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U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
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BETHESDA, MARYLAND 20814-4408

CL-10241178-4438

Alberta E. Mills
Freedom of Information Officer
Division of Information Management • Office of Information and Technology

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October 17, 2008

NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

Headquarters
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Enclosed are letters sent to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (Commission). The Commission cannot process the enclosed request or letters. The products or matters that are the subject of the correspondence does not fall within our jurisdiction. As a result we do not maintain any records responsive to the request and cannot respond to the concerns of the correspondent(s).

We are forwarding the requests or letters for whatever action your agency deems appropriate. We have notified the correspondent(s) about the referrals.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

Sincerely,


Alberta E. Mills

Enclosures

NM
3:29
10/22/08
NE

W/ to NHSA

[REDACTED]
MINE HILL, NJ [REDACTED]

CPSC/AT FREE INFORMATION
2008 SEP 19 P 2:18

September 11, 2008

Certified Mail – R.R.R.
ATTN: LEGAL DEPARTMENT
Harley-Davidson Motor Company
3700 W. Juneau Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53208

Re: 1HD1GP1136K [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Customer Service Reference No. [REDACTED]

1HD1GP11X6K [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Customer Service Reference No. [REDACTED]

Dear Sir or Madam:

My boyfriend and I each purchased a leftover 2006 FXDWGI from Harley-Davidson Motor Company (“HD”). Unfortunately, we recently learned the hard way that there is a design flaw in the 2006 FXDWGI for which there has been no recall or official notice given. HD is aware of the flaw, its symptom and its effect. HD is also aware of a permanent solution to the problem which eliminates the symptom and effect. However, HD is fraudulently “repairing” these bikes by treating the symptom and not the cause of this problem even in bikes that are still under warranty.

According to Harley-Davidson’s own mechanics in Milwaukee and Thiensville, Wisconsin, the inner primary bearing fails on these bikes because of the eventual movement/misalignment of the inner primary case due to normal wear which causes the bearing to wear excessively and ultimately fail.

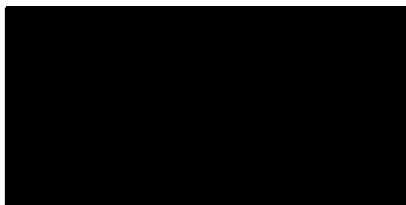
My boyfriend and I unfortunately learned of this problem and have proven it is an inherent problem in the 2006 Wide Glide because the bearings on both of our bikes failed within 55 miles of each other. We always ride together so we had the same wear and mileage on our bikes (within 55 miles, ± 12,500 miles). We recently rode from New Jersey to Wisconsin to celebrate Harley’s 105th Anniversary. [REDACTED] bike started making a loud noise in the primary case. The HD mechanic knew the exact problem as soon as he heard the bike – he did not have to use one tool to make a diagnosis. HD asked “How many times has it happened”? [REDACTED] answered “This is the first time”. HD indicated that the first time this happens, HD will replace the bearing only (installing the same bearing/part number). We were totally unaware that this was an issue with these bikes at that time, so we accepted this fix. We were relieved this happened in Milwaukee and the parts could be driven to the shop. The shop told us these are not parts they stock, so if we were in any other city the parts would have to be shipped creating even further delays. I made the Service Manager aware that I was concerned because my bike was coming up on the same mileage and David Hauser, the Service Manager (Suburban Harley – Thiensville, WI) told me “It probably won’t happen to yours - it’s hit and miss”.

The next day, approximately 50 miles later, my bike had the exact problem (2 out of 2 failures now within 50 miles of each other, on bikes subjected to identical wear). Our friends from Milwaukee highly recommended the House of Harley. When we arrived in quite a huff, the Service Manager and his technicians were very understanding of our frustration even though they had at least 10 bikes in front of mine in line for repair (Troy Kraut, Service Manager, and Matt, Trey & Ski). We told them we lost a full day of the 105th celebration the previous day dealing with this problem, and because we were so upset, this service manager was willing to install the "07 Fix" for this problem. Evidently, the "07 Fix" includes an entirely new primary case with dowels that hold the case in place so that there is no movement and no bearing wear. However, they would need 2 or 3 days to order the parts and complete the work. We had to ride home to New Jersey the next day to meet commitments, including getting back to work, so I did not have enough time to have that repair done. HD suggested I get home with the replaced bearing and then request that my local HD service manager give us the "07 Fix". Upon our return home we made several calls to both our local HD shop (Legends Harley – Ledgewood, NJ – HuBBs, Service Manager) and HD in Milwaukee. According to these resources, HD is unwilling to give us the permanent fix until the bearings fail again. This is completely ludicrous. This "patch" is unsafe and unsatisfactory. The customer service representative in Milwaukee told us to "Ride it 'til it blows". Our motorcycles are still under warranty and we should not be subject to another breakdown before we are entitled to the permanent fix. Chances are the next time the bearings fail we will be far away on vacation and again will not have the time to get the "07 Fix" out in the field. Further, the Service Manager at the shop we limp to might not be aware of the "07 Fix", and will simply replace the failed bearing after waiting overnight to receive the replacement bearing in the mail. Some HD customer service representatives are apparently unaware of the permanent fix as well. Common sense tells us the bearings will fail again utilizing the same bearing under the same conditions without any changes to the case. Therefore, we do not consider our bikes "repaired" under our warranties.

If we cannot take these motorcycles on long trips for fear of bearing failure every few thousand miles (there are documented cases on the internet forums of failure at 5,000 miles), they are unfit for their intended use, their value is substantially diminished and they are unsafe. It alarms us to think that upon bearing failure a piece of metal could shear from the attached affected components and lock up our rear wheel! at highway speeds.

We are requesting that HD allow our local dealer to install the permanent fix to this bearing wear problem under our warranties at no charge to us. Between the two of us we have owned 6 Harley-Davidson motorcycles and have over 40 years of road riding experience. My dad always had Ultras, and my sister and brother have older Wide Glides. This is our first negative experience with Harley. We love our Harleys and simply want them to perform like we know they can and should. Thank you in advance for a response within twenty days.

Sincerely,



Harley-Davidson Motor Company

September 11, 2008

Page 3 of 3

cc:

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Trenton, NJ 08625-0080

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U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission ✓
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