

*Ford Motor Company*

L. W. Camp, Director  
Automotive Safety Office  
Environmental and Safety Engineering

November 20, 2000

Mr. Kenneth N. Weinstein  
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

00V-246.111 (2)

Dear Mr. Weinstein:

Pursuant to Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Defect and Noncompliance Reports, Ford Motor Company submits the following information concerning a safety-related recall action that it is initiating.

573.5 (c) (2)

Certain 1999 and 2000 model year F-SuperDuty Motorhome chassis, F-850 and F-750 trucks produced at the IMMSA plant in Monterrey, Mexico; the Cuautitlan Assembly Plant in Mexico; and TruMack Assembly Plant in Detroit, Michigan. These vehicles were produced from July 10, 1999 through May 31, 2000.

Because these vehicles are not produced in VIN order, information as to the applicability of this action to specific vehicles can best be obtained by either calling Ford's toll-free line (1-800-392-3673) or contacting a local Ford or Lincoln/Mercury dealer, who can obtain specific information regarding the vehicles from the Ford OASIS computer system.

The tie rod and drag link assemblies mentioned later in this letter were supplied to Ford by TRW Commercial Steering Division, 902 Lyons Road, Portland, Michigan. TRW's phone number is (517) 647-4121.

573.5 (c) (3)

Approximately 17,700 vehicles.

573.5 (c) (4)

All of the subject vehicles are potentially susceptible to the condition.



00V-246-111 (22)

573.5 (c) (5)

The subject vehicles have tie rod ends and/or drag link assembly ends that may have insufficient hardness in the ball stud. This could result in premature wear and, potentially, separation of the ball stud from its socket. If this occurs, there could be a reduction in or loss of steering control. Reduced steering control could potentially result in a vehicle crash.

573.5 (c) (8)

Ford first became aware that the subject tie rod ends were being recalled by TRW during August 2000. Initial investigation revealed that Ford products utilizing these components were lower GVWR and GAWR than the other manufacturer's vehicles that are the subject of TRW's action. Further investigation revealed that, although the current risk to motor vehicle safety is insignificant, there is the potential for wear out and, potentially, separation, later in the useful life of the vehicle. Ford has decided, for other reasons, to conduct this program now rather than waiting to see if a defect trend develops. To date, Ford is aware of only one report of a tie rod separation on the subject vehicles. Ford is not aware of any reports of fires, accidents or injuries related to this condition.

573.5 (c) (8)

Ford will notify owners of record of the affected vehicles to return them to dealers to have the affected tie rod ends and/or drag link assemblies replaced at no charge to owners. It is currently anticipated that owner notification will occur on or before the week of December 4, 2000.

573.5 (c) (9)

Ford does not plan to make a public statement concerning this action. A copy of notification letters to dealers and owners from Ford Customer Service Division will be forwarded when available.

573.5 (c) (11)

Ford has assigned campaign number 00S48 to this action.

Sincerely,



L. W. Camp