



## PRODUCT ANNOUNCEMENT FROM IMMI



### SEAT BELT EXTENDER POLICY

For over 50 years, IMMI has designed, manufactured and tested occupant restraint systems for Commercial and Specialty Vehicle customers. Our approach of understanding the unique needs of this market and engineering products specifically for it, has enabled us to supply most of the seat belts used in Commercial Vehicles. Our experience confirms reports indicating that seat belts are the most effective means to reduce serious injuries and the likelihood of fatalities in Commercial Vehicle crashes. Therefore, IMMI recommends that all Commercial Vehicle occupants buckle-up while vehicles are in motion.

Some Commercial Vehicle occupants of exceptional size may be unable to fasten their original equipment seat belt. To assure that these occupants can buckle-up, Commercial Vehicle manufacturers and IMMI have designed special, extended length seat belt systems. These systems feature more webbing and may include other changes to allow occupants of exceptional size to buckle-up. As a consequence, these seat belt systems may not fully retract when the seat belt is not in use; so, they should only be used when necessary to accommodate occupants of exceptional size. These seat belt systems are custom designed to each vehicle and seating combination. They may be ordered and installed at Commercial Vehicle dealerships.

Within the automotive industry, seat belt extenders are sometimes used for this same purpose. The extender is a short strap placed between the seat belt system's buckle and latch plate. It is IMMI's policy not to provide seat belt extenders for Commercial Vehicles for several reasons. First, seat belt extenders shift the location where the torso and lap belts come together away from the buckle. In most cases, this causes poor fit of the torso belt. Poorly positioned torso belts may increase the chances for injury or death in crashes. Second, several different occupants often drive Commercial Vehicles. If seat belt extenders are installed for an exceptional sized occupant, they may not be removed for other average sized occupants. In this case, the seat belt extender would severely compromise the torso belt fit and safety belt performance for the average sized occupant. IMMI feels the potential for this type of misuse is greater in Commercial Vehicles than passenger cars. Third, seat belts in Commercial Vehicles continuously improve over time. Latches and buckles from an older, original equipment seat belt and a newer seat belt extender may not function optimally together. Lastly, multiple manufacturers supply Commercial Vehicle seat belts. A user could potentially mismatch a seat belt extender from one manufacturer with an original equipment seat belt from another manufacturer. Mismatched seat belt components increase the chances for injury or death in crashes.

IMMI is committed to bring safety to all Commercial Vehicle occupants, including those of exceptional size. We believe our policy of supplying special, extended length seat belts instead of seat belt extenders is the safest way to protect these occupants.

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