



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

INFORMATION Redacted PURSUANT TO THE FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(B)(6)

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

August 14, 2012

[REDACTED]
Houston, TX [REDACTED]

NVS-216 nlm
Ref. No. 10466916

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence to President Obama, Secretary LaHood, and others concerning model year (MY) 2007 and MY 2008 Chevrolet Impala vehicles. Your correspondence was forwarded to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) for reply.

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 motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. In order to initiate an investigation, we look carefully at the body of consumer complaints and other available data to determine whether a defect trend may exist. We do not have authority to act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

We appreciate the report you provided last month and sympathize with you regarding the injuries you sustained from a crash in October 2010. You indicated that the rear tires involuntarily swerved in your MY 2007 Chevrolet Impala causing you to drive off the road. You believe the crash was the result of defective rear wheel spindle rods that cause rear tire misalignment and premature rear tire wear in MY 2007 and MY 2008 Chevrolet Impala vehicles. You question why Chevrolet Impala vehicles owned by civilians were not recalled when police service vehicles were recalled for this problem. You indicate that non-police package vehicles are equipped with the same frame and suspension components as the police package vehicles. You request an investigation and mandatory safety recall of the 400,000 civilian-owned Chevrolet Impalas for this problem.

[REDACTED]

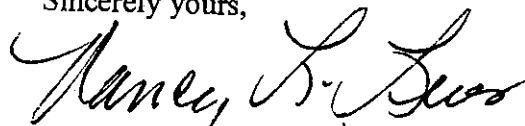
In July 2008, General Motors (GM) initiated a customer satisfaction program (bulletin No. 08032, summary enclosed) to address premature rear tire wear in MY 2007 and MY 2008 Chevrolet Impala vehicles equipped with the police package. Dealers were instructed to replace the rear wheel spindle rods and align the rear wheels. However, this action was not a recall. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for such a field action to be limited to police package vehicles due to duty cycles placed on components that are much more severe than non-police package vehicle operating conditions.

In December 2010, GM published technical service bulletin (No. PIC5406) to address rear tire alignment and/or rear tire wear on the inside edges in MY 2007 through MY 2011 Chevrolet Impala police and non-police vehicles. In December 2011, the bulletin was superseded by No. PIC5406A (summaries enclosed). Dealers were instructed to replace suspension components to remedy this problem if required. However, a manufacturer's technical service bulletin does not necessarily reflect the existence of a safety-related defect in accordance with the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act. Therefore, NHTSA cannot require GM to perform the corrective action described in the technical service bulletin free of charge. We recommend that you contact an authorized GM dealership about bulletin No. PIC5406A as it relates to your vehicle.

ODI is monitoring all available data concerning uneven or rapid rear tire wear caused by a rear suspension problem in MY 2007 and MY 2008 Chevrolet Impala vehicles. However, a safety defect trend that would warrant a defect investigation has not been identified at this time. A brochure explaining the NHTSA investigation and recall process is enclosed for your information and you can visit our website at www.nhtsa.gov. The information you provided has been entered into our database and will be considered with future reports to identify any safety defect trends that may require our attention.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please contact me or Mr. Frank S. Borris, Director, Office of Defects Investigation, at (202) 493-2631.

Sincerely yours,



Nancy L. Lewis
Associate Administrator
for Enforcement

Enclosures