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By Recall Management Division at 12:42 pm, Oct 31, 2013

13V-457  
(3 pages) Amended



**BY ELECTRONIC MAIL ([RMD.ODI@DOT.GOV](mailto:RMD.ODI@DOT.GOV)) & U.S. MAIL**

October 30, 2013

Jennifer Timian  
Chief – Recall Management Division  
US DOT – National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE,  
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: NABI Safety Recall #20136 – Sure Power battery equalizers.

Dear Ms. Timian:

Attached is a Vehicle Defect Initial Information Report, which is being submitted by NABI Bus, LLC pursuant to 49 C.F.R. Part 573.

The undersigned should be contacted for any additional information regarding this recall.

Sincerely,

NABI Bus, LLC (NABI)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan C. Allen", is written over a circular stamp or mark.

Dan C. Allen  
Chief Engineer  
Ph. 256-453-2242

Enclosures

NABI Bus, LLC (NABI)  
 VEHICLE DEFECT  
 INITIAL INFORMATION REPORT

**Date:** September 18, 2013 Revised October 30, 2013

**NHTSA Recall No. 13V- 457**  
**NABI Recall No. 20136**

MAKE	MODEL	MODEL YEAR	NUMBER OF VEHICLES	MANUFACTURED DATES FROM THROUGH	OTHER IDENTIFICATION NECESSARY TO DESCRIBE VEHICLE
NABI	LFW; CLFW; BRT	2000- 2011	<del>3,582</del> <b>3,501</b>	1/1/2000      12/31/2011	Certain city transit buses equipped with certain Sure Power battery equalizers
Optima	Opus	2000- 2009	<del>755</del> <b>501</b>	1/1/2000      12/31/2009	Certain city transit buses equipped with certain Sure Power battery equalizers
<b>Blue Bird</b>	<b>L4RE</b>	<b>2007- 2009</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>7/1/2007      10/31/2009</b>	<b>Certain Blue Bird city transit buses built by NABI, equipped with certain Sure Power battery equalizers</b>

Total Number of Vehicles: ~~4,337~~ 4,061      Percent Potentially Containing Defect: Estimated 100%

VEHICLE DEFECT  
INITIAL INFORMATION REPORT

Certain city transit buses, manufactured by NABI and Optima/Chance Bus are equipped with Sure Power manufactured battery equalizers. Sure Power has advised NABI that Sure Power is recalling the subject equalizers built between January 2000 and August 2013. Optima/Chance was acquired by NABI in 2006 and certain buses manufactured with the subject equalizers are included in this recall report.

**RISK TO MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY:** A failure of the battery equalizers may lead to a thermal event (smoke and/or fire). The specific potting compound used in the subject equalizers for insulation was found to be capable of conducting electricity once exposed to significant thermal energy. Once electrically conductive, the material is capable of self-heating and maintaining temperatures capable of accelerating a thermal incident. Thermal energy can be sourced by various electrical failures and Sure Power is still investigating whether there are application-specific contributions to the risk of failure. Sure Power has reported that electrical failures have been traced to water intrusion or solder joint fatigue resulting from ongoing expansion and contraction due to thermal cycling. Sure Power has reported that confirmed incidents to date have demonstrated smoking or flame at the affected part with additional damage limited to adjacent/connected parts such as wire harnesses and cables. No injuries have been recorded to date. The failure mechanism is not detectable and no warning is given prior to thermal failure.

- 1) **CHRONOLOGY OF PRINCIPAL EVENTS WHICH LED TO DETERMINATION OF DEFECT:**
  - It is unknown at this time how many NABI or Optima/Chance buses have experienced a failure of subject battery equalizer. However, NABI is aware of Sure Power equalizer failures of unknown cause.
  - On or about September 10, 2013 NABI received a recall notice from Sure Power (copy attached).
  - NABI investigated and determined that buses were manufactured by NABI were equipped with the subject equalizers.
  - On September 13, 2013, NABI decided to initiate a formal recall.
- 2) **REMEDY EXPENSE:** Sure Power and NABI will replace these equalizers free of charge.
- 3) **EARLIEST DATE TO BE REMEDIED:** November 2013.
- 4) **PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT DATE:** There will be no public announcement.
- 5) **OWNER LETTER:** A draft notification letter will be provided for review and approval by NHTSA.