



Gary W. Rossow
Director
Government Technical Affairs

DATE: December 1, 2000

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Office of Defects Investigation, Room 5326
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Attn: Jonathan D. White

Subject: Information Report, NHTSA No.00E-047/00V-246.101

In accordance with Title 49, Part 573, Freightliner LLC herewith submits an information report supplying supplemental information and copies of documents distributed to dealers and purchasers.

Sincerely,

Gary W. Rossow

Cc: Michael Mason, CAL-OSHA

Certified Mail No. Z 224 782 591

Section 573.5 Defect Information Report

Supplement No.: 2

Date: December 1, 2000

(c) (1) Manufacturer: FREIGHTLINER LLC
P.O. BOX 3849
Portland, Oregon 97208
(503) 735-8078

(c) (3) Total number of vehicles potentially affected: (Revise to read) 49,492

(c) (9) Communications sent to dealers and owners: 11/22/00

Subject: TRW Ball Stud End and Socket Assemblies

MODELS AFFECTED: Specific Freightliner Century Class, FLD, FLN, and Argosy vehicles; Sterling A Line, L Line, and Acterra vehicles; and Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation MT-46 and MT-55 vehicles manufactured between July 12, 1999, and October 10, 1999.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Freightliner LLC, on behalf of its Freightliner Trucks Division and its wholly-owned subsidiaries, Sterling Truck Corporation and Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation, has determined that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists on the vehicles mentioned above.

There are approximately 57,000 vehicles involved in this campaign. We anticipate 80% of these vehicles will be inspected/modified.

The ball stud and socket assemblies on certain tie rods, drag links, and steering assist cylinders may contain bearing surfaces that have a less than specified case depth and/or hardness. These ball stud and socket assemblies may wear out prematurely, resulting in a separation of the ball stud from the socket. This may cause a full or partial loss of steering control and possible vehicle crash without prior warning.

The modification consists of replacing all affected ball stud and socket assemblies with ball stud and socket assemblies of a different design.

NOTE: Vehicles involved in FL268O, P, Q, R, S, T and U will require inspection of the tie rod end and the drag link end and possible replacement of one or both.

WORK INSTRUCTIONS

Please refer to the attached work instructions. Included in this bulletin are:

1. Tie rod end inspection and replacement
2. Drag link end inspection and replacement
3. Steering assist cylinder end inspection and replacement

REPLACEMENT PARTS

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

If your dealership has ordered any vehicle(s) involved in campaign number FL268A-U, a computer listing of the customers and vehicle identification numbers is enclosed. Please refer to this list when ordering parts for this recall.

Recall Campaign

November 2009
 FL268A-U
 (NHTSA 00V-245.001)

IMPORTANT: FOR VEHICLES INVOLVED IN FL2680, P, Q, R, S, T, or U TWO KITS MAY BE REQUIRED, BOTH THE APPROPRIATE TIE ROD KIT AND DRAG LINK KIT.

Refer to Table 1 for replacement kits for FL268A-U

25-FL268-000 through 25-FL268-013

Campaign Number	Kit Number	Part Description	Part Number	Qty. per Kit	Suggested Wholesale*
FL268A, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U	25-FL268-000	TRW Tie Rod Kit	L20KP0008	1 kit	\$37.32 U.S. \$80.82 CAN
FL268B	25-FL268-001	TRW Tie Rod Kit	L24KP0018	1 kit	\$37.32 U.S. \$80.82 CAN
FL268C, D	25-FL268-002	TRW Drag Link Kit	TRW L20KP0029	1 kit	\$55.99 U.S. \$91.26 CAN
FL268D, S	25-FL268-003	TRW Drag Link Kit	TRW L20KT0033	1 kit	\$55.99 U.S. \$91.26 CAN
FL268E	25-FL268-004	TRW Cylinder Kit	TRW L20KP0035	1 kit	\$37.32 U.S. \$80.82 CAN
FL268F	25-FL268-005	TRW Tie Rod Kit	TRW L20KP0011	1 kit	\$37.32 U.S. \$80.82 CAN
FL268G	25-FL268-006	TRW Tie Rod Kit	TRW L20KP0009	1 kit	\$37.32 U.S. \$80.82 CAN
FL268P	25-FL268-007	TRW Drag Link Kit	TRW L20TP0028	1 kit	\$55.99 U.S. \$91.26 CAN
FL268K, T	25-FL268-010	TRW Drag Link Kit	TRW L20KT0028	1 kit	\$55.99 U.S. \$91.26 CAN
FL268L, Q	25-FL268-011	TRW Drag Link Kit	TRW L20KT0027	1 kit	\$55.99 U.S. \$91.26 CAN
FL268M, U	25-FL268-012	TRW Drag Link Kit	TRW L20KP0028	1 kit	\$55.99 U.S. \$91.26 CAN
FL268N, R	25-FL268-013	TRW Drag Link Kit	TRW L20KT0029	1 kit	\$55.99 U.S. \$91.26 CAN

* Please charge all Direct Warranty Customers the above-listed price for the kit, as they are authorized to perform their own recalls.

Table 1

REMOVED PARTS

Please destroy and scrap any removed parts. By filing a claim, you are certifying that you have destroyed all removed parts.

LABOR ALLOWANCE

Refer to Table 2 for labor allowance.

Campaign Number	Procedure	Time Allowed (hours)	SRT Code	Damage Code
FL268A-U	Inspect tie rod ends and/or drag link ends and/or steering assist cylinder ends	0.4	996-0372A	000-Inspected
FL268A, B, F, G	Inspect and remove/replace tie rod ends	1.8	996-0372B	000-Modifiedx
FL268C, D, K, L, M, N	Inspect and remove/replace drag link ends	0.9	996-0372C	000-Modifiedx

Recall Campaign

November 2000

FL268A-U

(NHTSA 00V-248.001)

Campaign Number	Procedure	Time Allowed (hours)	SRT Code	Damage Code
FL268E	Inspect and remove/replace steering assist cylinder ends	1.0	998-G372D	000-Modifiedx
FL268O, P, Q, R, S, T, U	Inspect and remove/replace tie rod ends and drag link ends	2.2	998-G372E	000-Modifiedx

Table 2

IMPORTANT: When the recall has been completed, clean a spot on the appropriate location of the vehicle and attach a completion sticker (Form W-147) referencing the Recall Campaign number and date the work was performed.

CLAIMS FOR CREDIT

You will be reimbursed for your parts, labor, and handling by submitting your claim through the Warranty system. Please reference the following information in QuickClaims:

- Claim type is Recall.
- In the FSDOC field, enter the campaign number and the appropriate condition code (e.g. FL268A, FL268B, FL268C, etc.).
- In the Primary Failed Part Number field, enter 25-FL268-000.
- In the Parts field, enter the appropriate kit number(s) as shown in the Replacement Parts Tables.

NOTE: ServicePro®/Service Advisor® 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.

Contact the Warranty Campaigns Department at (800) 647-0712, from 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Pacific Time Monday through Friday, or the Customer Assistance Center at (800) 385-4357, outside normal business hours, if you have any questions or need additional information.

To return excess kit inventory related to this campaign, U.S. dealers must submit a Parts Authorization Return (PAR) to the Memphis PDC and Canadian dealers must submit a PAR to their facing PDC. All kits must be in re-saleable condition. PAR requests must include the original purchase invoice number.

The letter notifying vehicle owners is included for your reference.

Please note that the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act, as amended (49 USC), 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 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. Also, any lessor is required to send a copy of the recall notification to the lessee.

Finally, the Act states that a remedy need not be provided without charge if the vehicle was bought by the first purchaser more than ten (10) calendar years before notice is given.

WARRANTY CAMPAIGNS DEPARTMENT

Recall Campaign

November 2000
FL266A-U
(NHTSA 00V-246.001)

Copy of Letter to Owner Subject: TRW Ball Stud End and Socket Assemblies

Dear (Involved Brands) Vehicle Owner:

This notice is sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act and the Canadian Motor Vehicles Safety Act.

Freightliner LLC, on behalf of its Freightliner Trucks Division and its wholly-owned subsidiaries, Sterling Truck Corporation and Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation, has determined that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists on specific Freightliner Century Class, FLD, FLN, and Argosy vehicles; Sterling A Line, L Line, and Acterra vehicles; and Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation MT-45 and MT-55 vehicles manufactured between July 12, 1999, and October 10, 1999.

The ball stud and socket assemblies on certain tie rods, drag links, and steering assist cylinders may contain bearing surfaces that have a less than specified case depth and/or hardness. These ball stud and socket assemblies may wear out prematurely, resulting in a separation of the ball stud from the socket. This may cause a full or partial loss of steering control and possible vehicle crash without prior warning.

The modification consists of replacing all affected ball stud and socket assemblies with ball stud and socket assemblies of a different design.

Repair kits are now available for authorized dealers to order. Contact your authorized dealer to arrange to have your vehicle(s) modified and to assure that parts are available at the dealer.

When you contact your dealer, refer to campaign number **FL266A-U**. Once kit(s) are received at the dealership, the recall will take between approximately 0.5 and 2.5 hours and will be performed at no charge to you.

IMPORTANT: When the recall has been completed, please ensure that a sticker has been affixed to your vehicle referencing **FL266A-U** and the date the work was performed.

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 with any information you can furnish that will assist us in locating the present owner. If you have leased this vehicle, please make sure this notification is immediately forwarded to the lessee.

If you are unable to have the defect remedied without charge and within a reasonable time after you tender the vehicle for repair, please contact the Warranty Campaigns Department at (800) 647-0712, 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Pacific Time Monday through Friday, or the Customer Assistance Center at (800) FTL-HELP, after normal business hours. You may also wish to notify the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 7th Street S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590, or phone (888) 327-4236. If your vehicle is involved in the Canadian portion, you may notify the Manager, Recall and Public Compliance, Road and Motor Vehicle Traffic Safety Branch, Transport Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, or phone (613) 993-9951.

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

WARRANTY CAMPAIGNS DEPARTMENT

Enclosure

Work Instructions

Subject: TRW Ball Stud End and Socket Assemblies

MODELS AFFECTED: Specific Freightliner Century Class, FLD, FLN, and Argosy vehicles; Sterling A Line, L Line, and Acterra vehicles; and Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation MT-45 and MT-55 vehicles manufactured between July 12, 1996, and October 10, 1999.

This recall campaign includes the following procedures:

- Tie Rod End Inspection
- Tie Rod End Replacement
- Drag Link End Inspection
- Drag Link End Replacement
- Steering Assist Cylinder End Inspection
- Steering Assist Cylinder End Replacement

Tie Rod End Inspection Procedure

Applicable condition codes are: FL268A, B, F, G, P, Q, R, S, T, U

1. Park the vehicle on a level surface. Turn off the engine, apply the parking brakes, and chock the rear tires.
2. Before starting the inspection procedure, check the passenger door jamb for a completion label (form W-147). If the completion label lists Recall Campaign FL268, the inspection procedure is not required.
3. Inspect both tie rod ends for the date code (Table 3). See Fig. 1 for location of date code. Replace both tie rod ends if either tie rod end has one of the following date codes and the sockets are size 20. To identify a size 20 socket, measure the outside swage diameter. See Fig. 2.

Date Codes		
9G1	9H1	9J1
9G2	9H2	9J2
9G3	9H3	9J3
9G4	9H4	9J4
	9H5	

Table 3, Date Codes

NOTE: A size 20 socket will measure approximately 1-7/8 inches. Any socket measuring 2-1/8 inches is a size 24 socket and is not part of this campaign.

4. If the tie rod ends have one of the specified date codes, continue with the replacement procedure below.

If the tie rod ends DO NOT have one of the specified date codes and size 20 sockets, do not replace the tie rod ends. Write the Recall Campaign number and the date the work was performed on a completion label (form W-147). Clean a spot in the passenger door jamb about 18 inches (457 mm) above the handle, and attach the label.

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November 2000
FL268A-U
(NHTSA 00V-246.001)

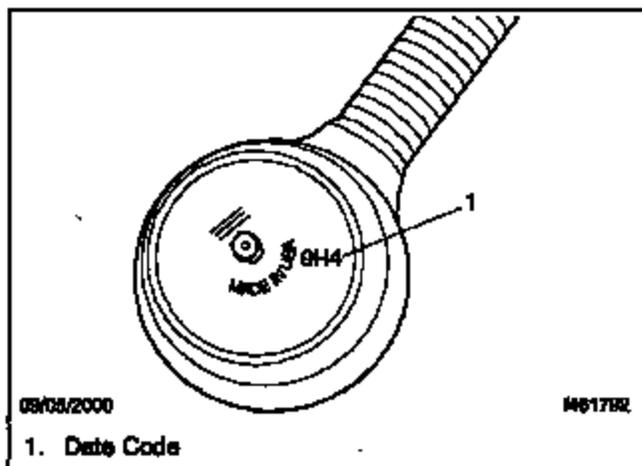


Fig. 1, Location of Date Code

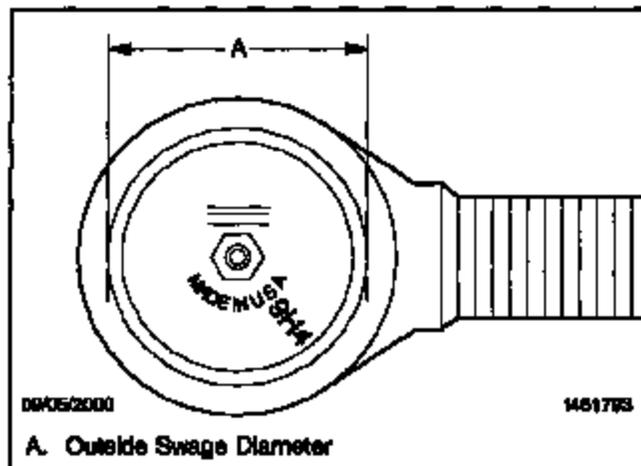


Fig. 2, Measure the Outside Swage Diameter

5. If the vehicle is involved in FL268O, P, Q, R, S, T, or U continue with the drag link inspection. If the vehicle is involved in any other part of the campaign, FL268A-N, no further work is required.

Tie Rod End Replacement Procedure

Applicable condition codes are: FL268A, B, F, G, P, Q, R, S, T, U

Use the following instructions and the appropriate tie rod end kit to replace the tie rod ends.

REMOVING THE TIE ROD ASSEMBLY (TIE ROD ENDS AND CROSS TUBE)

WARNING

Block the wheels to prevent the vehicle from moving. Support the vehicle with safety stands. Do not work under a vehicle supported only by jacks. Jacks can slip and fall over resulting in serious personal injury.

1. Use a jack to raise the vehicle so that the front tires are off the ground. Support the front axle with safety stands.
2. Remove and discard the cotter pins and the nuts that fasten the tie rod ends to the tie rod arms on both sides of the axle.

WARNING

Always support the tie rod assembly so that it does not fall and cause personal injury or become damaged when separated from the tie rod arms.

3. Disconnect the tie rod assembly from the tie rod arms. The use of a tie rod end puller is recommended.

WARNING

Do not heat the arm to remove the tie rod assembly. Doing so may damage the parts. Loss of steering control may result, possibly causing personal injury or property damage.

4. If necessary, tap on the tie rod end to loosen the tie rod end from the tie rod arm. See Fig. 3.

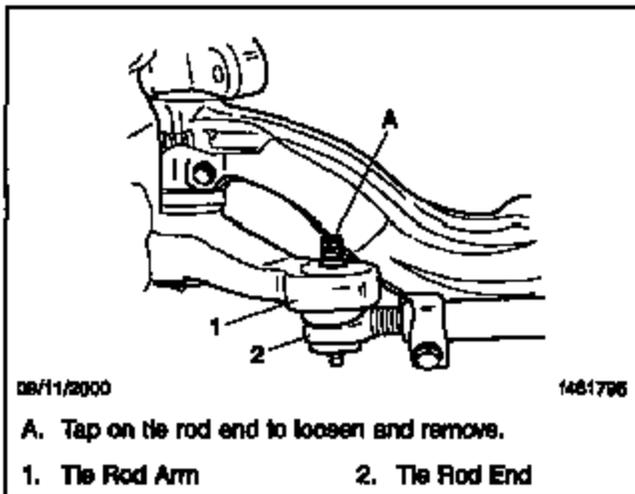
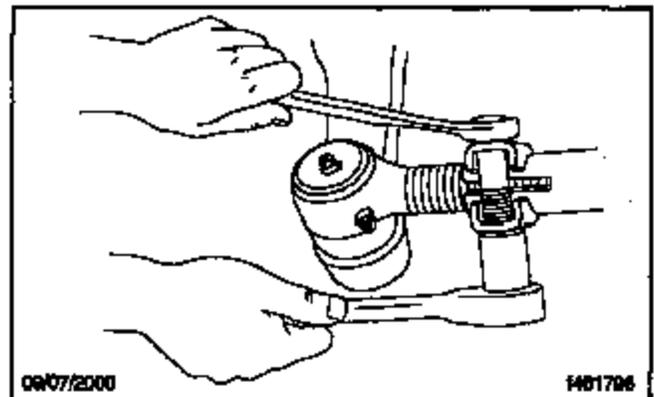
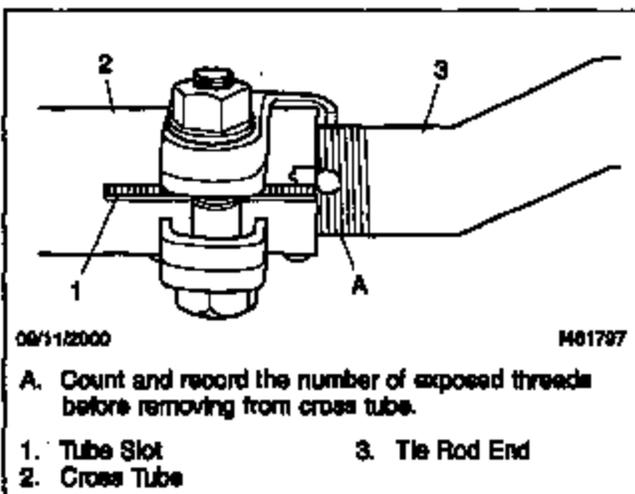
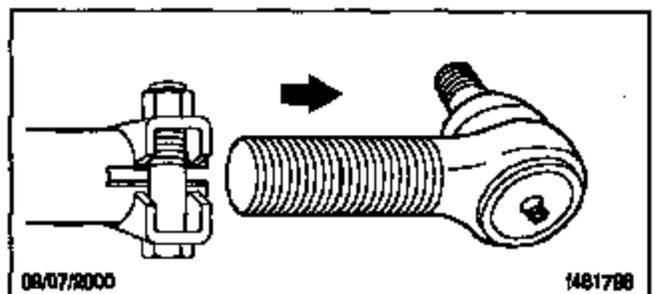
TIE ROD END REMOVAL FROM CROSS TUBE

1. Loosen the bolts and the nuts on the cross tube clamps. See Fig. 4.
2. Mark the installed position of each tie rod end and count and record the number of threads that appear outside of the cross tube. See Fig. 5.

WARNING

Do not remove clamps that are welded to the cross tube. Removing welded clamps may damage the cross tube. Loss of steering control may result, possibly causing personal injury or property damage. If welds are broken, the cross tube must be replaced.

3. Remove the threaded tie rod ends from the cross tube. See Fig. 6.
4. Inspect the cross tube for damage and replace if necessary.

**Fig. 3, Tie Rod End and Tie Rod Arm****Fig. 4, Loosen the Bolts and Nuts on the Cross Tube Clamp****Fig. 5, Bottom View of Tie Rod End and Cross Tube****Fig. 6, Remove the Threaded Tie Rod End from the Cross Tube**

Recall Campaign

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(NHTSA 00V-248.001)

INSTALLING THE TIE ROD ENDS IN THE CROSS TUBE



Do not bend, weld, or heat front axle components. Doing so may damage the parts.

NOTE: The cross tube has right-hand threads on the right side of the vehicle and left-hand threads on the left side of the vehicle.

1. Use the thread count as a guide and install the tie rod ends in the threaded cross tube ends to the approximate depth marked during the tie rod assembly removal. Both tie rod ends must be installed in the cross tube deeper than the end of the cross tube slot. See Fig. 7.
2. Check that the tab on the clamp is firmly seated against the end of the cross tube. See Fig. 8.

INSTALLING THE TIE ROD ASSEMBLY ON THE AXLE

1. Clean the tie rod arm taper hole. Connect the tie rod ends to the tie rod arms.
2. Push the threaded tie rod end through the tie rod arm hole. See Fig. 9.
3. Install new nuts on the tie rod ends and tighten the nuts to one of the following torque specifications based on the size of the stud thread.
 - 7/8-14, 160 to 300 lbf-ft (217 to 408 N-m)
 - 1-14, 250 to 450 lbf-ft (339 to 610 N-m)
 - 1-1/8-12, 350 to 650 lbf-ft (476 to 881 N-m)
 - 1-1/4-12, 500 to 675 lbf-ft (678 to 915 N-m)
4. Install new cotter pins. If necessary, tighten the locknut until the holes are aligned. Do not loosen the nut to install the cotter pin.
5. Apply torque seal, OGP F900WHITE, to the threads, nut, and cotter pin where they intersect.
6. Lubricate the sockets through the zerk fitting until you can see grease coming out of the seal.

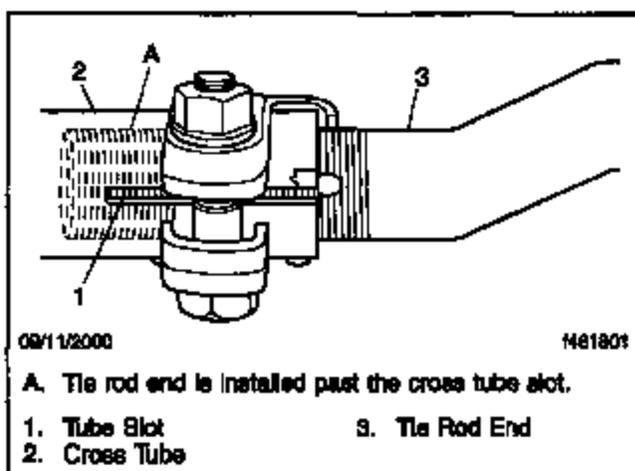


Fig. 7, Bottom View of Tie Rod End and Cross Tube

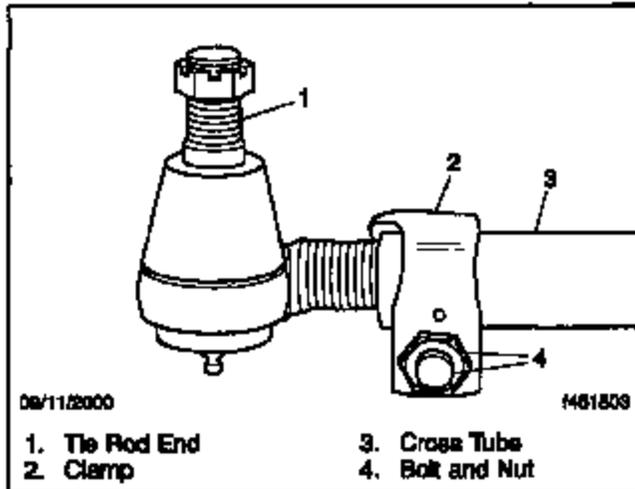


Fig. 8, Cross Tube Clamp

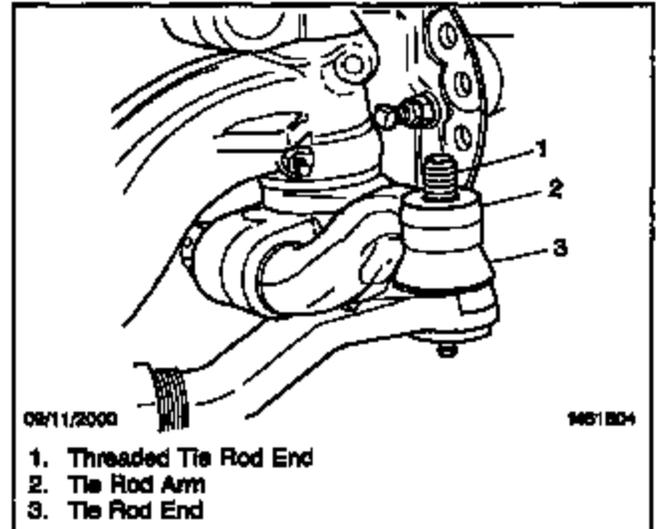


Fig. 9, Tie Rod Arm

ADJUSTING THE TOE-IN

1. Adjust the toe-in. For instructions, see the appropriate service/workshop manual in Table 4.

Toe-In Adjustment Procedures			
Vehicle	Service/Workshop Manual	Section	Subject
Acterra	<i>Acterra Workshop Manual</i>	33.00	140
Argosy	<i>Century Class Trucks Workshop Manual</i>	33.00	150
Business Class	<i>Business Class Trucks Service Manual</i>	33.00	140
Century Class	<i>Century Class Trucks Workshop Manual</i>	33.00	150
FLD Conventional	<i>Heavy-Duty Trucks Service Manual</i>	33.09	150
L-Line A-Line	<i>L-Line A-Line Workshop Manual</i>	39.00	180
Walk-In Van	<i>Walk-In Van Chassis Workshop Manual</i>	33.00	120

Table 4, Toe-In Adjustment Procedures

2. Apply torque seal, OGP F900WHITE, to the tie rod cross tube clamp bolt and nut.
3. Write the Recall Campaign number and the date the work was performed on a completion label (form W-147). Clean a spot in the passenger door jamb about 18 inches (467 mm) above the handle, and attach the label.

Drag Link End Inspection Procedure

Applicable condition codes are: FL268C, D, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U

1. Park the vehicle on a level surface. Turn off the engine, apply the parking brakes, and chock the rear tires.
2. Before starting the inspection procedure, check the passenger door jamb for a completion label (form W-147). If the completion label lists Recall Campaign FL268, the inspection procedure is not required and no further work is necessary.
3. Inspect both drag link socket assemblies for the date codes (Table 3). See Fig. 1 for location of date code. Replace the drag link assembly if either ball stud and socket assembly has one of the date codes shown in

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FL268A-U
(NHTSA 00V-246.001)

Table 3 and the sockets are size 20. To identify a size 20 socket, measure the outside swage diameter. See Fig. 2.

Adjustable drag links should be replaced as an assembly.

NOTE: A size 20 socket will measure approximately 1-7/8 inches. Any socket measuring 2-1/8 inches is a size 24 socket and is not part of this campaign.

- If the drag link socket assemblies have one of the specified date codes, continue with the replacement procedure below.

If the drag link socket assemblies DO NOT have one of the specified date codes and size 20 sockets, do not replace the drag link socket assemblies. Write the Recall Campaign number and the date the work was performed on a completion label (form W-147). Clean a spot in the passenger door jamb about 18 inches (457 mm) above the handle, and attach the label.

- If the vehicle is involved in FL268C, P, Q, R, S, T, or U continue with the tie rod end inspection if it has not already been done. If the vehicle is involved in any other part of the campaign, FL268A-N, no further work is required.
- Remove the chocks from the tires.

Drag Link End Replacement Procedure

Applicable condition codes are: FL268C, D, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U

- Replace the drag link assembly. For instructions, see the appropriate service/workshop manual in Table 5.

Drag Link Replacement Procedures			
Vehicle	Service/Workshop Manual	Section	Subject
Aeterna	<i>Aeterna Workshop Manual</i>	46.01	100
Argoey	<i>Century Class Trucks Workshop Manual</i>	46.03	100
Business Class	<i>Business Class Trucks Service Manual</i>	46.01	100
Century Class	<i>Century Class Trucks Workshop Manual</i>	46.03	100
FLD Conventional	<i>Heavy-Duty Trucks Service Manual</i>	46.06	100
L-Line A-Line	<i>L-Line A-Line Workshop Manual</i>	46.01	110
Walk-In Van	<i>Walk-In Van Chassis Workshop Manual</i>	46.01	100 or 110

Table 5, Drag Link Replacement Procedures

- Write the Recall Campaign number and the date the work was performed on a completion label (form W-147). Clean a spot in the passenger door jamb about 18 inches (457 mm) above the handle, and attach the label.
- Remove the chocks from the tires.

Steering Assist Cylinder End Inspection Procedure

Applicable condition code is: FL268E

- Park the vehicle on a level surface. Turn off the engine, apply the parking brakes, and chock the rear tires.
- Before starting the inspection procedure, check the passenger door jamb for a completion label (form W-147). If the completion label lists Recall Campaign FL268, the replacement procedure is not required.

3. Inspect both ball stud and socket assemblies for the date codes (Table 3). See Fig. 1 for location of date code. Replace the ball stud and socket assemblies if either socket end has one of the following date codes and the sockets are size 20. To identify a size 20 socket, measure the outside swage diameter. See Fig. 2.

Adjustable drag links should be replaced as an assembly.

NOTE: A size 20 socket will measure approximately 1-7/8 inches. Any socket measuring 2-1/8 inches is a size 24 socket and is not part of this campaign.

4. If either of the socket assemblies has one of the specified date codes, continue with the replacement procedure below.

If the socket assemblies DO NOT have one of the specified date codes and size 20 sockets, no further work is needed. Write the Recall Campaign number and the date the work was performed on a completion label (form W-147). Clean a spot in the passenger door jamb about 18 inches (457 mm) above the handle, and attach the label.

5. Remove the chocks from the tires.

Steering Asslet Cylinder End Replacement Procedure

Applicable condition code is: FL268E

1. Remove the cylinder connection at the steering arm and at the forward mounting bracket.
2. Clean the tapered hole in the arm with a clean cloth.
3. Count the number of threads exposed on the socket end of the cylinder.
4. Mark the clamp orientation on the socket tube.
5. Hold the cylinder rod in position using a wrench on the machined flat. See Fig. 10. Unscrew the socket from the piston rod.

CAUTION

Do not allow the cylinder rod to rotate freely while removing the socket end. Doing so could damage the internal cylinder seals.

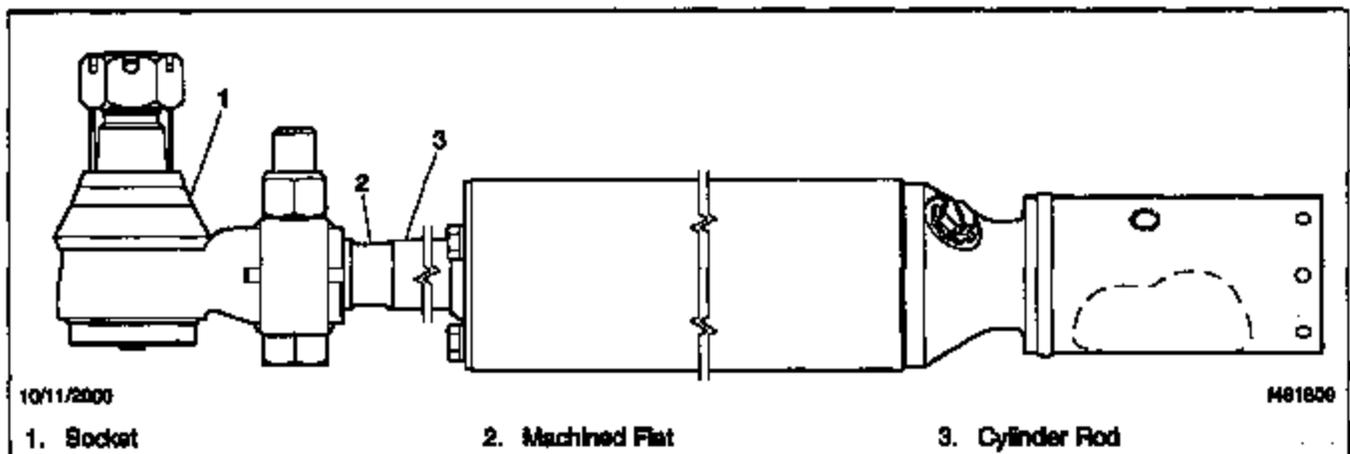


Fig. 10, Socket and Piston Rod

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6. Install the new socket end and adjust it until the same number of threads are exposed as counted during removal.

CAUTION

Do not adjust the socket end to a position where you can see the end of the cylinder rod threads through the slot in the tube. If the end of the rod is visible, corrosion may occur in the tube weakening the components.

7. Attach the cylinder to the steering arm. Torque the nut to one of the following specifications based on the size of the stud thread. Install the cotter pin.
 - 5/8-18, 60 to 116 lbf-ft (81 to 156 N-m)
 - 3/4-16, 90 to 170 lbf-ft (122 to 230 N-m)
 - 7/8-14, 160 to 300 lbf-ft (217 to 407 N-m)
8. Position the clamp with the mark that was made earlier in this procedure. Tighten the clamp and torque 40 to 60 lbf-ft (54 to 81 N-m). Apply torque seal, OGP F900WHITE, to the clamp bolt.

WARNING

If the clamp bolt is tack welded, do not remove the tack weld. Loss of steering control may result, possibly causing personal injury or property damage.

9. Lubricate the sockets through the zerk fitting until you can see grease coming out of the seal.
10. Write the Recall Campaign number and the date the work was performed on a completion label (form W-147). Clean a spot in the passenger door jamb about 18 inches (457 mm) above the handle, and attach the label.
11. Remove the chocks from the tires.

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A DaimlerChrysler Company

Gary W. Rossow
Director
Government Technical Affairs

November 19, 2001

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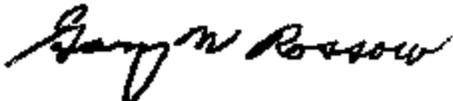
Office of Defects Investigation, Room 5326
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Attn: Jonathan D. White

Subject: Information Report, NHTSA No. 00V-246.101,

In accordance with Title 49, Part 573, Freightliner LLC herewith submits an information report supplying copies of documents distributed to dealers and purchasers.

Sincerely,



Gary W. Rossow

Cc: Michael Mason, CAL-OSHA

Certified Mail No. Z 313 288 153

Section 573.5 Defect Information Report

Supplement No.: 8

Date: November 19, 2001

**(c) (1) Manufacturer: FREIGHTLINER LLC
P.O. BOX 3849
Portland, Oregon 97208
(503) 735-8078**

(c) (9) Communications sent to dealers: 11/2/01

Communications sent to owners: 11/8/01

Subject: TRW Ball Stud and Socket Assemblies — Expanded (Tie Rod Ends)

MODELS AFFECTED: Specific Freightliner Century Class, FLD, FLN, and Argoey vehicles; Sterling A-Line, L-Line, and Acterra vehicles; and Freightliner Custom Chassis MT-45, MT-55, FS-65, and RV chassis manufactured from the second week of June 1999 through the third week of November 1999 and from the third week of April 2000 through the first week of June 2000.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Freightliner LLC has been informed by TRW Automotive that additional shipments of ball stud and socket assemblies have the defect addressed by Recall FL268A-U. Vehicles that have not had the earlier recall performed, will have the defect addressed under FL383A-D.

FL268A, B, F, and G are superseded by this recall. All work will be done under FL383A-D from this point forward.

The ball stud and socket assemblies on certain tie rods may contain bearing surfaces that have a less than specified case depth and/or hardness. These ball stud and socket assemblies may wear out prematurely, resulting in a separation of the ball stud from the socket. This may cause a full or partial loss of steering control and possible vehicle crash without prior warning.

The modification consists of replacing the affected ball stud and socket assemblies with assemblies of a different design.

WORK INSTRUCTIONS

Please refer to the attached work instructions.

REPLACEMENT PARTS

Replacement kits are now available and can be obtained by ordering the kit number(s) listed below from your local Parts Distribution Center.

If our records show your dealership has ordered any vehicle(s) involved in campaign number FL383A-D, a list of the customers and vehicle identification numbers is enclosed. Please refer to this list when ordering parts for this recall.

NOTE: If you receive a kit marked for FL268, it is correct and should be used.

Refer to Table 1 for replacement kits for FL383A-D

25-FL383-000 through 25-FL383-003

Campaign Number	Kit Number	Part Description	Part Number	Qty. per Kit	Suggested Wholesale *
FL383 A	25-FL383-000	TRW Tie Rod Kit	TRW L20KP0006	1 kit	\$37.32 U.S. \$60.82 CAN
FL383 B	25-FL383-001	TRW Tie Rod Kit	TRW L24KP0018	1 kit	\$37.32 U.S. \$60.82 CAN
FL383 C	25-FL383-002	TRW Tie Rod Kit	TRW L20KP0011	1 kit	\$37.32 U.S. \$60.82 CAN
FL383 D	25-FL383-003	TRW Tie Rod Kit	TRW L20KP0009	1 kit	\$37.32 U.S. \$60.82 CAN

* Please charge all Direct Warranty Customers the above-listed price for the kit, as they are authorized to perform their own recalls.

Table 1

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 (NHTSA 00V-248,001)

REMOVED PARTS

Please follow Warranty Failed Parts Tracking shipping instructions for the disposition of all removed parts.

LABOR ALLOWANCE

Refer to Table 2 for labor allowance.

Campaign Number	Procedure	Time Allowed (hours)	SRT Code	Damage Code
FL383 A, B, C, D	Remove/replace tie rod ends (Incl. toe-in adjustment)	1.8	998-0372B	000-Modifiedx

Table 2

IMPORTANT: When the recall has been completed, write the recall number on the completion sticker provided in the recall kit (Form WAR260) and place it on the base campaign sticker on the vehicle. If the vehicle does not have a base sticker (Form WAR259), clean a spot on the appropriate location of the vehicle and first attach a base sticker.

CLAIMS FOR CREDIT

You will be reimbursed for your parts, labor, and handling by submitting your claim through the Warranty system within 30 days of completing the recall. Please reference the following information in QuickClaim®:

- Claim type is Recall.
- In the FSDOC field, enter the campaign number and the appropriate condition code (e.g. FL383A, FL383B, FL383C, etc.).
- In the Primary Failed Part Number field, enter 25-FL383-000.
- In the Parts field, enter the appropriate kit number(s) as shown in the Replacement Parts Tables.
- If a vehicle experiences premature tire wear within 30 days of performance of the recall, the dealer will be responsible for replacement of tires. Incorrect toe-in settings can damage tires very quickly. The Work Instructions and SRT reflect the toe-in adjustment step of the recall.
- **IMPORTANT:** FL288A, B, F, and G are superseded by this recall and should no longer be performed. All work and claims must be for FL383A-D.

NOTE: ServicePro®/Service Advisor® 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.

Contact the Warranty Campaigns Department at (800) 547-0712, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Pacific Time, Monday through Friday, e-mail address WarrantyCampaigns@Freightliner.com, or the Customer Assistance Center at (800) 385-4357, outside normal business hours, if you have any questions or need additional information.

To return excess kit inventory related to this campaign, U.S. dealers must submit a Parts Authorization Return (PAR) to the Memphis PDC and 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.

The letter notifying vehicle owners is included for your reference.

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Please note that the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act, as amended (49 USC), 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 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. Also, any lessor is required to send a copy of the recall notification to the lessee.

Finally, the Act states that a remedy need not be provided without charge if the vehicle was bought by the first purchaser more than ten (10) calendar years before notice is given.

WARRANTY CAMPAIGNS DEPARTMENT

Recall Campaign

November 2001
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(NHTSA 00V-246.001)

Copy of Letter to Owner

Subject: TRW Ball Stud and Socket Assemblies — Expanded (Tie Rod Ends)

This notice is sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act and the Canadian Motor Vehicles Safety Act.

Freightliner LLC, on behalf of its Freightliner Trucks Division and its wholly-owned subsidiaries, Sterling Truck Corporation and Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation, has determined that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists on specific Freightliner Century Class, FLD, FLN, and Argosy vehicles; Sterling A-Line, L-Line, and Acterra vehicles; and Freightliner Custom Chassis MT-46, MT-55, FB-65, and RV chassis manufactured from the second week of June 1999 through the third week of November 1999 and from the third week of April 2000 through the first week of June 2000.

TRW Automotive has informed Freightliner LLC of additional shipments of suspect ball stud and socket assemblies used in some tie rods. For safety reasons, this new information requires Freightliner to recall certain vehicles included in recall FL268A-U and to expand the number of vehicles involved.

The ball stud and socket assemblies on certain tie rods may contain bearing surfaces that have a less than specified case depth and/or hardness. These ball stud and socket assemblies may wear out prematurely, resulting in a separation of the ball stud from the socket. This may cause a full or partial loss of steering control and possible vehicle crash without prior warning.

The modification consists of replacing the affected ball stud and socket assemblies with assemblies of a different design.

Repair kits are now available for authorized dealers to order. Contact your authorized dealer to arrange to have your vehicle(s) modified and to assure that parts are available at the dealer.

When you contact your dealer, refer to campaign number FL383A-D. Once kit(s) are received at the dealership, the recall will take approximately two hours and will be performed at no charge to you.

IMPORTANT: When the recall has been completed, please ensure that a sticker has been affixed to your vehicle referencing FL383A-D.

If you do not own the vehicle(s) that corresponds to the identification number(s) which appears on the Recall Notification, please return the notification to the Warranty Campaigns Department with any information you can furnish that will assist us in locating the present owner. If you have leased this vehicle, please make sure this notification is immediately forwarded to the lessee.

If you are not able to have the defect remedied without charge and within a reasonable time, which is not longer than 60 days after you tender the vehicle for repair, please contact the Warranty Campaigns Department at (800) 547-0712, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Pacific Time, Monday through Friday, e-mail address WarrantyCampaigns@Freightliner.com, or the Customer Assistance Center at (800) FTL-HELP, after normal business hours. You may also wish to notify the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 7th Street S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590, or phone (888) 327-4236. If your vehicle is involved in the Canadian portion, you may notify the Manager, Recall and Public Compliance, Road and Motor Vehicle Traffic Safety Branch, Transport Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, or phone (613) 993-9651.

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

WARRANTY CAMPAIGNS DEPARTMENT

Enclosure

Work Instructions

Subject: TRW Ball Stud and Socket Assemblies — Expanded

MODELS AFFECTED: Specific Freightliner Century Class, FLD, FLN, and Argosy vehicles; Sterling A-Line, L-Line, and Asterra vehicles; and Freightliner Custom Chassis MT-45, MT-65, FB-65, and RV chassis manufactured from the second week of June 1999 through the third week of November 1999 and from the third week of April 2000 through the first week of June 2000.

Before performing the recall:

- FL268A, B, F, and G are superseded by this recall. All work will be done under FL383A-D from this point forward.
- If you receive a kit marked for FL268, it is correct and should be used.
- If a vehicle experiences premature tire wear within 30 days of performance of the recall, the dealer will be responsible for replacement of tires. Incorrect toe-in settings can damage tires very quickly. These Work Instructions and the SRT reflect the toe-in adjustment step of the recall.
- Park the vehicle on a level surface, shut down the engine, set the parking brakes, and chock the tires.
- Check the "base" completion label (Form WAR259) on the passenger-side door jamb. If it has a sticker for Recall FL383 (Form WAR260), nothing more needs to be done. Remove the chocks from the tires.
- If no sticker is present, continue with the replacement procedure.

Tie Rod End Replacement Procedure

Use the following instructions and the appropriate tie rod end kit to replace the tie rod ends.

REMOVING THE TIE ROD ASSEMBLY (TIE ROD ENDS AND CROSS TUBE)

WARNING

Do not work under a vehicle supported only by jacks. Jacks can slip, causing the vehicle to fall, which could result in serious personal injury. Always support the vehicle with safety stands.

1. Use a jack to raise the vehicle so that the front tires are off the ground. Support the front axle with safety stands.
2. Remove and discard the cotter pins and the nuts that fasten the tie rod ends to the tie rod arms on both sides of the axle.

WARNING

Always support the tie rod assembly so that it does not fall and cause personal injury or become damaged when separated from the tie rod arms.

3. Disconnect the tie rod assembly from the tie rod arms. The use of a tie rod end puller is recommended.

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WARNING

Do not heat the arm to remove the tie rod assembly. Doing so may damage the parts. Loss of steering control may result, possibly causing personal injury or property damage.

4. If necessary, tap on the tie rod end to loosen it from the tie rod arm. See Fig. 1.

REMOVING THE TIE ROD END FROM THE CROSS TUBE

1. Loosen the bolts and the nuts on the cross-tube clamps. See Fig. 2.
2. Mark the installed position of each tie rod end and count and record the number of threads that appear outside of the cross tube. See Fig. 3.

WARNING

Do not remove clamps that are welded to the cross tube. Removing welded clamps may damage the cross tube. Loss of steering control may result, possibly causing personal injury or property damage. If welds are broken, replace the cross tube.

3. Remove the threaded tie rod ends from the cross tube. See Fig. 4.
4. Inspect the cross tube for damage and replace if necessary.

INSTALLING THE TIE ROD ENDS IN THE CROSS TUBE

CAUTION

Do not bend, weld, or heat front axle components. Doing so will damage the parts.

NOTE: The cross tube has right-hand threads on the right side of the vehicle and left-hand threads on the left side of the vehicle.

1. Use the thread count as a guide and install the tie rod ends in the threaded cross tube ends to the approximate depth marked during the tie rod assembly removal. Both tie rod ends must be installed in the cross tube deeper than the end of the cross tube slot. See Fig. 5.

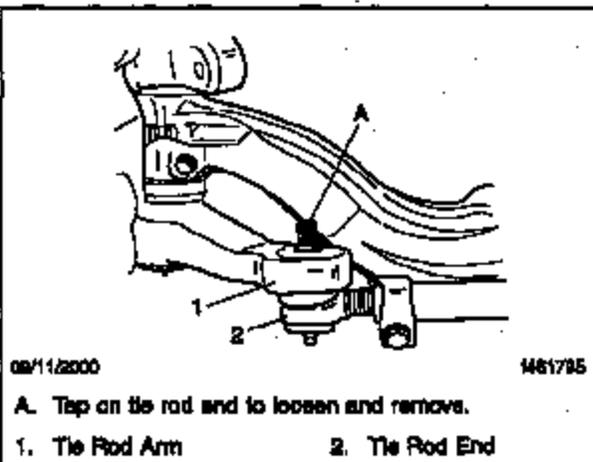


Fig. 1, Tie Rod End and Tie Rod Arm

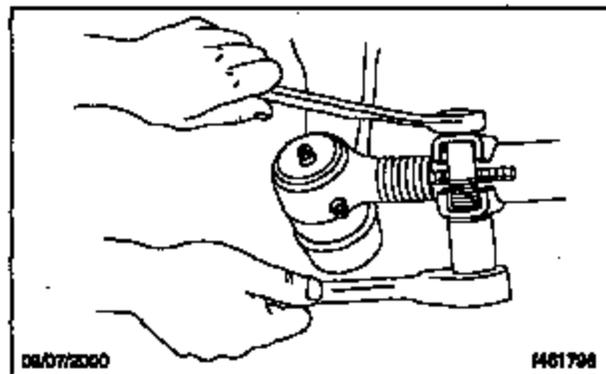


Fig. 2, Loosen the Bolts and Nuts on the Cross-Tube Clamp

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ADJUSTING THE TOE-IN

1. Adjust the toe-in. For instructions, see the applicable service/workshop manual in Table 3.

Toe-In Adjustment Procedures			
Vehicle	Service/Workshop Manual	Section	Subject
Acterra	<i>Acterra Workshop Manual</i>	33.00	140
Argosy	<i>Century Class Trucks Workshop Manual</i>	33.00	150
Business Class	<i>Business Class Trucks Service Manual</i>	33.00	140
Century Class	<i>Century Class Trucks Workshop Manual</i>	33.00	150
FLD Conventional	<i>Heavy-Duty Trucks Service Manual</i>	33.03	150
L-Line A-Line	<i>L-Line A-Line Workshop Manual</i>	33.00	150
Recreational Vehicle	<i>Recreational Vehicle Chassis Workshop Manual</i>	33.00	140
School Bus	<i>School Bus Chassis Workshop Manual</i>	33.00	140
Walk-In Van	<i>Walk-In Van Chassis Workshop Manual</i>	33.00	120

Table 3, Toe-In Adjustment Procedures

2. Apply torque seal, OGP F900WHITE, to the cross-tube clamp bolt end nut.
3. Clean a spot on the "base" completion label (Form WAR258). The "base" label is usually located on passenger-side door jamb about 18 inches (46 cm) above the handle of the vehicle. Write in the recall number and attach the completion sticker (Form WAR260) provided in the recall kit.

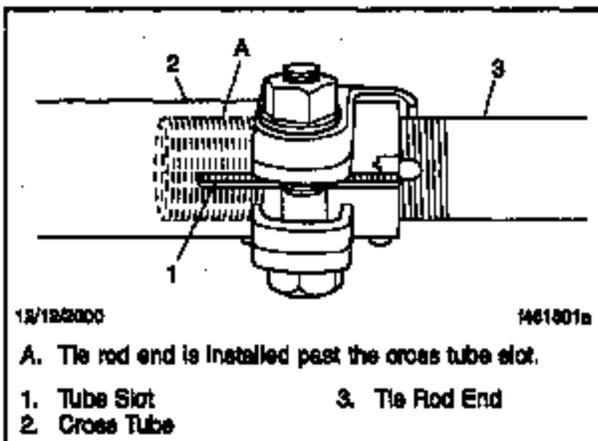


Fig. 5, Bottom View of Tie Rod End and Cross Tube

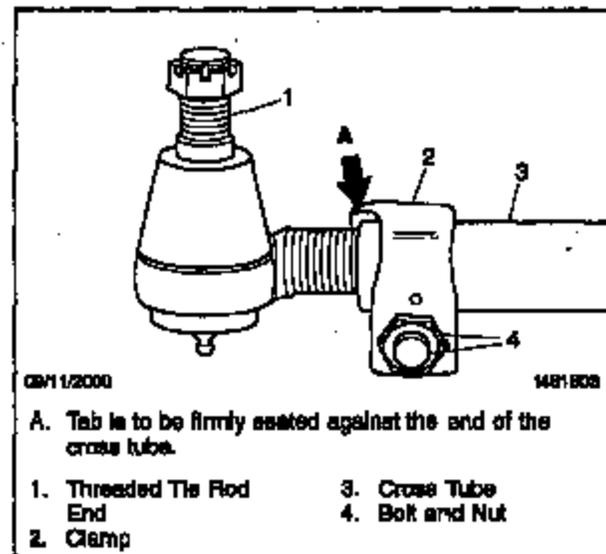


Fig. 6, Cross Tube Clamp

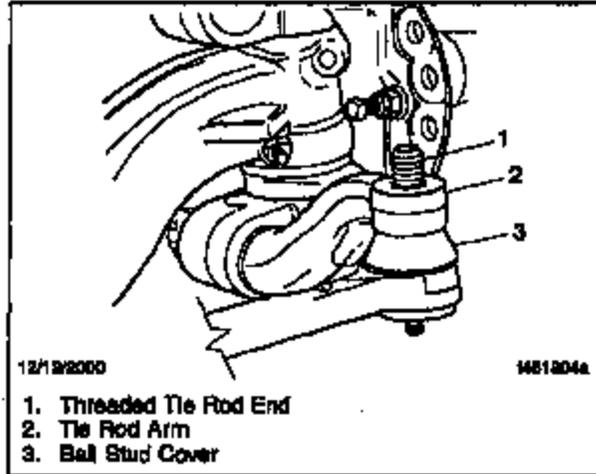


Fig. 7, Tie Rod Arm