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Compliance Manager

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OFFICE OF DEFECTS  
INVESTIGATION

February 9, 2009

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

Subject: Vehicle Defect Initial Information Report – Navistar 09501

Dear Associate Administrator:

Pursuant to Part 573.6 (c) (1), this Vehicle Defect Initial Information Report is submitted to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration by Navistar, Inc on behalf of IC Bus, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary.

*(1) IDENTIFICATION OF VEHICLES [Part 573.6(c)(2)]*

- Vehicle Models Involved:
  - Certain MY 2001 thru MY 2009 IC Bus BE, CE, and FE model commercial and school buses built with a stepwell heater or rear wall mounted heater.
- Vehicle Manufacturing Dates:
  - 2000-02-02 thru 2008-06-02
- Other Identification Necessary to Describe Vehicles:
  - Buses equipped with an entrance door stepwell heater feature code 0048PMS or 0548001 and/or a rear wall mounted heater feature code 0048TAR or 0048PSX.

*(2) COMPONENT MANUFACTURER [Part 573.6(c)(2)(iv)]*

- This report relates only to a component supplied by Fasco (Von Weise) to Bergstrom and installed in the bus models listed above.
- Contact information is:

Dan Giovannetti  
Vice President of Quality  
Bergstrom  
2390 Blackhawk Road  
Rockford, IL 61125-1007  
815-874-7821

*(3) VEHICLE POPULATION INVOLVED [Part 573.6 (c)(3)]*

Model	Number of Suspect Vehicles		
	United States	Canada	Export
BE School Bus	1,335	171	0
BE Commercial Bus	42	4	0
CE School Bus	59,336	4,282	1
CE Commercial Bus	270	63	0
FE School Bus	329	0	0
FE Commercial Bus	4	0	0
Total Vehicles	61,316	4,520	1

*(4) PERCENTAGE OF VEHICLES ESTIMATED TO CONTAIN THE DEFECT [Part 573.6 (c)(4)]*

- It is estimated that all (100%) of the vehicles in suspect population could have the defect.

*(5) DESCRIPTION OF DEFECT [Part 573.6 (c)(5)]*

- The heater blower motor located in the entrance door stepwell heater units and certain rear wall mounted heater units may fail in low speed operation causing elevated temperatures that can result in ignition of any nearby combustible materials resulting in possible property damage, personal injury, or death.

*(6) CHRONOLOGY OF PRINCIPAL EVENTS WHICH LED TO DETERMINATION OF A SAFETY DEFECT or TEST RESULTS THAT LED TO DETERMINATION OF NONCOMPLIANCE [Part 573.6 (c)(6)/(7)]*

- 2007-02-26 Report of first bus fire originating in the stepwell heater area; Elgin, IL; no injuries reported; the cause of fire undetermined.
- 2007-05 Report of second bus fire originating in the stepwell heater area; Elgin, IL; no injuries reported; the cause of fire undetermined.
- 2007-07-13 Navistar receives NHTSA inquiry PE07-034.
- 2007-08-24 Navistar responded to NHTSA inquiry. The conclusion was that the fire did originate in the stepwell heater area, but the root cause was undetermined, the incidents appeared to be isolated in nature, and therefore, the situation would be monitored.
- 2008-02 Report of a third bus fire originating in the stepwell heater area; Nixa, MO; no injuries reported.
- 2008-03-07 Navistar, Bergstrom, and Von Weise (blower motor manufacturer) reopened the investigation to determine scope and cause of the issue.
- 2008-04-18 Issue is investigated through failure analysis and simulation testing.  
thru  
2008-11-17 Team could reproduce heat in low speed winding, but could not reproduce failure mode.

- 2008-12-16 thru 2009-01-15 Five additional reports received of fire originating in the stepwell heater area; no injuries reported.
- 2008-01-16 Investigation team determines through inspection of the returned motor components that the fire originates from elevated temperatures in the low speed winding of the blower motor which can result in the ignition of any nearby combustible materials.
- 2009-02-04 Suspect bus population is determined based on where suspect blower motor is used.
- 2009-02-05 Navistar declares a safety recall.

*(7) PROGRAM TO REMEDY DEFECT [Part 573.6 (c)(8)]*

- A final remedy for this defect has not been determined at the time of this report.
- An interim notice will be issued to mitigate the concern of possible fire in low blower speed until a final remedy can be determined.

*(8) PLAN FOR REIMBURSEMENT [Part 573.6 (c)(8)(i)]*

- Some of the vehicles in this recall fall outside the warranty period; therefore, Navistar's plan for reimbursement of pre-notification remedies, on file and dated 1/5/2009 applies and instructions will be included in the customer notification.

*(9) SCHEDULE FOR RECALL NOTIFICATION [Part 573.6 (c)(8)(i)]*

- 2009-02-20 An Interim Notification letter will be mailed to vehicle owners to communicate the defect and recommend action to mitigate the risk until the final remedy and customer notification is provided at a later date.

*(10) RECALL NUMBER [Part 573.6 (c)(11)]*

- Navistar: 09501
- NHTSA: Not Yet Assigned

The undersigned should be contacted for any additional information regarding this recall on (260) 461-1890.

Sincerely,



R. L. Van Laar  
Compliance Manager  
Navistar, Inc.

RV:ta