



Z-FRAME™ BACKGROUNDER

THE TERMINOLOGY

A “Commercial Low Floor Vehicle” is defined as a vehicle having its floor height for entry/exit access below the center of the rotating wheels that support the vehicle floor. Dallas Smith Corp. has been issued broad patent coverage on this vehicle arrangement.

THE PATENTS

Dallas Smith Corp. holds two patents from the U.S. Patents and Trademark Office on parts engineered for use on the Ford F-450/550 Super Duty series cab chassis. Patent number US 6,986,519 B2, titled “Low Profile Chassis and Suspension”, covers the Z-Frame™ design that allows road vehicles to be converted to low floor. The second patent, US D 485,787 S, protects the rights to the design of the vehicle chassis.

A total of 15 patents are held by Dallas Smith Corp. on the low floor technology. Workhorse Custom Chassis, a division of International Trucks, is a licensee of Dallas Smith Corp., the company manufactures standard stripped low floor chassis used for transit shuttle buses in class 5. Marmon-Herrington (Louisville, Ky.) also a Dallas Smith licensee outfits class 6 & 7 chassis as heavy duty trucks, utility and military vehicles.

THE MANUFACTURER

Detroit Chassis exclusively manufactures the Z-Frame™ as engineered by Dallas Smith Corp. The company will also perform conversions on select Z-Frame™ vehicles. See more on conversions below.

Detroit Chassis

Location: Detroit, Mich

Online: www.detroitchassis.com

THE CONVERTERS

Manning Equipment and Detroit Chassis perform all conversions on Ford F-450/550 Super Duty cab chassis, removing the standard rear frame from the chassis and attaching the Z-Frame™.

Manning Equipment, a Ford-recognized QVM (Quality Vehicle Manufacturer) of more than 50 years, receives the manufactured Z-Frame™ from Detroit Chassis. Manning Equipment is located next to the Ford Kentucky Truck Plant in Louisville where the F-Series Super Duty Series trucks are manufactured. After the conversion, the truck is sent back to the neighboring Ford plant where it will be shipped directly to the Ford Truck commercial truck dealer in a process referred to as a “ship through.”

Manning Equipment also “bodies up” or completes the truck by adding a body on the Z-Frame™ chassis. Conversions on low-floor pickups, stake bodies with fences, low flat beds, and open and closed utility service trucks are performed by Manning Equipment.

Manning Equipment

Location: Louisville, Ky.

Online: www.truckequip.com



Detroit Chassis converts the standard chassis to low floor with the Z-Frame™ rear chassis and ships the unit to Supreme Coach in Goshen, Ind. to be “bodied-up” as a Friendly Bus (low floor shuttle bus) or a Boss Van (low floor cargo/box van).

KEY PERSONNEL

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