

US Department of Transportation

11/12/21

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Office of Defects Investigation (NVS-210)

Dear NHTSA –

I am writing this letter regarding my 2019 Mercedes 144" Sprinter 2500, vin #WD4FF0CDXK [REDACTED] I purchased this vehicle new in 2019 and had it upfitted for traveling in and camping. It is sold as a Cargo Van, with heavy duty suspension and often used by contractors, delivery companies and is known for its quality and ability to last a very long time with proper maintenance. Currently it has 23553 miles on it

Since I purchased it, I have received a total of nine (9) NHTSA initiated recalls that have required me to make an appointment at the Mercedes dealership. I do not know if this is a common number of recalls but in my 50 plus years of owning new vehicles, I have never seen this many. I am thankful that the NHTSA is continuing to look out for the safety of consumers and trying to keep our highways safe for all who use them.

The reason I'm writing today is to make you aware of another issue that I believe many Mercedes Sprinter owners are experiencing especially with the 2019 models and newer. There are two (2) different electronic modules that are mounted below the dash and near or inside the driver's side "A" pillar. One is called the EIS module and the other is called the EZS module. Due to their location, they are exposed to damp and wet conditions and over time they corrode, fail, and need to be replaced. From what I have learned, beginning with the 2019 models, these modules were relocated from higher up behind the dash area down to their current position. First my ESI module failed due to moisture and corrosion and needed to be replaced and then just recently the EZS module failed for the same reason and needed replacing. It's obvious that the location of both modules chosen by Mercedes was not a good decision. There was no warning or indication that they had been exposed to damp conditions, they just suddenly stopped functioning, making the vehicle lose the ability to shift out of P into R or D, and making the vehicle unable to startup, in both instances my vehicle had to be towed. The cost for one of these modules is around \$1800 plus a full

day of labor to access the old one, remove it and install the new one and program it. I was very fortunate that Mercedes covered these costs under the warranty of the vehicle.

Currently Mercedes has issued a Technical Bulletin L154.21-N-069524 that they used to reinstall the new EZS on my vehicle. The bulletin does not relocate the modules to a better, less exposed location but provides for a vinyl/plastic sleeve that the module sits in hopefully preventing moisture from affecting it. There is nothing mentioned about turning the module upside down and remounting it to keep moisture from getting on the dozens of wires and allowing water to infiltrate the module. Obviously, this is just a "band-aid" solution and in time they will fail again. The 2 different dealerships where I had each one replaced at said "Yes, we have a few Sprinters come through with this issue".

I feel I was extremely lucky to be stopped and pulled over off the road when both failed. Honestly, I do not know what would happen if we had been traveling at highway speeds on a freeway or going around a corner in the mountains and one of these failed and that is why I'm writing to you. I'm concerned for myself and my family when we are traveling in this vehicle, and I'm concerned about the other millions of these same vehicles currently on our highways.

**In my opinion this needs to be investigated and Mercedes needs to issue a recall to permanently correct this issue as soon as possible.**

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to speak about an important mechanical issue that may have serious safety consequences. Please feel to contact me if you have any questions or need further clarification.

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