



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

October 17, 2012

[REDACTED]
South River, NJ [REDACTED]

NVS-216 nlm
Ref. No. 10477722

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence concerning your model year (MY) 2002 Ford Explorer. The New Jersey Office of the Attorney General forwarded your correspondence to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and asked that we respond directly to you.

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. However, we do not have authority to act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

You indicated that Ford refuses to address a broken bolt under the front seat of your MY 2002 Ford Explorer. You state that NHTSA Safety Recall Campaign No. 03V-281 identifies this problem in certain MY 1998 through MY 2001 Ford Explorer vehicles. You indicate that although your MY 2002 Ford Explorer experienced the same problem your vehicle is not included in the recall. You request that Ford repair your vehicle at no expense to you.

NHTSA is aware of the recall (NHTSA Safety Recall Campaign No. 03V-281, summary enclosed) that addresses a problem with the upper bolt on the driver's side high back seat that attaches the recliner mechanism to the seat back frame that could fracture. The affected vehicles include certain MY 1998 through MY 2001 Ford Explorers, MY 2001 and MY 2002 Ford Explorer Sport and Sport Trac vehicles with high back seats. The MY 2002 Ford Explorer is not included in the recall; therefore, Ford is not required to provide you a cost free repair. In addition, you describe a problem with a bolt under the driver's seat. However, as stated above, the recall addresses a problem with a bolt at the seat back frame and reclining mechanism. We recommend that you continue to work with Ford and a local dealer for further assistance.

Should you encounter a safety-related problem with a motor vehicle or item of motor vehicle equipment in the future, you can complete an electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire online at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/ivoq. Also, a summary listing of vehicle owners' complaints, safety recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, etc. can be obtained at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Reid". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Randy" and last name "Reid" clearly distinguishable.

Randy Reid, Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement

Enclosure

Recall Detail

10-OCT-2012

Recall Num: 03 V 281 000	573 Date: 04-AUG-2003	573 Date Rcvd: 05-AUG-2003	Potentially Affected: 1,552,880	Potentially Defective: 1,552,880
Mfr Recall Num: 03S04				
Subject: FORD/HIGH BACK SEATS				
Recall Type: Defect	Recall Effect: Crash Avoidance	Remedy Type: Inspect and Replace	RP Num:	FMVSS Num:
Problem Exp: Complaints		NHTSA Inv Num: PE03-020	Influenced by: ODI	
		Manufacturer: FORD MOTOR COMPANY	Recall Status: CONDUCTING RECALL	
Problem Descr: ON CERTAIN SPORT UTILITY VEHICLES EQUIPPED WITH HIGH BACK SEATS, THE UPPER BOLT ON THE DRIVER'S SIDE HIGH BACK SEAT, THAT ATTACHES THE SEAT RECLINER MECHANISM TO THE SEAT BACK FRAME, COULD FRACTURE. IF THE BOLT FRACTURES AND DOES NOT JAM IN THE SEAT BACK FRAME, THE SEAT BACK MAY RECLINE UNTIL IT MAKES CONTACT WITH AN OBJECT BEHIND THE SEAT, SUCH AS THE SECOND ROW SEAT CUSHION.				
Consequence: THE DRIVER COULD POTENTIALLY LOSE CONTACT WITH THE STEERING WHEEL OR FOOT PEDALS DURING SUCH AN EVENT, INCREASING THE RISK OF A CRASH.				
Remedy Type: DEALERS WILL REPLACE THE DRIVER SEAT UPPER BOLT WITH A METAL SPACER AND BOLT. IN ADDITION, SEATS WITH TUBULAR BACK FRAMES WILL HAVE THE FULLY THREADED LOWER RECLINER BOLT REPLACED WITH A PARTIALLY THREADED BOLT. OWNER NOTIFICATION BEGAN ON AUGUST 29, 2003. OWNERS SHOULD CONTACT FORD AT 1-800-392-3673.				
Notes: FORD RECALL NO. 03S04. CUSTOMERS CAN ALSO CONTACT THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION'S AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE AT 1-888-DASH-2-DOT (1-888-327-4236).				
MFR Knowl Dt: 12-DEC-2002	Prod Change Dt:	Mfr Press Release Dt:	NHTSA Press Release Dt:	
Stop Sales:	Regional:			
Supplier:	Mfr Toll Free Num: 800-392-3673			

Recall Detail

10-OCT-2012

Products	Vehicle Usage	Beginning Mfg Date	Ending Mfg Date
Product Type :VEHICLE Manufacturer :Ford Motor Company Make :FORD Model :EXPLORER SPORT TRAC Model Year :2001	Passenger	24-SEP-1999	16-AUG-2002
Product Type :VEHICLE Manufacturer :Ford Motor Company Make :FORD Model :EXPLORER Model Year :1999	Passenger	13-MAY-1997	24-DEC-2000
Product Type :VEHICLE Manufacturer :Ford Motor Company Make :FORD Model :EXPLORER Model Year :1998	Passenger	13-MAY-1997	24-DEC-2000
Product Type :VEHICLE Manufacturer :Ford Motor Company Make :FORD Model :EXPLORER SPORT TRAC Model Year :2002	Passenger	24-SEP-1999	16-AUG-2002
Product Type :VEHICLE Manufacturer :Ford Motor Company Make :FORD Model :EXPLORER SPORT Model Year :2002	Passenger	24-SEP-1999	16-AUG-2002
Product Type :VEHICLE Manufacturer :Ford Motor Company Make :FORD Model :EXPLORER Model Year :2000	Passenger	13-MAY-1997	24-DEC-2000
Product Type :VEHICLE Manufacturer :Ford Motor Company Make :MERCURY Model :MOUNTAINEER Model Year :1999	Passenger	13-MAY-1997	24-DEC-2000
Product Type :VEHICLE Manufacturer :Ford Motor Company Make :FORD Model :EXPLORER Model Year :2001	Passenger	13-MAY-1997	24-DEC-2000
Product Type :VEHICLE Manufacturer :Ford Motor Company Make :MERCURY Model :MOUNTAINEER Model Year :2001	Passenger	13-MAY-1997	24-DEC-2000
Product Type :VEHICLE Product Category :LIGHT VEHICLES Manufacturer :Ford Motor Company Make :FORD Model :EXPLORER SPORT Model Year :2001 Type :MULTIPURPOSE PASSENGER VEHICLE	Passenger	24-SEP-1999	16-AUG-2002
Product Type :VEHICLE Manufacturer :Ford Motor Company Make :MERCURY Model :MOUNTAINEER Model Year :2000	Passenger	13-MAY-1997	24-DEC-2000
Product Type :VEHICLE Manufacturer :Ford Motor Company Make :MERCURY Model :MOUNTAINEER Model Year :1998	Passenger	13-MAY-1997	24-DEC-2000

Component Name

SEATS:FRONT ASSEMBLY:RECLINER

Influencing Investigation(s)

Investigation Num	Subject	Investigator	Relationship
PE 03 020	FRONT SEAT BACK RECLINER ATTACHMENT	MARK SWANSON	Influencing

Recall Detail

10-OCT-2012

Related Recalls

Yr	Type	Major Sub	Relationship
----	------	-----------	--------------

Recall Characteristics

Unique Recall	Unique Descr
---------------	--------------

Recall Communications

Fax Ack: 19-AUG-2003	Letter Ack:
Draft 577 Received: 19-AUG-2003	Draft 577 Approved: 20-AUG-2003
Final 577 Received: 31-AUG-2003	Owner Notification: 29-AUG-2003
Phased: N	577 End:
Renotification:	Envelope Approved:
Dealer Notification	
Received: 31-AUG-2003	Dealer Notification: 22-AUG-2003