



VLR Lift- en Roltraptechniek

REGISTERED MAIL

SICOR S.R.L.
Viale Caproni, 32
38068 Rovereto (TN)
ITALY

OUR REF. : VLR/211012/HB/iho
TELEPHONE : 088 400 84 56
DATE : October 12, 2021
RE. : safety risks SICOR MR14

Dear Board Members

On behalf of the Dutch lift sector, which is represented by the trade association VLR, we would like to ask your attention for the following issue.

INCIDENT IMPLYING SAFETY RISKS

A couple of weeks ago, one of our member companies has been called to inspect the safety of a lift. Reason for this call was the fact that the lift had spontaneously moved from the ground floor to the 8th floor, transporting one person but without any command/action (car call) of this person. The door of the lift remained opened during the entire ride of the car from the ground floor to the upper floor. The lift indeed stopped at the upper floor, but not at the correct level, i.e. approximately 20 cm beyond the normal level. The person inside the lift was able to leave the lift without any injury.

This incident has of course been reason for thorough inspection by the lift company involved. The brake arm has been disassembled in order to inspect the brake drum and the brake linings. Both proved to be seriously polluted by oil and grease. Oil had leaked due to a defective lip seal of the gear box, which is located between the gearbox and the brake drum. Oil had come between the motor axle and the lip seal. Due to the rotation of the axle, the oil has ended upon the brake drum and the brake linings. As a consequence, the brake function was no longer there or was at least seriously affected.

This could have been a unique case, but inspections of other lifts equipped with the SICOR MR14 machine have unfortunately proved that this defect occurs in approximately 10% of the lifts concerned. Such lifts have therefore been put out of service, in order to exclude the risk of fatal accidents. The lip seals have been replaced by lip seals which have been recommended by you or by lip seals of another make.

URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

The situation which has occurred and the outcome of the inspections of other lifts equipped with the SICOR MR14 machine has been communicated to all the member companies of our national lifts association VLR. We have urged our member companies to inspect the lifts they have delivered or for which they provide service on any oil leakage to the braking system and to take adequate action, where appropriate.

We have also taken the initiative to report the risks to the Dutch market surveillance authorities, in order to implement the responsibilities of lift manufacturers and distributors under Article 5.3 of the European General Product Safety Directive (Directive 2001/95/EC). We quote the text of this Article 5.3 for your convenience:

Where producers and distributors know or ought to know, on the basis of the information in their possession and as professionals, that a product that they have placed on the market poses risks to the consumer that are incompatible with the general safety requirement, they shall immediately inform the competent authorities of the Member States thereof under the conditions laid down in Annex I, giving details, in particular, of action taken to prevent risk to the consumer.

As manufacturers and distributors of lifts, including your MR14 machine, our member companies cannot escape this obligation, so we informed the Dutch authorities, acting on behalf of all our member companies concerned.

RISKS OF DEATH/INJURY

Our member companies have been deeply alarmed by the information on the oil leakage in your machines, as they incorporate these machines in their lifts, provide service on these machines and/or give advice in this respect. They certainly have an interest in preventing accidents with your lift machines, particularly to prevent fatal injury of people using and employees servicing these lifts. They may also incur product liability if such injury would occur.

We have been informed that you are aware of the situation, as described, and that you have offered a retro-fit-kit to replace the lip seal which may be the cause of the problems. We would however like to ask additional information to act appropriately.

QUESTIONS/NEED FOR INSTRUCTIONS

We assume you have been analysing the risks concerned at length. Our member companies would like to receive your report on this analysis. As your company is the specialist for the machines involved, we would certainly like to receive detailed instructions on how to proceed in order to exclude any future accidents. Can you recommend specific action to ensure safety of the lifts concerned? Can you suggest specific testing procedures to assess the reliability and safety of the lip seals concerned? Can you be more precise about the type and serial numbers of MR14 machines which may present the risks at stake?

Please provide us with all information and instructions which may be important for our companies to prevent accidents.

We are confident that you will contribute to ensure safety of persons using or servicing the lifts concerned and that you will support our member companies with all the assistance they need to exclude accidents. Thank you very much for reacting at very short notice.

We send copy of this letter to your distributor in the Netherlands, Wittur.

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of VLR

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Bussing', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Harold Bussing
Chairman