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NHTSA #: ES13-001541	Rec'd Date: 3/28/2013	Referred By: NPO-011
XREF #:	Doc Type: GEN	Doc Date: 3/24/2013
Delivery: EXP	Address To: NOA010	Due Date: 4/11/2013
S10 #:	DOT/I #:	RMP #:
Subject: SUBMISSION FROM [REDACTED] REGARDING HER 2001 PONTIAC GRAN PRIX LIGHTING PROBLEM, CASE NUMBER 6150244		
Ack Date:	Ack By:	Signed For:
Sign Office: ENFORCEMENT	Signature: NANCY L. LEWIS	Cleared For:
Cleared Date:	Cleared By:	Closed Date:
File Loc:	XREF File:	
Added By: CBUTLER x60180	Modified By: Chris.Butler	
Most Recent Comment:		

Author:

[REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 VIRGINIA BEACH, VA [REDACTED]
 Tel: Fax: E-mail:

Assigned To	Task	Asgn Date	Deadline	Returned Date
NVS-200	REPLY	3/28/2013	4/11/2013	
NVS-010	INFORMATION	3/28/2013	4/11/2013	

MAR 28 2013

NM
32913
SMD

Virginia Beach VA
March 24, 2013

Mr. Michael P. Millikin
General Motors Company
Senior Vice President and General Counsel
PO Box 33170
Detroit MI 48232-5170

RE: Case Number 6150244
2001 Pontiac Gran Prix
VIN 1G2WK52J91F

Dear Mr. Millikin:

As you will see by the enclosed copies of correspondence, it was almost ten years ago to the day that I first contacted GM because of the lighting problem with this car that began while the car was still under the original factory warranty. At that time it was believed the matter was resolved once and for all; therefore, I did not pursue the situation any further. Now I am realizing that I should have pursued the fact this car is a lemon that presents a safety issue to anyone on the roadway because it is still occurring. It is also my understanding that the case can be reopened at any time.

Rather than repeating all the circumstances that you can read on the enclosed material, I would like to once again request something be done by General Motors, the manufacturer of this vehicle. The mileage on this vehicle as of March 24, 2013, 5:15 p.m., is 87,744 miles which is extremely low for a vehicle this age. The reason it is so low is due to the fact it cannot be safely driven at night. According to both Kelly Blue Book and the NADA guide, this car is worth approximately \$4,000 because of the low mileage and its very good condition. This vehicle has been in my possession since it was purchased in March 2001 and has been properly maintained through the years.

Since I no longer need the vehicle, I would like to sell it. However, I cannot morally sell this car and put other people's lives at risk as your company did mine when you would not acknowledge there was a problem which technically classified this car as a lemon product according to the laws of Virginia. The problem was reported within the 18 month timeframe defining a vehicle as a lemon. Many efforts were made to repair it, but the real root of the problem was never found. When they finally discovered the lighting circuit breaker on the right side behind the glove compartment, there was evidence of it being hot which I can only assume could have caused an electrical fire. Therefore, since the issue is once again resurfacing, there are two safety issues involved: 1) the issue of all lights going out, both interior and exterior, leaving the vehicle in total darkness; and 2) a possible electrical fire hazard; both of which could be deadly or lead to serious injuries.

Due to the disadvantages and adjustments I have had to make putting in the car in the shop multiple times, not being able to drive it at night, insurance premiums paid so it could be legally driven at all, I feel that I should get out of the car what it is worth, safety issues aside. I could possibly push for what it was worth ten years ago, but am willing to settle for what it is worth

ES13-001541

Mr. Michael P. Millikin
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according to the used car guides now. This vehicle needs to be taken off the road for everyone's safety.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter and I look forward to hearing from you because I feel that a lawsuit would be a waste of time and money for both of us, when this matter could be settled without all that hassle.

Sincerely,



Enclosures (4)

✓ cc: David L. Strickland, Administrator
NHTSA Headquarters
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
West Bldg
Washington DC 20590

Virginia Beach VA
March 19, 2003

G. Richard Wagoner, Jr.
GM President and CEO
General Motors Corporation
100 Renaissance Center
PO Box 431301
Detroit MI 48265

Dear Mr. Wagoner:

This letter is in reference to Pontiac case number 6150244 on a 2001 Pontiac Grand Prix, VIN 1G2WK52J91F. This vehicle was purchased new in March 2001. I am the original owner.

Approximately one year ago, we were driving on the highway at night when all lights, both interior and exterior, went completely out. This same incident has occurred on seven (7) different occasions. A history of these incidents is enclosed for your convenience. The automobile has been in the repair shop four (4) times with no resolution to the problem. The following pieces of equipment have been replaced during the first three (3) visits to a Pontiac dealership shop – the diode, the BCM, and the headlamp switch. On the most recent visit to the shop, I was told that nothing more could be done until the technicians were able to duplicate the problem. There are no error codes showing. The technicians have spoken with your technical assistance department on several occasions concerning this matter.

After this last visit to the dealership's shop, I called your customer service assistance division to be told that Pontiac could do nothing until your technicians duplicate the problem. Apparently there is some thought that perhaps a ground or circuit breaker is causing the problem; but they will not, or cannot, go into the dash area to troubleshoot these possibilities because of the Pontiac rule that the technicians have to duplicate the problem.

As you will note on the history enclosed, the problem most often happens at night after dealerships are closed. So we would not be able to get it there immediately for them to check it out. And since it always seems to happen at night on major highways, we may not be alive to get it to the shop. Not only are our lives at stake, but unknown others depending on the amount of traffic at the time of an occurrence. We live in a heavily populated area, so there could be numerous fatalities, and we travel primarily on interstates to visit family.

I have been very patient about this problem to-date. I have taken it back to Pontiac dealerships because of warranty issues involved and the fact that the problem stems from original equipment malfunctions. My patience has run out. This is very definitely a safety issue and should be addressed by Pontiac – above the "a technician has to duplicate the problem" response. It is not right to put people's lives in danger because of malfunctioning equipment. I am tired of feeling unsafe in my own vehicle, and endangering the lives of my family, others and myself. It is not feasible to always travel in the daylight.

A report has been filed with the NHTSA this week, per your owner's manual instructions. Also in the event of an accident because the lights went out, copies of all paperwork – the history documentation, service reports, phone conversation transcription with your customer service representative and a copy of this letter – will be available to all parties involved in such an accident. However, I would very much like to settle this issue directly with Pontiac **before** lives are lost.

In my research, I have learned that earlier models of Pontiac have had the same problem – all lighting goes out. I have also learned of some potential problems I for which I was never notified of recalls or the fact there could be problems under certain circumstances. These include:

- Frontal air bags for which the recall states that phone calls were made to owners on January 29, 2001, and follow-up mailings began April 17, 2001. I did not own my vehicle on January 29; but I never received any mailings either and those began after I purchased the vehicle in March 2001.
- Frontal air bags for which a recall was issued December 3, 2002, because of a missing check value pin. I never received any information on that situation.
- Seat belts, front buckle assembly that had a recall date of August 17, 2000. Perhaps this had been replaced in my vehicle before I purchased it in March 2001. How can I be sure?
- Rotor problem – this was discovered “by accident” when I took my vehicle in because the car would pull and shudder when brakes were applied. That was on February 26, 2002, and they were replaced. I never received any notification from Pontiac.

My question to you is – what is General Motors/Pontiac going to do about this situation? Do we come to a settlement between us or do I contact a lawyer and/or news media services, either of whom would relish addressing a safety issue factor?

Sincerely,



cc: John F. Smith, Jr.
GM Chairman

Better Business Bureau
3055 Southfield Road, Ste 200
Southfield, MI 48076-7751

2001 Pontiac Grand Prix
VIN: 1G2WK52J91F XXXXXXXXXX

April 25, 2003

Started car approximately 7:20 a.m.

Cloudy conditions

Dash lights on automatically, switch still in off position

About five minutes of driving heard click inside dash, nothing happened.

Light sprinkle so turned lights on manually. Sprinkle stopped, turned lights off.

Heard click, dash lights remained on

One minute later, dash lights went out.

Heard another click a few minutes later, nothing changed visibly.

April 23, 2003 Approximately 6:59-7:00 a.m. Within 3-4 minutes of leaving my house for work, I noticed the interior dash lights were on. Not manually turned on as the switch was off. They remained on for 5-10 minutes, at which time I turned off the car to go inside a store. They did not come on when I restarted the car about 7:30 a.m. Sunny conditions.

April 14, 2003 **Time 9:50 p.m. to 10:13 p.m.**

- While stopped at light, all interior and exterior lights went completely out for a few seconds
- Then began flashing sequence of 4 times, few seconds off, few seconds on
- Drove a few more blocks, was turning, and they went completely out again, no flashing sequence this time, just out and back on
- Drove about ½ block when they went completely out again, travel speed was approximately 20 mph, no flashing sequence, just out momentarily and back on
- Driving time approximately 15 minutes prior to incident, in-town speeds of 25-35 mph

April 14, 2003 **Time 7:40 a.m.**

- Upon starting the car, the interior dash car-outline light was on, as if lights had been turned on manually. The switch was in "off" position.
- Weather was sunny – too bright for the lights to automatically come on
- After driving approximately 5 minutes, they shut off on their own.

March 25, 2003 **Time: 7:45 a.m.**

- Heard clicking in the dash
- Driving time approximately 10-15 minutes
- Sunny weather

March 24, 2003

- Heard clicking the dash – like switch trying to connect
- Driving time approximately 30 minutes
- Sunny weather

March 2, 2003 **Time: 6:00 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.**

- All interior and exterior lights went off briefly, came back on themselves
- About 2 miles further down the road, they went into a flashing sequence – total darkness, flashed on, total darkness for 3-4 times
- Driving prior to incident was on local streets about 10 minutes and on I-264 approximately 2-5 minutes when incident occurred
- Lights had been manually turned on
- Weather conditions were damp, rainy

January 3, 2003

Time: 4:19 p.m.

- Interior instrument panel lights came on automatically
- Driving time prior to occurrence was approximately 5-10 minutes
- They did not click off
- May have been overcast, but not dark enough to cause them to come on by themselves
- Headlamp switch replaced by dealership

December 31, 2002

Time: 7:00 p.m.

- All interior and exterior lights went completely out – total darkness
- Did this 2-3 times within 15-30 minute span of time, not flashing sequence, distinguishable time lapse between each occurrence
- Driving time prior to occurrence was approximately 9 hours on interstate roads
- Weather was clear, occurred on I-64 between Richmond and Williamsburg, Virginia
- Discovered fog lights worked
- Lights were manually turned on

December 31, 2002

Time: 10:00 a.m.

- Interior and exterior lights went completely out
- Flashed back on momentarily and went out again.
- Flashing sequence happened 3-5 times in succession
- Driving time prior to incident was about 30 minutes
- Rainy conditions so we had windshield wipers and lights manually turned on
- Continued to drive with lights on as sky became brighter – lights went out again without being manually turned off

December 30, 2002

Time 9:30 p.m.

- All lights, interior and exterior, went completely out, no warning
- Repeated approximately 6-12 times within an hour; not flashing sequence, distinguishable time lapses between each occurrence
- All control panel lights went out, as in each of the other instances. Radio continued to play but could not see the dial.
- Lights had been turned on manually
- Driving time prior to incident was approximately 8-9 hours

December 30, 2002, continued

- Smooth roads, no bumps -- I-44 in Missouri and I-64 in Illinois and Indiana
- Rainy weather conditions

September 6, 2002

Time: 9:00 – 9:15 p.m.

- All interior and exterior lights went completely out – no warning
- This was a flashing sequence occurring 2-3 times within 10 minute time frame
- Driving time prior to incident was 4 hours on interstate highways
- Were on country road in Warren County, Virginia, at time of occurrence
- Dealership replaced BCM when taken to the shop

May 19, 2002

Time: 8:00 – 8:30 p.m.

- All interior and exterior lights went completely out, total darkness, no warning
- Clear weather conditions
- I-64 between Waynesboro and Richmond, Virginia
- Driving time prior to incident was approximately 10 hours
- 18-wheeler behind us when incident occurred going down the mountain
- Dealership replaced DRL module

March 2002

Time: 8:00 – 9:00 p.m.

- All interior and exterior lights went out without warning, total darkness
- Happened twice within 5-10 minutes
- Country road in eastern Pennsylvania mountains
- Clear weather conditions
- Driving time prior to incident was approximately 7-8 hours on interstates
- This was the first occurrence and we were dealing with a death in the family
- Did not take it to the shop when we returned home as it didn't happen again on that trip

Questions presented to the dealership in January 2003

Is there something wrong with the main light switch(es), thus creating problems?

Are relay switches not making proper connections?

Is something over-heating within the lighting circuitry?

Is something very simple being overlooked in this process?

Can the designer of this system be contacted for possible problems/solutions?

Are other owners reporting the same or similar problems?

Is there another technician more knowledgeable who can help with the solution?

Is it something outside the computer module(s) to cause this problem?

Sometimes when driving, I hear a clicking sound coming from the instrument panel—
like a switch clicking.

Addendum of March 18, 2003

Additional information learned within past two-three weeks is that perhaps something is wrong in the circuit breaker or a ground. However, the Pontiac rule of "technicians must duplicate the problem" kept them from checking inside the dash or other components.

2001 Pontiac Grand Prix
VIN: 1G2WK52J91F XXXXXXXXXX

DATE	TIME	CONDITIONS	DRIVING TIME	HEADLIGHT SWITCH POSITION	DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENTS
		Weather/Speed	Prior to incident		
March 2, 2013	9:15 p.m.	Night Cold 45 mph	Approximately 15 minutes	On	Driving on Virginia Beach Boulevard in Virginia Beach, VA between Great Neck Road and Independence Boulevard. Interior and exterior lights went totally dark 3-4 times within a span of 15 minutes. They came back on by themselves.
Fall/spring 2009-2010	8:30 to 9:00 p.m.	Warm 55 mph	Approximately 20-30 minutes	On	Driving in I-264 in Virginia Beach, Virginia from Birdneck Road to Independence Boulevard. I had my four grandchildren in the car when all the lights (interior and exterior) went out. I do not remember if they came back on their own immediately or if it took awhile. I recall speaking with the dealership to see what might have caused it this time, but did not take the vehicle in as there was no real answer to the situation. I just quit driving the vehicle at all after dark for safety reasons.
April 28, 2003	7:45 am	Sunny Heavy dew on vehicle	0	Off	Started engine, dash lights were on. Manual switch in off position. Went off itself in 1-2 minutes
	7:55 am 8:00 am	25-35 mph			Heard loud click in dash, no visible changes. Driving into sun. Heard moderately-loud click in dash, no visible changes
April 25, 2003	7:20 am	Cloudy 25-35 mph	0	Off	Started engine, dash lights were on. Manual switch in off position. After five minutes of driving heard clicking inside dash, nothing visibly happened. There was a light sprinkle so turned lights on manually. Sprinkle stopped, turned lights off. Heard click, dash lights remained on. One minute later, dash lights went out. Heard another click a few minutes later, nothing changed visibly.
April 23, 2003	6:59-7:00 am	Sunny 25-35 mph	3-4 minutes	Off	Within time specified, I noticed the interior dash lights were on. Not manually turned on as the switch was off. They remained on for 5-10 minutes, at which time I turned off the car to go inside a store. They did not come on when I restarted the car about 7:30 am
April 14, 2003	9:50 pm-10:13 pm	Night 25-45 mph	15-20 minutes	On	While stopped at traffic light, all interior and exterior lights went completely out for a few seconds/minute This occurred 4 times within 5 minutes. Drove a few more blocks, was turning, and they went completely out again, came back on in 1-2 seconds/minutes Drove about 1/2 block when they went completely out again, came back on in 1-2 seconds/minutes
April 14, 2003	7:40 am	Sunny 25-35 mph	0	Off	Upon starting the car, the interior dash car-outline light was on, as if lights had been turned on manually. Manual switch in "off" position. After driving approximately 5 minutes, they shut off on their own.
March 25, 2003	7:45 am	Sunny 25-35 mph	10-15 minutes	Off	Heard clicking in the dash
March 24, 2003	2:00 pm	Sunny	30 minutes	Off	Heard clicking the dash - like switch trying to connect

March 2, 2003	6- 6:15 pm	Damp, rainy 25-55 mph	5 minutes	On	All interior and exterior lights went off briefly, came back on themselves About 2 miles further down the road, total darkness, came on briefly, back to total darkness Occurred 3-4 times within 5 - 10 minute time frame. Driving prior to incident was on local streets about 10 minutes and on I-264 approximately 2-5 minutes when incident occurred Lights had been manually turned on
Jan 3, 2003	4:19 pm	Slightly overcast	5-10 minutes	Off	Interior instrument panel lights came on automatically, manual switch in off position They did not click off on their own Overcast was not dark enough to cause them to come on by themselves <i>Headlamp switch replaced by dealership on this visit to shop</i>
Dec 31, 2002	7:00 pm	Dark, clear night Highway speeds	9 hours	On	All interior and exterior lights went completely out - total darkness Occurred 2-3 times within 15-30 minute span of time, not flashing sequence, distinguishable time lapse between each occurrence Driving time prior to occurrence was approximately 9 hours on interstate roads Occurred on I-64 between Richmond and Williamsburg, Virginia Discovered fog lights worked Lights were manually turned on
Dec 31, 2002	10:00 am	Rainy Highway speeds	30 minutes	On	Interior and exterior lights went completely out Flashed back on momentarily and went out again. Occurred 3-5 times in succession within 5 - 10 minutes Rainy conditions so we had windshield wipers and lights manually turned on Continued to drive with lights on as sky became brighter - lights went out again without being manually turned off
Dec 30, 2002	9:30 pm	Dark, rainy Highway speeds	8-9 hours	On	All lights, interior and exterior, went completely out, no warning Repeated approximately 6-12 times within an hour; distinguishable time lapses between each occurrence All control panel lights went out, as in each of the other instances. Radio continued to play but could not see the dial. Lights had been turned on manually Smooth roads, no bumps - I-44 in Missouri and I-64 in Illinois and Indiana
Sept 6, 2002	9- 9:15 pm	Dark, clear night Highway speeds	4 hours	On	All interior and exterior lights went completely out - no warning Occurred 2-3 times within 10 minute time frame Were on country road in Warren County, Virginia, at time of occurrence <i>Dealership replaced BCM when taken to the shop</i>
May 19, 2002	8 - 8:30 pm	Dark, clear night Highway speeds	10 hours	On	All interior and exterior lights went completely out, total darkness, no warning I-64 between Waynesboro and Richmond, Virginia 18-wheeler behind us when incident occurred going down the mountain <i>Dealership replaced DRL module</i>
March 2002	8 - 9:00 pm	Dark, clear night Highway speeds	6-7 hours	On	All interior and exterior lights went out without warning, total darkness Happened twice within 5-10 minutes Country road in eastern Pennsylvania mountains This was the first occurrence; did not take it to the shop when we returned home, as it didn't happen again on that trip. Decided to see if it happened again or was just a one-time irregularity.

TELEPHONE MEMORANDUM

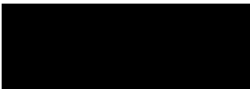
DATE: May 22, 2003

TIME: 1:47 p.m.

FROM: Ema Mann, Pontiac Headquarters

Acknowledged receipt of my letter of appreciation. Said the information was in their database and a copy would be sent to the dealer.

According to her, file status on this case is closed, but can be reopened at any time.



Call from Tim Perry when car was repaired stated it was a headlamp lighting circuit breaker located in the dash on the right side. (I learned it was in the glove compartment.) It was replaced because when they checked it, the terminals showed they had been hot. This breaker has the items were we losing on it.

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David L. Strickland, Administrator
NHTSA Headquarters
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
West Bldg
Washington DC 20590

Country of Destination:/Pays de



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