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By Recall Management Division at 2:13 pm, Feb 22, 2013

Safety Defect and Noncompliance Report Guide for Vehicles

PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report

Date: **02/15/2013**

This report serves as **Fontaine Heavy-Haul's** notification to the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that a defect related to motor vehicle safety exists in certain **2013 Renegade Trailers**. **Fontaine Heavy-Haul** decided that this defect existed in these vehicles on **02/12/2013**.

I. Manufacturer, Designated Agent, and Other Chain of Distribution Information

Manufacturer's corporate name: **Fontaine Trailer Company dba Fontaine Heavy-Haul**
Vehicle brand or trademark name owner(s) (where applicable):
Fontaine Renegade LX40 and Fontaine Renegade LXT40
Designated Agent (imported vehicles):

N/A

If this notification concerns a defective or noncompliant component that the above identified manufacturer did not manufacture, identify that component and provide the name, address, and phone number of the manufacturer of the component (if this manufacturer is unknown, provide this information as to the supplier of the component):

Component: Combo Eye Plate 50403020

Manufacturer:

Norca Engineered Products, LLC

8224 Creedmoor Road, Suite 201

Raleigh, NC 27613

919-846-2010

Name, address, email, and phone and fax numbers for the person(s) to whom inquiries about this report should be directed:

Dan Hill, Quality Control Manager
Fontaine Heavy-Haul
5398 US Hwy 11
Springville, AL 35146
P: 205-467-1813
F: 205-467-3026
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Manufacturer's assigned campaign number (where applicable):

II. Identification of the Recall Population and Its Size

Complete the tables below for each group of vehicles subject to this notification. Additional tables may be necessary where there are more than three groups subject to a notification.

Make: Fontaine
Model: Renegade LX40/LXT40
Model Year(s): 2013
Inclusive dates of manufacture (month and year): 8/2012 – 11/2012
Body Style/Type (for non-passenger cars): Lowbed Trailer
Other information necessary to describe these vehicles (e.g., VIN range, GVWR or class for trucks, displacement for motorcycles, and number of passengers for buses): Class 8 Semi-Trailer
Total number of these vehicles: 78

Provide the following information as to all the groups of vehicles:

Grand total number of vehicles: **78**_____

The percentage of the recall population you estimate actually contain the defect or noncompliance: **8%**_____

Identify and describe how the recall population was determined (e.g., on what basis the recalled models were selected and how the inclusive dates of manufacture were determined):

Supplied component was moved from one factory to a new factory in October of 2011. All suspect components are identified by a lot number of 10/11 and have been determined to have been manufactured in the new factory. Total supplied components that are suspect are 200 pieces. 156 pieces were utilized in vehicles. 44 pieces were identified as suspect and quarantined (never utilized in any vehicles). There are two components utilized per each vehicle which equates to 78 vehicles containing the suspect components.

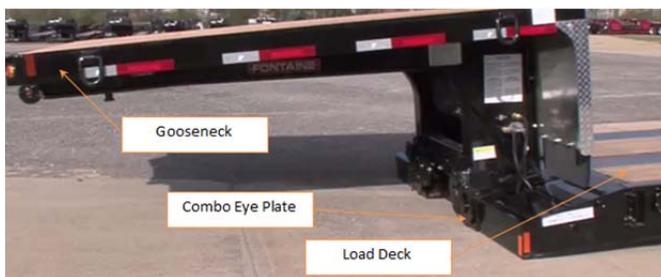
Describe how the recall population is different from any similar vehicles not subject to this notification:

The recall population is different from similar vehicles not subject to this recall because the recall vehicles are the only ones to utilize the suspect components.

III. Description of the Defect or Noncompliance and Chronology of Events

Describe the defect or noncompliance, including a summary and detailed description of the nature and physical location (if appropriate) of the defect or noncompliance. Graphic aids should be provided where necessary.

The suspect defective components are located at the front of the load deck and are linkages between the gooseneck and the load deck of the semi-trailer.



Describe the cause(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

The supplied component material specifications did not conform to the design requirements. Specifically there was a manufacturing defect related to the heat treatment process with the suspect components.

Describe the safety consequence(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

The supplied component's material properties indicate a brittle condition which could lead to cracking and ultimately fracture of the component thus rendering the component non load bearing.

Identify any warning(s) that may precede the defect or noncompliance condition.

Surface cracks in the supplied component would be indicative of a defective component.

For defects, provide a dated, chronological summary of all the principle events that were the basis for the determination that the defect is related to motor vehicle safety, including a summary of all warranty claims, field or service reports, and other information such as numbers of crashes, injuries and fatalities.

There have been two warranty claims for fractured combo eye plates. First claim occurred on 12/06/2012. Second claim occurred on 01/09/2013. Both claims indicated fracture and failure of the supplied component upon loading of the semi-trailer load deck prior to transport onto the highway. Operator heard loud pop noise and observed the combo eye plates had fractured. Due to the nature of use of our trailer product, first assumption was an overload situation had occurred. Upon further investigation it was discovered that the supplied component parts did not conform to design requirements. There have been no reported crashes, injuries or fatalities.

For noncompliances, identify the test results and other information considered in determining the existence of the noncompliance, and provide the date of each test and observation indicative of that noncompliance.

N/A

IV. The Remedy Program and Its Schedule

Describe the program for remedying the defect or noncompliance, including the plan for reimbursing those owners and purchasers who may have incurred costs to remedy the defect or noncompliance before receiving the manufacturer's notification concerning that defect or noncompliance. Also include, where applicable, details with dates concerning any production remedy that was conducted or will be conducted.

Each owner and Dealer will be notified of the subject safety recall (pursuant to the included "DRAFT - Owner Notification Letter) by registered mail service.

Each owner will be instructed to contact a Fontaine Dealer or authorized service center to schedule service to remedy the defect. Fontaine will ship replacement combo eye plates and retaining hardware to the Dealer or service center. Each affected unit will have all worked performed pursuant to the work instructions included the Dealer notification letters at no charge to the owner.

Fontaine will reimburse each Dealer or authorized service center the amount of \$250.00 per trailer remedied (2 hours shop labor and all associated shop supplies).

Reimbursement will be made to any Owner, Dealer or authorized service center that made described remedy repairs prior to this notice of recall in the amount of incurred charges.

Provide the estimated date(s) on which owner and purchaser notifications will be issued and the estimated date(s) for completion of those notifications.

We are attempting to identify owners by Dealer contacts and Polk registrations. It is expected to take two weeks to receive the Polk registration information and therefore the owner and purchaser notifications are expected to be mailed out on or before March 8, 2013 upon approval from NHTSA/ODI.

We have currently identified owners of 38 units affected and will notify them as soon as we receive NHTSA/ODI approval to do so. Considering the population of affected vehicles, all notifications are expected to be mailed on or before March 8, 2013.

Provide the estimated date(s) on which dealer and distributor notifications will be issued and the estimated date(s) for completion of those notifications.

The dealer and authorized service center notifications are expected to be mailed out on or before March 8, 2013 upon approval from NHTSA/ODI. Considering the population of affected vehicles, all notifications are expected to be mailed on or before March 8, 2013.

Clearly describe the distinguishing characteristics of the remedy component/assembly versus the recalled component/assembly.

The remedy components are flame cut combo eye plates with no cast numbers versus the recalled components which are cast components with cast in numbers visible to an observer.

******* IMPORTANT REMINDERS *******

A DRAFT version of the letter that the manufacturer intends to mail to owners and purchasers notifying them of the defect and/or noncompliance must be submitted to NHTSA at least five Federal Government business days before those letters are issued. In addition, it is recommended that the draft version of the letter that the manufacturer intends to send to its dealers and distributors concerning the defect and/or noncompliance also be submitted for review. For prompt receipt and review, drafts may be submitted to the attention of the Recall Management Division (NVS-215) via facsimile on (202) 366-7882, or email to RMD.ODI@dot.gov.

A representative copy of all notices, bulletins, and other communications that relate directly to the defect or noncompliance and which are sent to more than one manufacturer, distributor, dealer, or purchaser, must be submitted to NHTSA no later than five days after they are initially sent. This requirement applies both to the final version of the notification letter that is sent to owners and purchasers, as well as the final version that is sent to dealers and distributors. It also includes any follow-up notifications issued concerning a recall. The representative copies of the letters sent to owners and purchasers, and dealers and distributors, must be submitted via certified mail. It is strongly recommended, however, that additional representative copies be submitted via facsimile on (202) 366-7882, or email to RMD.ODI@dot.gov, so that the submission can be more promptly reviewed. All submissions should be conspicuously labeled with the appropriate NHTSA-assigned recall number.