

Safety Alert

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RETROFITTED MINI-VANS/BUSSES

Country: *AZERBAIJAN - Russia, Central Asia*

Location: *ONSHORE : Other onshore*

Incident Date: --- Time: ---

Type of Activity: *Transport - Land*

Type of Injury: ---

Function: ---

Specific insights were gained during a recent deep dive into the use of retrofitted vehicles, e.g. converted cargo-duty Mini-Vans/Busses for passenger transportation.

Inspections undertaken in Azerbaijan demonstrated that retrofitted vehicles with supplier certification (e.g. "letter of conformance"), for the retrofit installation and anchoring of seats can potentially be unsafe. Inspected vehicles were found to be out of conformance with the standards set out by United Nations Vehicle Regulations 17 for seat anchoring.

Where the seat anchoring is inadequate, there is a potential risk that in the event of a collision, the seats could pull from the floor and pile forward, crushing the occupants.



Corrective Actions and Recommendations:

For any retrofitted vehicles in use, it is recommended to thoroughly inspect the seat anchorages as below, regardless of supplier certification, to ensure it meets the standard set out by United Nations Vehicle Regulations 17:

1. Verify through inspection the type of seat anchorage bolts used. Seat anchorage bolts where “square plates” (Figure 1) are welded to the bolts might be inadequate in holding the seat in its position in the event of lateral force being applied (e.g. during collision). Only use appropriate, fit for purpose bolts (e.g. made out of one piece) to robustly secure the seat.
2. Verify through inspection the anchoring of the supporting rails and rail supporting beams. These might be inadequately anchored to the vehicle when being retrofitted (Figure 2). These rails and beams must be adequately anchored to the chassis (e.g. bolted).
3. Where issues with inadequate seat anchorage bolts are identified, stop using these vehicles. Where issues with the inadequate anchoring of the supporting rails and rail supporting beams are identified, adopt appropriate risk management controls (e.g. operate the vehicle at lower speed). Prioritise change out of vehicles in favour of original and purpose built Mini-Vans/Busses (e.g. purpose built for the intended use of passenger transportation and supplied directly from the vehicle manufacturer’s production line).

Figure 1: Inadequate seat anchorage bolts with welded square plate



Figure 2: Inadequate anchored rail and beam (e.g. welded instead of bolted)



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