



U.S. Department
of Transportation
National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

DOT Auto Safety Hotline

Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire
To Report Vehicle Safety Defects
1-888-DASH-2-DOT
(1-888-327-4236)
INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 100184

Date Received
2003 DEC -2 AM 11:36
04-NOV-2003

Repository ☐
Reference No.
10046325

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name XXXXXXXXXX
Address XXXXXXXXXX
City HUNTSVILLE State AL Zip Code XXXXXX

Daytime Telephone Number XXXXXXXXXX
Evening Telephone Number XXXXXXXXXX
E-mail Address XXXXXXXXXX

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? ☐ YES ☒ NO
In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.
Signature of Owner XXXXXXXXXX Date 11/17/03

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side
2FACP74F2MX149619
Make FORD Model CROWN VICTORIA Model Year 1991
4 Dr Sedan
Date Purchased 3-20-91 Dealer's Name and Telephone Number Joe Gartin Ford 256-350-2120
Engine: 5 Liter No. Cylinders V8 Fuel Type: Unleaded Regular
Original Owner ☒ Dealer's City Decatur State Alabama Zip Code 35603
Transmission Type ☐ Antilock Brakes Powertrain
4 speed ☒ Cruise Control
Vehicle Component Code 081000 ENGINE AND ENGINE COOLING:ENGINE
Multiple Failure: 1

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s) 01-OCT-2003 Failure Mileage 88000 Failure Speed 65-70
ADD Transmission lost function of 3rd and 4th gear while driving on Interstate highway.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make XXXXXXXXXX Tire Model (Name or Number) XXXXXXXXXX Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)
DOT No. (Example: DOTM18ABC036) ☐ Original Equipment ☐ Prior Repair Failure Location:
Tire Component Code XXXXXXXXXX Tire Failure Type XXXXXXXXXX

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE

Make: XXXXXXXXXX Date Manufactured: XXXXXXXXXX Model No./Name: XXXXXXXXXX
Seat Type: XXXXXXXXXX Installation System: XXXXXXXXXX
Child Seat Component Code: XXXXXXXXXX Failed Part: XXXXXXXXXX

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident, failure(s), condition, and injury(ies).)

Crash ☐ Yes ☒ No Fire ☐ Yes ☒ No
Number of Persons Injured 0 Number of Deaths 0 Reported to Police N

Narrative Description of Incident(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies).
Please describe (1) events leading up to the failure, (2) failure and its consequences, and (3) what was done to correct the failure, i.e. parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available).

WHEN VEHICLE WAS IDLING CONSUMER SMELLED THE HEAVY SCENT OF OIL BURNING. WHILE DRIVING AT 65 MPH ENGINE BEGAN REVVING AT A HIGH RATE. ALSO, TRANSMISSION GEARS WOULD NOT GO INTO THIRD OR FOURTH GEAR. VEHICLE WAS TAKEN TO THE DEALER, WHO INFORMED THE CONSUMER THAT ~~CRUISE~~ BUSHING WAS MADE OF PLASTIC. HOWEVER, THIS BUSHING SHOULD BE MADE FROM METAL. MANUFACTURER HAD BEEN INFORMED. *AK See Extract of Letter to Ford Motor Company.
Six page attachment enclosed. This cable linkage determines ~~clutch~~ transmission shift points and appropriate hydraulic pressure to activate various internal components such as bands and clutch plates. When disconnected, leads to destruction of clutch locking up the higher two gears. Without this lock up only 1st and 2nd gear work.

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice. ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY.

The Privacy Act of 1974-Public Law 93-579 This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.

Extract from Letter To FMC

October 30, 2003

To: Ford Motor Company (FMC)
Customer Relationship Center
16800 Executive Plaza
Post Office Box 6248
Dearborn, Michigan 48121

From: [REDACTED]
Huntsville, Alabama

Car Serial No. [REDACTED]

Dear Ford Center:

I enclose a report on a '91 Ford Crown Victoria. This car had a mechanical breakdown, which I consider due to a design error. This is a typical problem going back to 1980 thru 1994 on Ford car models listed:

80-92 Crown Victoria
80-93 Thunderbird
84-94 Tempo
Lincoln
82-92 Continental

81-93 Bronco
81-93 E & F Series
84-94 Topaz
82-92 Town Car

83-93 Mustang
80-92 Mercury
Marquis
80-92 Mark Series

- Page 3 Invoice Pegus-Hurst Motor, Longview, Texas
4 Invoice Woody Anderson Ford, Huntsville, Alabama
5 Computer generated schematic of Cable Linkage
6 Original purchase invoice Joe Sartain Ford
1 Xerox reproduction of original part and upgrade part for bushing/grommet

PART NO. FMC [REDACTED]
Original Bushing-Plastic

Motorcraft [REDACTED]

FIG-718 245 MAR 78

PART NO. FMC [REDACTED]
Upgrade Bushing-Metal
With Metal Clip

Xerox reproduction of original part and upgrade part for bushing/grommet

or throttle valve

I can say with confidence the cause of this failure was due to a material selection of a plastic bushing/grommet on the kickdown cable linkage at the accelerator end attaching the cable to the carburetor (see Attachment *page 5* showing schematic of this linkage). This car was purchased from Joe Sartain Ford (see Attachment *page 6*). It's been used as a personal car only, serving reliably with no major problems other than herein described. A phone call was made on 13 Oct 03 to your customer service number 1-800-392-3673, however the party on the line held out little hope that Ford would acknowledge its responsibility. The evidence shows failure was due to a poor choice of material for this bushing. When Ford issued an upgrade kit, they made the replacement out of metal. This is factual evidence the original material was inferior and unsuitable.

I never received notice of this upgrade. Ford appears to have kept this change in-house concealed from affected owners of record. By this neglect Ford assumed responsibility of breakdowns thereafter. Automatic transmission specialist I have since talked to have verified that the bushing's disintegration has led to a large number of AOD transmission failures.

Ford's failure to apprise me of this fact has led to costly repairs, delays in travel, and potentially life threatening dysfunctional event. Therefore I can only look to the source of the cause, being Ford to receive recompense.

I experienced considerable inconvenience due to my family car losing power driving at highway speeds. I now find that is not so an unusual occurrence for similar Ford products. In this case failure was due to a simple grommet. Most of these owners never connected this to their automatic transmission clutch not locking up when activated, thus leading to the destruction of the clutch plates driving 3rd and 4th gears (drive and overdrive position on the selector lever). And too, more than likely they were never informed of this connection of these two seemingly unrelated events being so closely related. My reliance was on Ford to warn of this possibility well in advance of my problem.

Just 20 miles south of Dallas on Interstate 35 E, the motor started free wheeling but no power was transmitted to the drive wheels. I could not stay up to traffic speeds. With the car literally coasting down the highway, I found by moving the gear selector to drive position power returned to the drive wheels at considerably slower pace. When I attempted to return to highway speed the engine was making excessive noise. This was very upsetting.

I found Pegus-Hurst Motor Co. in Longview. I drove into their shop and sought out their transmission mechanic, Mr. Ric Crum. He promised to look into the problem as soon as he could. *See Invoice on page 3*. I waited to hear his analysis. It was closing time when he reported the unwelcome news. The clutch for 3rd and 4th gears were not functioning, disabling those two gears. That's when I was told of the failure of the bushing and, as shown on the invoice, he replaced it. When they separated, the appropriate hydraulic pressure failed to lockup this high speed clutch. The clutch assembly did not hold tight enough allowing heat to destroy these metal plates due to friction. The clutch being inactive, the higher gears are disabled. Normally the higher pressure can hold the clutch locked but with the linkage disconnected, insufficient force was available to perform the lockup function.

Over the next several days after returning home, I checked with local Ford Dealers, independent transmission shops and others who I found were to my surprise acquainted with the history of the AOD transmission. They in general had known of many situations similar to mine. This discovery almost makes your blood boil. With the long history of this cable usage, numerous Ford products had been affected. Everyone in the design phase should have realized the bushing would have a restricted life span. And due to its critical location a limit should have been assigned for its useful life. My car had 88,000 miles on it at the time of failure. This bushing was continually under force loading coupled with a high temperature environment. A practical useful life should have been set at 60,000 miles or so. Car dealers and owners alike should have been warned to change this part at a reasonable interval. Ford made an upgrade design out of metal. As evidence of this I purchased one of each: one of plastic and the upgrade of metal (see invoice Attachment *page 4*). Attachment *page 4* is a Xerox image of these two items. More than two decades has past with this plastic part still in use. No one has been able to show where Ford has sent out a Technical Bulletin informing everyone.

Ford had me on record as an owner yet I was still not informed. The upgrade part only cost \$4.65 and would have been the best insurance against transmission breakdown. The upgrade part number is FMC F3SZ7H303B. Checking the bushing Longview Ford installed in my car they used the newer metal version. Until repairs are made this car of mine is unserviceable. I am asking Ford to make the transmission workable and place it in drivable condition. We still do not know the full ramifications of this chain of events.

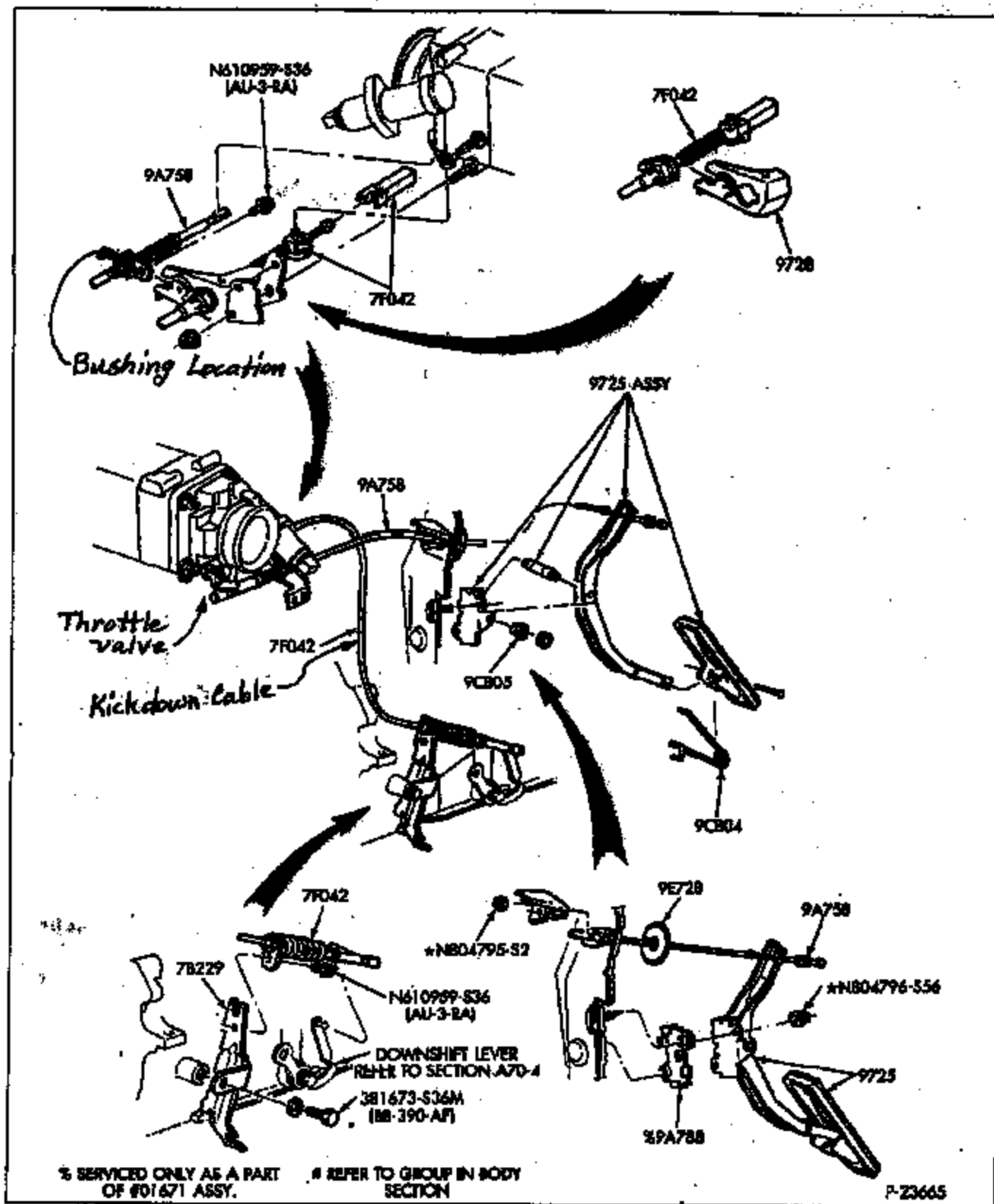
-----OH WHAT TANGLED WEB WE WEAVE, IF AT FIRST WE PRACTICE TO DECEIVE!-----

1991 A (Ford)

95 - Carburetor, Accelerator

8 CYL. 5.0L

Accelerator linkage - AOT



THE ATTACHMENTS TO THIS
DOCUMENT HAVE BEEN REMOVED
TO PROTECT UNWARRANTED
INVASION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY
PURSUANT TO EXEMPTION 6 OF
THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6).