

Trailer Brakes Not Working

Question: We own a 1986, 27' Airstream Sovereign Trailer, which is giving us brake problems. On the side opposite the door (right side) it does not have power to the brakes. The left side brakes are fine.

Thor says it is spliced up under the belly, but they are not sure where. We have contacted several sources and have been unable to find an answer. We would appreciate any help you could give us. Unfortunately, we are not close to any Airstream help and have several rallies coming up.

Answer: I know the feeling. Usually the breakage occurs at the connection between the brake pigtail leads and the 12 volt line. If your 12 volt wires to the brake pigtail do not have any voltage when you turn on the controller then the broken wire is indeed under the belly pan where the right and left side wires join the main feed line. Where the connection was made could be anybody's guess.

The easiest and fastest solution is to run a new wire from the front of the trailer (where your brake wire feed is) direct to the right side brakes. As a temporary fix, you could run this along the belly pan (for a quick solution) so you can go on the rallies. Just be sure to install some wire clamps.

The permanent solution is to run the wires inside the trailer along the wall. Since it is on the side away from the door, you just have to feed it through closets and behind moldings. Be sure and protect the wires if they have to go through any sheet metal using plastic or rubber grommets. Use nylon wire clamps that have a mounting hole to hold the wires in place. Near the brakes you will need to drill a hole through the floor and belly pan to feed the wire through. Get a 12" drill that will go through the floor and pan and stick out so you can see it. This would work best in a closet. Be sure and use a grommet on the belly pan. Don't forget to tape off the old wires, so they cannot cause a short if the connection comes back. Leave a reasonable loop and securely mount the wires next to the brake connection. Be sure and use the same size wire that is currently installed.

The only other solution I am aware of is to remove the belly pan, fix the connection, and re-rivet the pan. This is probably in the \$500-\$600 range and not a usual do-it-yourself job. Properly supporting the pan for both removal and re-installation is the big problem. Let me know how you make out. Good luck.

Response: Thanks! You have given me assurance on what to do. Will get to it this day and I have an appointment with a Trailer Service Company in October. The earliest they could do it. Thanks again. "Blue Beret" and you deserve a big pat. GREAT SERVICE Help!