

REMINGTON ARMS COMPANY, INC.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Remington



Lonoke, Arkansas
December 13, 1972

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SMITH & WESSON COMPLAINT CONCERNING DAMAGED MODEL 39 PISTOLS
9MM LUGER 124 GR M.C. - CODE LT21DD (June, 1971)

S&W reported to J. H. Chisnall on October 26, 1972 that they had received reports of nine (9) damaged Model 39's from the field and had also experienced two damaged guns in their own gallery testing. Previous to this, Bridgeport had been informed by the FBI Academy that they had experienced two damaged Model 39's while using 9mm Luger cartridges supplied by Super Vel. The ammunition in question, loaded in January, 1972, had been manufactured by Lonoke for Super Vel under contract.

Nature of casualty is such that gas released into frame of pistol from a rupture in case breaks hand grips and damages magazine. Case fails just forward of extractor groove where wall of shell meets solid portion of head. The actual rupture is associated with blowout of an elliptical shaped section of brass metal approximately .230 long x .130 wide x .030 thick. Outline of rupture (or bulge when rupture does not take place) conforms to that of relieved area at entrance to gun chamber on bottom side. This "ramp" facilitates feeding of cartridge into chamber but leaves shell unsupported for a distance of about 1/16" above extractor groove. The relieved area extends more deeply into the chamber of the S&W pistol than with Colt and Luger versions of the same caliber.

The actual defect in the shell responsible for rupture is a severe cold shut or fold in the base wall formed during the heading operation. This structural weakness is to be found to a greater or lesser degree in nearly all caliber pistol and revolver ammunition and is characteristic of manufacturing process. Direction of this fold, however, is normally into solid portion of head and therefore of no particular consequence. Examination of exhibits submitted by S&W revealed folds to be abnormal not only with respect to severity but also in direction of propagation through side wall.

Enclosure 3

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