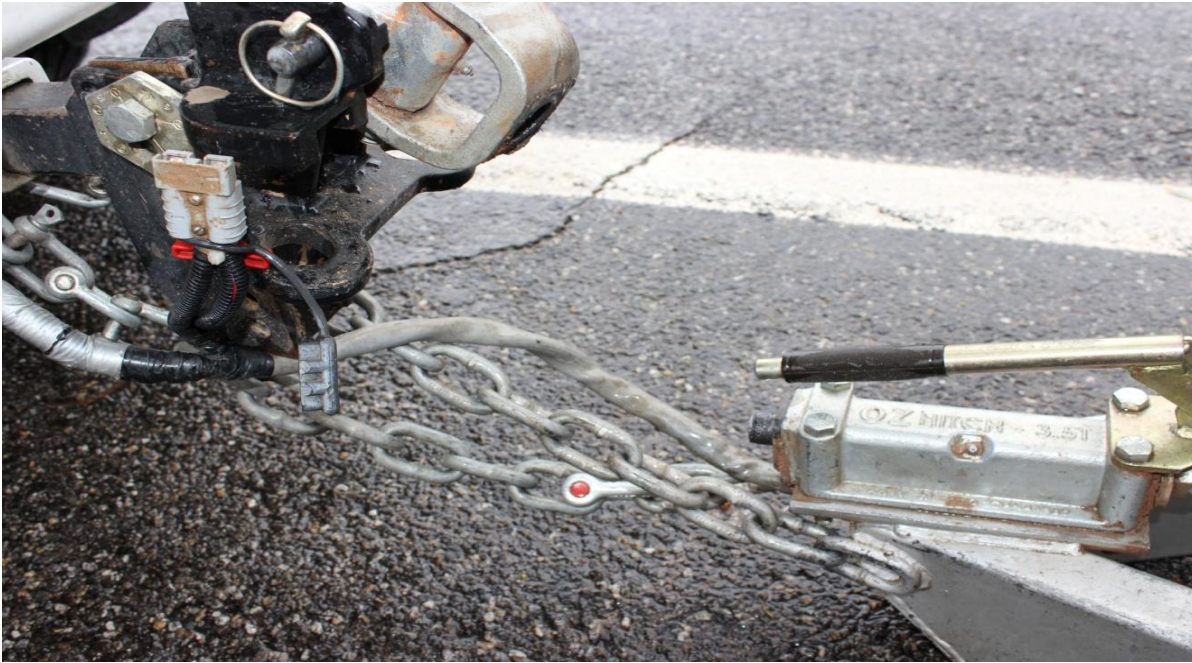


## CARAVAN COUPLING FAILURE

I would like to provide information on a recent failure of the coupling on my caravan. I had fitted an Oz Hitch 3.5t 4 bolt off road coupling to my caravan in lieu of the standard ball coupling to allow me to fully open the rear door of my tow vehicle as the door fouled on the original coupling D handle.

The coupling was fitted in February 2013 and has travelled approximately 16000kms.

On Saturday 31 May 2014 I was executing a U turn, and half way through the turn, the coupling failed. This was caused by a failure of the spigot shaft weld on the rear end of the coupling.



On the day of the failure, I contacted the manufacturer, Oz Hitch and advised them of the situation to which they replied "we have had a few failures of these, we are happy to replace the unit". "The new units have the shaft threaded and then welded".

Whilst I was happy with their response, I felt unable to trust the product again and subsequently requested a full refund on the purchase price plus postage which has occurred.

My concern here is that this company has not issued any form of recall of a product that has the potential to kill people. In our situation we were very lucky that this happened during a very low speed manoeuvre approximately 10 kmh, 10 minutes earlier were travelling at 80-90 kmh, with potentially disastrous consequences.

I have been subsequently told that the welded area was between the high tensile steel shaft and cast steel coupling.

The caravan is a 2008 Coromal Lifestyle XC 615 and the towing vehicle is a 2010 Toyota Prado.

I have provided this information so that the word can be spread to people that have these hitches and to contact the manufacturer Oz Hitch or have their coupling fully checked out.