



April 3, 2015

MANAGER, VEHICLE MAINTENANCE
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SUBJECT: Vehicle Fire Prevention

In January 2014 the USPS hired Trident Engineering Associates Inc., to investigate the cause of fires in the current Long Life Vehicle fleet. While the cause of all fires cannot be determined with certainty, the investigations have indicated conclusively some areas that need attention.

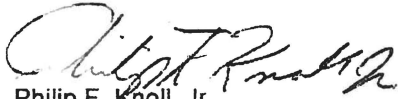
All Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF) managers must ensure Preventive Maintenance Inspection (PMI) guidelines are being followed by both postal employees and contractors. Vehicle Maintenance Bulletin VMB V-07-98 clearly outlines the required inspection items that must be made when performing a preventative maintenance inspection. **Total compliance** with this bulletin must occur when PMIs are performed and a copy of this bulletin should be made accessible to all contractors performing service on our vehicles.

Trident's reports indicate fires occurred primarily due to electrical system issues or fuel & oil/hydraulic system leaks. In some cases evidence was provided that oil leaks previously existed and this problem was not addressed. Please ensure the following actions are taken during each scheduled maintenance:

1. Ensure all contractors performing PMIs are provided with a copy of VMB V-07-98 and they are complying with these guidelines by completing the PS Form 4546.
2. Closely observe the vehicles fuel system when performing the inspection. It is imperative that all fuel system related items on the PMI form 4546 be inspected carefully. The inspection should focus on each fuel system component for leaks, signs of wear, proper installation and proper routing. When fuel lines are disconnected or fuel filters are changed, O-rings must be replaced at each connection when disturbed. Special attention must be given to the flexible fuel hoses to ensure there is sufficient space from hot engine components. Note: some aftermarket filter relocation kits twist the fuel lines in a way that differs from the original design and may require repositioning to move them away from hot components.
3. When performing the electrical wiring inspection, ensure all cables and wiring harnesses are routed properly and are not chaffed of their protective coating. All worn battery cables must be replaced when the insulation exhibits any damage. All wiring harnesses should be repaired according to manufacturer's procedures using only Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) design connectors. All splices must be soldered and made weatherproof. All electrical manufacturers' safety devices such as fusible links and in line fuses must be inspected and never eliminated to ensure proper circuit protection. When connectors are damaged or corroded beyond repair, the connector or wiring harness must be replaced.

4. Oil and coolant leaks must be repaired immediately. Almost all liquids used in the vehicle are combustible at an obtainable exhaust temperature. When researching the vehicle history, look for indications that the vehicle is using excessive oil that may require engine replacement rather than putting it off for the next person to do.

It is the obligation of Fleet Management to ensure all our postal vehicle assets are maintained in a safe and reliable condition. Please make it your commitment to ensure that every vehicle serviced by the VMF or by a contractor receives a complete and professional repair each and every time.



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