

Information Alert 6/14

28 August 2014

Dear Operator

SECURITY OF WHEELS ON BUSES

ISSUE:

The Office of Transport Safety Investigation (OTSI) released technical inspection findings relating to a wheel being detached from a bus on 14 January 2014. The report referred to the examination of the circumstances of the incident which highlighted preventative measures of regular checking of wheel nut security.

There have been previous alerts to operators involving wheels detaching from buses. Roads and Maritime Services is concerned that some operators may not have the appropriate system in place to ensure wheel nuts on buses are tensioned correctly. It is imperative that drivers are educated in regards to the pre-departure and end of shift procedures adopted by operators, which includes the visual checking of wheel nuts.

It is recommended that operators become familiar with the OTSI investigation regarding the security of wheels on buses and the report that can be accessed via the internet at <http://www.otsi.nsw.gov.au/bus/investigations.php>

NOTICE:

OTSI has identified preventive measures to assist in the security of wheels on buses which may be of use to operators. OTSI advised that regular checking of wheel nut security in its most basic form involves the checking of nut tightness on a regular basis. All wheels should be tightened in accordance with the manufacturers' standards and instructions. When possible the checks should be performed with a torque wrench, without first slackening the wheel nuts. If a torque wrench is not available, as is often the case away from a workshop, frequent visual checks should be performed until one is available. Pre-trip visual checks of wheel nuts and studs by drivers should be routine. There are aftermarket products available that are intended to aid in the prevention of wheel loss. These fall into three basic groups:

1. Products which give a visual indication of nut movement.
2. Products that arrest slackening of wheel nuts.
3. Products that lock the wheel nuts so that they cannot move.

There is also at least one product that combines the characteristics of categories 1 and 2 above.

REQUIRED ACTION:

Bus Operators are to:

- ensure that mechanics or suitably trained persons are aware of and comply with Manufacturer's Standards and instructions when tightening wheel nuts; and
- ensure that all drivers include the visual checking of wheel nuts in pre-departure checks and end of shift checks.

Bus Operators are reminded that failure to maintain buses in accordance with the manufacturer's maintenance standards is classified as a *Safety Critical Deficiency*.

**Joanne Treacy
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Accreditation**