



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

400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

MAY 9 2005

The Honorable Robert F. Bennett
United States Senator
324 25th Street, Suite 1410
Ogden, UT 84401-2310

NVS-216 mec
Ref. No. 10118938

Dear Senator Bennett:

Thank you for your facsimile dated April 15, 2005, on behalf of your constituent, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] wrote concerning the problems he has encountered with his model year (MY) 2003 Ford F-350 truck.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's highways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair vehicles or items of motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain serious safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. In order for the agency to initiate an investigation, we look carefully at the body of consumer complaints and other available data to determine whether a defect may exist. We cannot act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

We appreciate the report you provided on behalf of [REDACTED]. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. Each report is analyzed and entered into a database to help us determine whether an investigation into a possible safety defect is warranted.

On October 7, 2004, NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) opened a preliminary evaluation (PE04-070) into reports alleging an engine-stalling condition in MY 2003 and 2004 Ford F-Series Super Duty and Excursion vehicles equipped with 6.0L diesel engines. On February 15, 2005, ODI upgraded that investigation to an engineering analysis (EA05-003), which is a more detailed and complete technical analysis of the character and scope of an alleged defect. ODI's investigation into allegations of an engine-stalling condition in the subject vehicles is continuing; however, no determinations have been reached at this time. For your information, we have enclosed a copy of the opening resume for PE04-070, the closing resume for PE04-070, and the opening resume for EA05-003.



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888-DASH-2-DOT
888-327-4236

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The Honorable Robert F. Bennett

With respect to the engine-hesitation during acceleration and loss of engine power problems [REDACTED] reported, ODI does not classify these types of problems as engine-stalling events. While these types of problems are excluded from the scope of EA05-003, ODI has reviewed its database in an effort to identify whether a safety defect trend exists with regard to these types of problems in MY 2003 through 2005 Ford F-Series and Excursion vehicles equipped with 6.0L diesel engines. At this time, ODI has determined that insufficient evidence exists to warrant redefining the scope of EA05-003 or opening a separate safety defect investigation into allegations of engine-hesitation during acceleration and loss of engine power. The information you provided on behalf of [REDACTED] has been entered into our database. ODI will continue to monitor these types of reports and take future action as appropriate.

We sympathize with [REDACTED]'s request for remuneration; however, this request does not fall under our jurisdiction. If [REDACTED] has not done so, he may consider contacting his local Consumer Protection Agency, Better Business Bureau, or the Utah State Office of the Attorney General regarding his problems and rights under the Utah State Lemon Law.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please have your staff contact me or Mr. Ronald L. Medford, Senior Associate Administrator for Vehicle Safety, at (202) 366-1810.

Sincerely yours,



Michael W. Harrington
Director of External Affairs

Enclosures

cc: Washington Office



U.S. Department
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**National Highway
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ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE04-070
Prompted By: Consumer Complaints
Date Opened: 10/07/2004
Principal Investigator: Scott Yon
Subject: Engine Stalling

Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company
Products: MY 2003 - 2004 Ford F-Super Duty/Excursion With 6.0L Diesel
Population: 345,000 (Estimated)

Problem Description: The engine stalls (stops running) without warning.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	68	tbd	0
Crashes/Fires:	1	tbd	0
Injury Incidents:	1	tbd	0
# Injuries:	1	tbd	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	tbd	0
# Fatalities:	0	tbd	0
Other*:	0	tbd	0

*Description Of Other:

Action: A preliminary evaluation has been opened.

Engineer: D. Scott Yon *DSY*
Div. Chief: Jeffrey L. Quandt
Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 10/07/2004
Date: 10/07/2004
Date: 10/07/2004

Summary: The above population number is estimated; the exact population will be determined during the investigation. Half of the reports (34) involve model year (MY) 2003 and half involve MY 2004 vehicles.

The reports allege that the 6.0 liter diesel engine will stall without warning under various operating conditions, including while driving at roadway speeds, while descending an incline with the throttle closed or when attempting to accelerate the vehicle from a stop. When the engine stalls power steering assistance is lost resulting in increased steering effort, and power brake assistance diminishes with subsequent brake application.

The one crash incident resulted in property damage (estimated \$8,000) and a minor injury to a passenger that did not require treatment by a physician. According to the complainant, the crash incident occurred when the engine stalled on a mountain roadway. The vehicle ran off the road when the operator was unable to negotiate an oncoming turn.

The Office of Defects Investigation has opened this preliminary evaluation to establish the scope and frequency of engine stalling as well as any safety implications or consequences.

*VICJ
10-7-04*



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ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE04-070
Date Opened: 10/07/2004 Date Closed: 02/15/2005
Principal Investigator: Scott Yon
Subject: Engine Stalling

Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company
Products: MY 2003 - 2004 Ford F-Super Duty/Excursion With 6.0L Diesel
Population: 384,070

Problem Description: The engine stalls (stops running) without warning.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	101	3,135	3,211
Crashes/Fires:	2	13	14
Injury Incidents:	1	2	2
# Injuries:	1	2	2
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	12,536	12,536

*Description of Other: Related warranty claims.

Action: This Preliminary Evaluation has been upgraded to Engineering Analysis (EA) 05-003

Engineer: D. Scott Yon *[Signature]* 2/15/05
Div. Chief: Jeffrey L. Quandt
Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 02/15/2005
Date: 02/15/2005
Date: 02/15/2005

Summary: Twenty five of the ODI failure reports are duplicative of Ford complaints. Twenty ODI reports do not contain a VIN (and may or may not be duplicative of Ford reports). The 14 alleged crashes and 2 alleged injuries were all minor.

Submitted during Preliminary Evaluation (PE) 04-070, Ford's response to ODI's information request (IR) letter contained about 5,000 consumer reports (MORS) and 8,700 field reports (CQIS). Ford reviewed the complaints and categorized them. The manufacturer reports shown above represent a count of unique vehicles that Ford categorized as allegedly stalling due to a subject engine component ('A' category, see Ford's IR response letter for further detail); some of these vehicles received multiple reports. ODI has not yet confirmed Ford's categorization of these reports, nor has ODI confirmed Ford's categorization of the remaining reports (which Ford states do not pertain to the alleged defect). Ford submitted nearly 19,000 warranty claims, many of which involved claims for a technical service bulletin (TSB 04-13-08) and field service action (FSA 03B05) which Ford identified as potential remedies for stalling complaints. ODI has not confirmed that either of these are a remedy for engine stalling complaints. Several other dealer communications related to engine stall were also submitted as well as over 50 product modifications, 15 of which involve revisions to the software for the electronic engine control unit.

Further investigation is required and ODI is upgrading PE04-070 to an Engineering Analysis (EA). During the EA, ODI will establish and update the manufacturer failure report counts, further investigate the frequency and trend of stalling complaints, and determine the scope and safety implication of stalling events. ODI will also investigate Ford's remedies, their effectiveness, and whether further action is required.

[Handwritten signature]
2/17/05



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ODI RESUME

Investigation: EA05-003
 Prompted By: PE04-070, Consumer Complaints
 Date Opened: 02/15/2005
 Principal Investigator: Scott Yon
 Subject: Engine Stalling

Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company
 Products: MY 2003 - 2004 Ford F-Super Duty/Excursion With 6.0L Diesel
 Population: 384,070

Problem Description: The engine stalls (stops running) without warning.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	101	3,135	3,211
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# Injuries:	1	2	2
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	12,536	12,536

*Description Of Other: Related warranty claims

Action: Open an Engineering Analysis.

Engineer: D. Scott Yon

Div. Chief: Jeffrey L. Quandt

Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 02/15/2005

Date: 02/15/2005

Date: 02/15/2005

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VRJ
2/17/05