



National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

INSPECTION PROTOCOL

Schoharie, NY
HWY19MH001

Background:

The National Transportation Safety Board is an independent Federal agency charged by Congress to determine the probable cause of an accident and to issue safety recommendations. The vehicle itself is an important aspect in determining the probable cause of this accident. This examination will help to determine the effect of the stretch modification, the structural integrity and road worthiness of the vehicle.

Our vehicle inspection process involves an in depth examination of all vehicle components and applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS). The examination will also include compliance with the manufacturers specifications for modification.

Often times operational parts and systems can be eliminated as contributory to the crash. There have been occasions where this type of examination has resulted in urgent or emergency recommendations to prevent other accidents from occurring. For instance a recall and removal of operation of a particular amphibious passenger vehicle from service until a recall was addressed, and a brake component in a Freightliner truck that could cause a loss of braking.

Since this crash NTSB investigators have been in contact with limo trade groups, limo companies, vehicle modifiers, vehicle manufacturers, state vehicle inspectors gathering information about limo vehicle. NTSB investigators have inspected stretched limos to develop a knowledge base of designs, modification and components specific to stretched limos.

Exterior Vehicle Inspection:

The accident vehicle was inspected and examined by the NYSP and their retained expert. Although NTSB investigators and defense representatives were present at a distance, several items were removed from the vehicle for further examination, but those items have not been identified to the NTSB. The NTSB understands that the items were removed from the vehicle for further examination. The NTSB did not observe the NYSP or its expert examine in detail the interior of the accident vehicle other than a scan of the accident vehicle. The NTSB did not observe the NYSP or its expert examine in detail the frame or undercarriage.



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Exterior inspection protocol:

- Examination will be conducted in cooperation with and direction of the Schoharie District Attorney in the presence and assistance by the NYSP
- Examine the undercarriage of the vehicle as it is in storage supported on jack stands. The height should provide adequate room for our examination so there is no need to further raise or lay the vehicle on its side.
- The examination will include photographs, measurements, documentation and additional scanning.
- There is no intention to remove any items or conduct any type of destructive testing.
- There may be a need to use a wire brush to remove some surface rust as the vehicle has not been stored in a climate controlled shelter.
- Frame,
 - Examination to include the general condition and all associated components, welds, body supports, body attachment and corrosion
 - Frame and floor concealment panels (if equipped remove to examine behind them)
- Suspension
 - Springs, shocks, sway bars
- Steering system
- Drive train
 - Drive shafts, carrier bearing
 - Engine oil sample
 - Transmission fluid sample
 - Verify that engine was operating
- Tires and wheels
 - Tires and wheels specified
 - Tires and wheels on the vehicle, size, manufactured date, load rating, speed rating
- Brake system
 - Brake lines, rotors, calipers, brake fluid (analyze for viscosity, contamination)
 - ABS, download of ABS module
- As part of our examination to examine the cause, we have a need to view the parts and information from the NYSP expert.
 - Collectively we may ask for further analysis of some components by the NYSP expert

Interior Vehicle Inspection:

Interior inspection protocol:

- Visual examination, photos, measurements, seat examination, dimensions, attachments, seat belts and seatbelt anchors.



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- Purpose: Establish mechanism of injury and evaluation of seat integrity, restraint systems and interior deformation
- Vehicle side panels and roof support
 - Examination of welds at structure members and possible weld quality
 - Passenger containment, survivable space
- Vehicle specification plates, stickers

Company Remaining Fleet:

Inspection of Remaining Fleet (3 stretched limos):

- Visual inspection of the remaining fleet in the presence of and assistance of the NYSP and NYDOT
 - Purpose to examine the underframe for corrosion and integrity
 - Safety inspection to examine compliance with applicable Federal and State Regulations
 - Arrangements have been made with a garage with a lift to raise the vehicles in a safe manner inside due to weather considerations
 - Vehicles could be transported under NYSP escort to and from the garage to maintain chain of custody about 7 miles from Troop G