation values of the base material in the delivered wheels can serve to undermine the structure and durability of an otherwise well engineered wheel, causing unpredictable and premature failures during normal service exposure. The failure would normally be in the form of a fracture, which could cause the wheel to suddenly lose air pressure, creating potential hazard for the vehicle and its occupants. Although the actual risk of this occurrence is hard to predict and depends on a variety of circumstances, if it occurred, it could lead to a loss of control and potential vehicle crash. Vision Wheels has received no reports of injuries associated with this issue.
6. **Chronological summary of events leading to this determination:** In October, Vision Wheel received a report of two Prado 901 wheel failures on a single vehicle following pothole impacts, both failures in one occurrence. Both wheels fractured around the circumference of the wheel, an unusual type failure. Vision Wheel obtained the two failed wheels from the field and conducted an in-house evaluation, which indicated that the aluminum material condition was suspect. Vision Wheel sectioned one of the failed wheels, sending one section to the original wheel manufacturer and another section to an independent laboratory, requesting metallurgical evaluation from each. With the results from these two sources reporting differing opinions of the material condition, Vision Wheel then arranged for independent laboratory metallurgical testing. Eight (8) randomly selected new wheels from inventory representing all three Prado style numbers were sent to the selected laboratory. In late December, Vision Wheel obtained the test lab reports which confirmed that all of the tested wheels demonstrated inadequate elongation values, specifically in the area of the wheels where the earlier failures occurred. With all eight (8) of these metallurgical tests indicating deficiency of elongation value in the same specific wheel area, Vision Wheel determined that it is appropriate to notify NHTSA and its customers of this potential defect, and to conduct a safety recall to replace the affected wheels.
7. **Description of proposed remedy (including schedule for dealer and customer notification):** Vision Wheel has stopped distribution of the subject wheels, and is working with its distributors to quarantine and recover all inventory. Vision Wheel will also work with its distributors to notify purchasers of these Prado aftermarket wheels. The purchasers will be offered replacement wheels of comparable value at no charge (including shipping and labor) to the consumer. Vision Wheel is prepared to begin customer notification immediately upon receipt of NHTSA's approval of the draft customer letter, which will be provided shortly for NHTSA's review.

- 8. Program for remedy campaign (including program for reimbursing any consumer who obtained the remedy at his/her own expense within one year prior to this 573 report):**
As these wheels are relatively new and still covered under warranty, this item does not apply.