

AUSPLOW FARMING SYSTEMS

6 Davison Road, Jandakot 6164 PO Box 5010, South Lake 6964 Western Australia
Ph: (61 8) 9417 8877 Fax: (61 8) 9417 8878
e-mail: ausplow@ausplow.com.au

PARTS BULLETIN No. 2-08

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Subject: AUSEEDER BLADE REPLACEMENTS

A widespread problem has developed with tillage blades over the past two seasons. This has applied, to varying degrees, to all manufacturers of blades protected with Tungsten Tiles.

Ausplow Warranty Policy has been identical to the majority of other manufacturers, in that ground engaging wear-parts are specifically excluded from warranty provisions. This is primarily because of the widely varying ground conditions that will be encountered and the achievable service life is impossible to predict. Once a blade has entered the ground and worked for a short period it is normally extremely difficult to establish whether subsequent wear or damage is normal for the conditions or not.

There may, however, be some circumstances where a variation to this standard policy is justified and a Policy Warranty decision be made on a Goodwill Basis.

The current situation has been judged to be a special circumstance and Ausplow are prepared to offer some assistance to our customers under specific conditions. There are two distinct indicators which help to isolate blades that qualify for consideration.

(1) Tungsten Tiles split in semi-horizontal layers, rather than across or through the tile.

This failure seems to be related to particular batches of tungsten tiles. Failures of this type occurred mostly during the 2006/07 season and rectification was completed at that time. Some suspect blades which were in dealer stock, or held as spares on farms, may not have been used until the 2007/08 season. Care must be exercised in assessing blade claims, since tungsten tiles may chip, or split, from impact with rock or other solid objects and this would be classed as normal wear in those conditions.

(2) Tungsten Tiles not bonded to Blade.

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This failure clearly relates to the soldering process which bonds the tungsten tile to the blade. The process which Ausplow uses has not been changed over many years and hundreds of thousands of blades. There have, however, been changes by the manufacturers in the composition of the solder, most recently the removal of Cadmium to meet environmental regulations. At this stage we have not been able to establish a cause conclusively but our control of heat during the process has been tightened to ensure a strong bond.

Blades which lose tungsten tiles (in the vast majority of cases it is the bottom tile), are easy to detect in most cases. Some will become dislodged in transport or in handling. Others will be lost within the first few minutes, or hectares, of use. In these cases, presentation of a blade with a tile missing and some of the machined portion of the blade visible is accepted as evidence of this problem. Blades which have been used until the bottom of the blade has been completely worn away (the normal end of service life), will not be accepted as having this problem unless other supporting evidence is available.

RECTIFICATION

Ausplow is prepared to replace blades, which are shown, to our satisfaction, to have these problems, on a one-for-one basis.

Dealers are requested to ensure that any suspect blades are returned by owners to the dealer premises by no later than 30th June 2008.

Wherever possible returned blades will be inspected by Ausplow at the dealer premises and quantities for replacement will be agreed at that time.

NOTE: Where returned blades were specials made to customer request, the replacements will be standard blades of that length only. The only variation will be blades with liquid tube nuts.

Mike Kilroy
Parts Manager

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