

R00DV

May 25, 2000

Dear Blue Bird Owner:

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

Blue Bird Body Company has determined that certain Blue Bird buses equipped with transit sliding pushout windows do not conform to Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 217 pertaining to "Bus Window Retention and Release" requirements. On subject buses, the potential sticking and/or binding of the pushout window inner frame within the outer frame results in opening forces exceeding the requirements of FMVSS 217.

Blue Bird Body Company's evaluation of the risk to motor vehicle safety reasonably related to this non-compliance is potential for pushout window to bind preventing opening of the window in the event of an emergency. Blue Bird is conducting a recall to correct this non-compliance.

You should have this non-compliance corrected immediately. Your Blue Bird bus(es) affected by recall R00DV are identified by body serial number(s) on the enclosed reply sheets. Follow the instructions on the enclosed **yellow** parts request sheet and return to Blue Bird in the enclosed pink, postage prepaid, reply envelope.

If you no longer own the subject bus (es), please complete the appropriate section of the yellow reply sheet and return to Blue Bird in the enclosed pink, postage prepaid, reply envelope.

You may perform this modification yourself or have the work done by a qualified repair facility convenient to you. You may contact your Blue Bird distributor for assistance. Upon completion of the recall, the owner should complete and return the pink reply sheet in the pink postage prepaid reply envelope provided. The owner may request reimbursement of labor costs by completing the appropriate section of the pink reply sheet. If repair is performed by other than the owner or a Blue Bird distributor, attach a copy of the paid work order/invoice to the reply sheet.

Time required to inspect window opening force is 30 minutes (0.5hr) **per bus**. If required, time to modify each window not meeting retention and release force requirements is 1 hour **per window**. Modification parts will be available beginning June 30, 2000.

Important: Your prompt return of the pink reimbursement sheet, complete with the correct Body Serial Numbers, permits Blue Bird to update the record indicating recall has been completed and prevents the mailing of a second notice. This is much appreciated. We regret any inconvenience this may have caused.

If Blue Bird Body Company should fail to or is unable to remedy this condition without charge to you, you may contact:

**ADMINISTRATOR
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590**

or you may call The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration toll free at:

1-800-424-9393

Washington D.C. residents may call 202-366-0123.

Questions regarding this recall campaign should be directed to me at (912) 822-2242.

Thank you,

Bill Coleman
Recall Administrator

**RECALL R00DV
TRANSIT PUSHOUT WINDOW NONCOMPLIANCE
INSTRUCTIONS**

Inspection Procedures:

Non School Bus:

The force required to unlatch a transit sliding pushout window on a non school bus shall not exceed 15 lbs.

The force required to push open a newly installed window shall not exceed 30 lbs. The force required to push open a window that has set for 3 days or more shall not exceed 45 lbs. on the first try and shall not exceed 30 lbs thereafter.

School Bus:

The force required to unlatch a transit sliding pushout window on a school bus shall not exceed 15 lbs.

The force required to push open a newly installed window shall not exceed 30 lbs. The force required to push open a window that has set for 3 days or more shall not exceed 40 lbs. on the first try and shall not exceed 30 lbs. thereafter.

NOTE: All emergency pushout windows should be checked on a periodic basis to maintain ongoing compliance with FMVSS 217 pushout window release and retention. Reference the "Emergency Exit" section of your Blue Bird owners manual See excerpt at bottom of page 6 of instructions. You may have a force gauge capable of measuring a minimum of 60lbs/28kg forces, in both a push or pull mode, in your shop equipment inventory.

Blue Bird uses the Force Dial FDK 60 Hand Held Dual Scale Dynamometer manufactured and distributed by Weigh and Test Systems, Inc of Greenwich CT. If you do not have a force gauge or can not obtain one locally, you may contact Weigh and Test Systems at 203-869-9681. Weigh and Test Systems Inc. will provide a discount for dynamometers purchased for this recall. Reference Blue Bird Body Company Recall R00DV when contacting Weigh and Test Systems Inc.

1. Using a force gauge check each window handle opening force by placing gauge at center of window latch and pulling inward and upward until latch is released. Record maximum force obtained on each window latch in the appropriate space on the enclosed check sheet.
2. Using a force gauge check each window opening force by placing the gauge on the inside bottom center of pushout portion of window and pushing out until window swings open. Record maximum force obtained on each window in the appropriate space on the enclosed check sheet.

Modification procedures:

Windows not meeting the opening force requirements should be modified as follows:

1. Release window and prop open with a secure device. Remove the existing weather strip seal and remaining glue. Glue should be removed using a naphtha-based solvent or mineral spirits. Do not scratch paint from window frame.
2. Install new weather strip seal, part number 0203323, as shown in Figure 1 on page 3. NOTE ORIENTATION OF SEAL. The 1/2 " edge should face out to seal against the pushout portion of the window. When installing seal start at the bottom center of window frame and work seal up and around window frame. **Do not pull seal tight across corners. Glue will release before setting.** Push seal into corners so that no tension is on seal throughout radius of corner. Route seal around window and overlap where seal starts for approximately 1/4". Cut seal smoothly and squeeze into gap where seal starts to ensure a water tight seal.

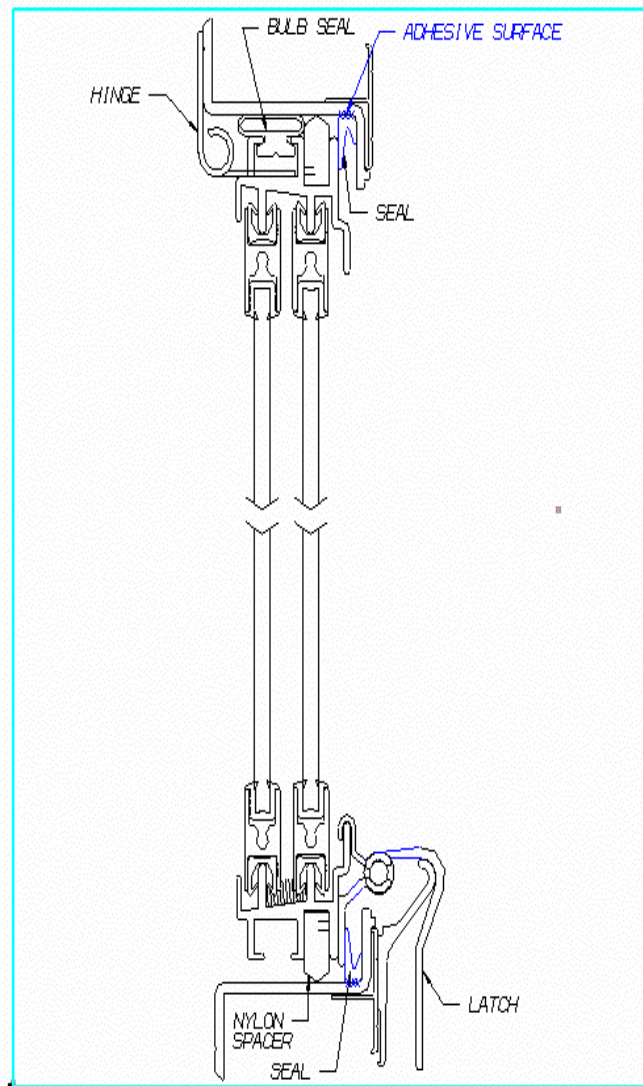


Figure 1

3. Cut off the lower portion of the external bulb type seal and remove the excess as shown in Figure 2 at both the front and rear of the window. The end of the bulb seal should now be approximately 7 ½ inches below the bottom of the drip rail.



Figure 2

4. With the window held open, grind 1/8th of an inch off of the three (3) nylon spacers located on the bottom rail of the window. See Figure 3.



Figure 3

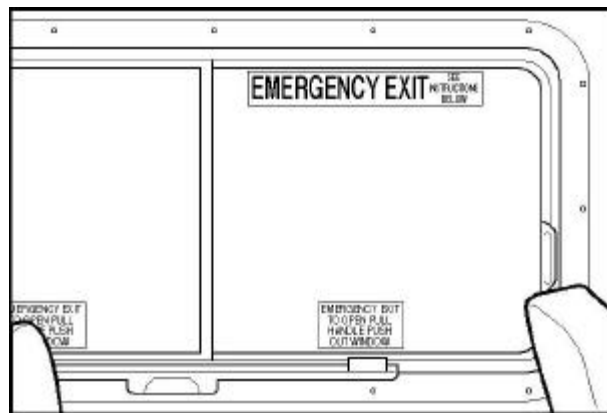
5. Close the window and be sure the nylon spacers do not interfere with the window sash when closing. If interference exists, then continue to grind off material from each spacer until clearance is achieved to permit required opening force..

6. With the window closed, recheck the force required to release the window latch. If needed, adjust latch by slightly bending corners of latch striker plate to achieve a force no greater than 15 lbs.
7. Recheck the push open force as describe on page 1 under inspection procedures for non school bus and school bus as appropriate. Window s should swing open without binding or sticking for a minimum of 18" to meet FMVSS 217 requirements. If requirements are not met recheck modification procedures to ensure all steps have been followed.

Operators manual excerpt:

Emergency exits are clearly identified by the words "EMERGENCY EXIT." Operating instructions are printed nearby each exit. Some units are equipped with an audible alarm device signifying an emergency exit is unlatched or open. If a buzzer sounds when turning on the ignition switch, check emergency exits to see that they are completely closed. All emergency exits meet Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 217, "Bus Window Retention and Release."

All emergency exits should be inspected and operated daily to ensure they are labeled and operate properly per the instructions provided.



**Transit Sliding
Pushout Window**