



SERVICE BULLETIN

Subject: Improper Use of Folding Ramp as a Handrail
Applicable Products: "Activan" minivan conversion
Effectivity: All – personal and commercial

Ricon service bulletins are for use by professional service technicians, and are not intended for use by non-professionals (do-it-yourselfers). Service Bulletins alert technicians to issues that may occur with Ricon products, and are intended to assist the technician in the proper service of those products.

Professional service technicians have the background and knowledge to perform maintenance work properly and safely.

An issue described by a service bulletin does not necessarily apply to every unit in a product line. A Ricon authorized service technician will be able to determine which units can benefit from the information provided here.

Introduction

The information in this bulletin describes a hazard that may result when passengers use the folding ramp as a supporting handrail.

Incorporation

Ricon recommends the incorporation of this service bulletin as soon as possible.

Information

Physically impaired people enter the Activan vehicle through the side door, which is often equipped with a folding ramp. The ramp may be either a manually operated type or a powered type. When not in use, the ramp is folded and raised to a vertical position within the doorway (refer to Figure 1). When needed for entering or exiting the vehicle, the ramp is unfolded and lowered to the ground (refer to Figure 2). When an ambulatory person needs to enter or exit the vehicle at the side door, the raised ramp is swung outward like a gate (refer to Figure 3).

The components that allow the ramp to lower to the ground and to also swing like a gate are attached to the lower left of the ramp frame and to the rearward door jamb (where the jamb meets the door sill).

When the ramp is swung out, passengers entering or exiting are prone to using the top edge of the folded ramp as a handrail. When in this position, the ramp is not intended to support additional weight. If any force is applied along the upper edge of the ramp (refer to Figure 3), the vertical bracket supporting the ramp flexes at its lower end. This flex leads to premature fatigue and cracking. Once cracked, the bracket can fail, allowing the ramp to drop unexpectedly.

Caution

The person responsible for operation of the folding ramp (typically the vehicle operator) should watch over its use, and caution passengers against using the folded ramp as a handrail.

Ramps that have been subjected to use as handrails should be inspected for cracking of the main vertical bracket assembly (refer to Figure 4). Inspect related parts that could also have been stressed, such as the pivots on the ramp frame and associated hardware. Replace brackets that exhibit signs of cracking, or any related parts that are damaged.



Corrective Action

A warning decal has been produced that alerts passengers to the potential hazard of using the folded ramp as a handrail (refer to Figure 5). Two of these decals are placed on each vehicle, one visible to passengers entering the vehicle and one visible to those exiting. One decal is placed on the exterior side of the sliding door window, in the lower right corner (viewed from outside). The second decal is placed on the interior side of the rear-most side window, in the lower left corner (viewed from inside). This is the fixed window that is just behind the "C" pillar. Refer to Figure 6.

The operating and servicing manual has been revised to include a warning that advises against using the folded ramp as a handrail. The warning is in the Safety Precautions section of chapter two.

Parts Involved

Decal, Warning, Do Not Lean 22075
Manual, Service/Operator, Activan TX for Caltrans32DACTC

Labor Allowance

None

Figures

See following page.



FIGURE 1



FIGURE 2



FIGURE 3

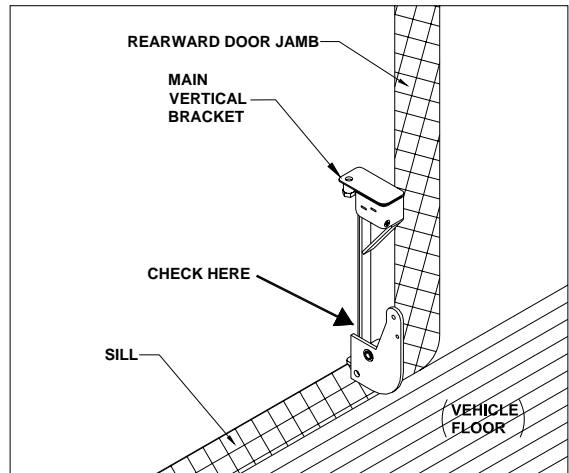


FIGURE 4



FIGURE 5

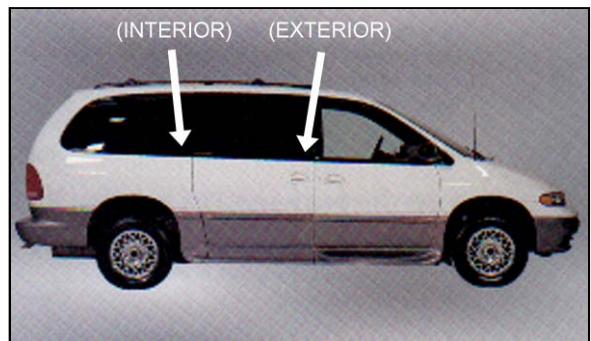


FIGURE 6