

Jack Danielson, Executive Dir
NHTSA
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

[REDACTED]
Frederick, Maryland [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

RE: Premature Engine Failure Mercedes-Benz Engine M278928
Engine Lock During Operation Safety Hazard

Dear Sir,

Please find enclosed numerous correspondences with the Executive leadership Team of MBUSA. The corporate office has failed to adequately address my concerns and have chosen instead to force me to assume responsibility for all safety concerns and the financial burden of replacing an engine that has been manufactured utilizing defective technology, methods, and procedures. It is my belief that MBUSA knew or should have known that the engine was defective prior to selling their GL550 vehicles to consumers.

I am requesting that you investigate my claims which represent my interest and the interest of similarly situated owners of certified preowned purchased GL550 vehicles equipped with the M278 engine. The defect is known to MBUSA but they have elected not to disclose the defect leading to premature failure of the engine to customers who purchased vehicles equipped with this engine. The damage occurs when the car logs slightly more than 60,000 miles and progressively worsens until the vehicle logs in excess of 70,000 miles. ***There is the potential for the engine to lock at high speeds during operation on the nation's roadways. This is a clear safety hazard.***

The defect presented itself to me in my case when the car's engine started shuddering, losing power on the freeway, such that the car eventually needed to be evaluated by a certified Mercedes Benz Service Facility on multiple occasions before the defect was captured via borescope. The nature of the defect was revealed to me at one facility and additional documentation was required to verify with certainty the extent of the defect. Therefore, the vehicle was towed to a second Mercedes Benz facility to determine the extent of the engine defect. The images were obtained and revealed that all 8 cylinders are scored. The images have been included as part of this document. This type of damage simply does not occur in modern day vehicles absent a defect. The piston is an integral and basic component of an internal combustion engine, whose travel inside the engine's cylinder causes the compression of the combustible fuel and air mixture that propels the vehicle.


For more than 60 days, I have sent letters to the MBUSA Executive Team to request an equitable and safety-first solution to this problem that has resulted from the manufacture of a defective Mercedes Benz Engine. Despite numerous requests, the MBUSA Executive Team did not respond; but instead, instructed me to speak with the service dealership who in no way is responsible for the sale of the vehicle. I was told to purchase a new engine to remedy the problem at a cost of approximately \$40,000. ***Additionally, at no time prior to the sale of the vehicle or otherwise did MBUSA or its Germantown Dealership who sold the vehicle to me with approximately 34,000 logged miles disclose to me that the engine was prone to premature failure.***

JD

For the reasons set forth in this document and previous correspondences, I do ask that you investigate my claims to ensure that this matter is resolved in a safe and equitable manner for me and all others who have purchased Mercedes Benz vehicles equipped with the M278 engine. I suspect that the proper investigation of my claims will reveal the true nature of the defect and what MBUSA knew about the engine defect. It is hoped that Ethical Leadership will resolve this issue. However, if legal recourse is required, then the end result, I believe will be similar to a ruling imposed by a federal judge in Georgia. ***He ruled that Mercedes-Benz must face claims it sold model year 2015-2019 C-Class vehicles that suffer from a manufacturing defect that causes them to leak raw fuel within their engine compartment. This is a clear safety hazard.***



It is hoped that the Executive Team will initiate a course of action to resolve this matter in lieu of having to Settle an Engine Defect Class Action Lawsuit as was the case on March 23, 2015. In this settlement, Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC ('MBUSA') prospectively had to cover future repairs for the allegedly defective parts at issue for the lesser of 10 years or 125,000 miles, subject to certain conditions and limitations. This extended coverage more than doubled the durational limit of MBUSA's New Vehicle Limited Warranty's term of the lesser of 4 years or 50,000 miles." Mercedes-Benz reimbursed eligible engine defect Class Members for past repair costs that they incurred while attempting to replace the allegedly defective Mercedes-Benz engine. Car repairs that were not performed at an authorized Mercedes-Benz dealer, were reimbursed up to \$4,000 for the engine defect repair and replacement costs.

Sincerely,


September 4, 2023

CC: Ralph B. Kalfayan, Esq., LL.M., 2262 Carmel Valley Road, Suite 200, Del Mar, CA 92014
Maryland Attorney General, Anthony G. Brown, Saint Paul Plaza, 200 St Paul Pl, Baltimore, MD 21202
Robert J. Tully, Esq., The Tully Firm LLC, 305 W. Allegheny Avenue, Towson, Maryland 21204
Dimitris Psillakis, CEO Mercedes-Benz USA, 1 Mercedes-Benz D, Sandy Springs, GA 30328

Dimitris Psillakis, CEO
Mercedes-Benz USA
1 Mercedes-Benz Dr
Sandy Springs, GA 30328


Frederick, MD 

RE: Cylinder No. 5 Misfire Mercedes-Benz Engine 278928
2015 GL 550 Low Milage

Mr. Psillakis,


As per my letter to you of August 17, 2023, I expressed concerns regarding the lack of Ethical Leadership on the part of MBUSA to address the financial dilemma confronting Mercedes Benz customers who own vehicles with the above referenced defect. Research regarding premature failure of the Mercedes Benz engine suggests that the problem is causally related to the use of silicon to coat the cylinders. This innovation that was employed in earlier 2014 through 2016 models was believed to increase horsepower by reducing friction. The Misfire defect is also causally related to a factory press being employed to push a sleeve in place within the cylinder. As a result, the sleeve was not pushed in place, which causes a leak. The leak resulted in the scoring of the No. 5 cylinder with continued misfire. It is believed that this problem would not exist if the factory did not employ the press.

The nature of the manufacturing defect argues against a remedy that allows MBUSA to provide only labor cost to install a new engine while the customer is forced to purchase a defective engine to resolve the issue. An ethical decision in this case is one that considers the nature of the defect, the responsibility of all involved parties to resolve the issue, and a decision that is cost-effective which addresses the financial burden to the customer. The proposed innovation to coat the engine block cylinders has contributed to the incompatibility of the materials of construction of the piston and cylinder walls. ***The replacement engine or the components used to rebuild the new engine must not utilize this technology.*** Hence, the ethical decision is not to force the customer to buy defective technology. The engine should be remanufactured using proven technology that is known to be substantially more durable. The assembly of this remanufactured engine with proven established technology should provide the customer with an option to either have MBUSA assemble the engine, or the customer may elect to have the engine assembled at the customer's expense. Any engine assembled by MBUSA will be priced at a premium and carry a 125,000-mile warranty. Should the customer elect to rebuild the engine utilizing parts manufactured by MBUSA, then the parts within the kits are to be under warranty only. ***In both instances, MBUSA should be responsible for the removal and installation of the engine as per the customer purchase option.***

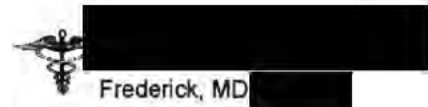
Certainly, there are other options to consider in resolving this issue. Some would consider honing the silicone cylinders, but then others do suggest utilizing sleeves to correct the problem. Both options are less reliable than the above referenced options. However, the most cost-effective option allows MBUSA to take the lead by manufacturing the components required to assemble a viable and durable engine utilizing proven existing technology. Some customers may choose to purchase an engine that is assembled by MBUSA, but other customers may choose to contract with certified specialist who can assemble the engine using reliable components at a fraction of the cost. The latter approach is perhaps more attractive to MBUSA for obvious reasons.

I have reached out to you on several occasions via certified mail in hopes that you will render an ethical decision to resolve this issue which is the result of a manufacturing defect. This is a well-known problem that has been well documented by various sources. Many loyal MBUSA customers owe in excess of \$30,000 on their vehicle and should not be forced to pay an additional \$40,000 in order to drive the vehicle. The cost of repairing the vehicle should be a shared financial burden between involved parties. MBUSA is responsible for manufacturing the defective engine. ***The dealer who sold the defective engine is an agent of MBUSA and should not be allowed to profit at the expense of an unsuspecting customer.*** Likewise, the customer should have minimal financial liability to repair the vehicle relative to the expected life expectancy of the vehicle if the vehicle is maintained by a certified Mercedes Benz service facility. Therefore, MBUSA should assume 50 % of the financial burden, the dealership that sold the vehicle should assume 40% of the financial burden because they made misrepresentations about the reliability of the vehicles, and the customer should assume 10% of the financial burden. I have sought the professional advice of many professionals regarding this matter. Pending your response, I will continue to explore viable options with other individuals in order to reach an equitable and ethical decision.

Sincerely,


August 25, 2023

Dimitris Psillakis, CEO
Mercedes-Benz USA
1 Mercedes-Benz Dr
Sandy Springs, GA 30328



RE: Cylinder No. 5 Misfire Mercedes-Benz Engine 278928
2015 GL 550 Low Milage

Dear Sir,

We do appreciate the quality, service, professionalism, and safety-first attitude displayed by the Mercedes Benz dealership of Hagerstown, Maryland and MBUSA in response to various recall campaigns. It is my responsibility to ensure that my 2007 GL-450 and 2015 GL550 are brought into the dealership to participate in any mechanical recall defect program issued by Mercedes Benz USA.

In fact, I also religiously follow the scheduled maintenance service program as recommended for the vehicles by the manufacturer and owner's manual. Not only do I adhere to the scheduled maintenance program, but I will bring my vehicle to the dealership for the slightest imperfection in performance. Hence, I was more than surprised when I recently brought my GL-550 into Hagerstown due to some puttering of the engine when gas is applied to learn the full scope of the problem.

I was informed that cylinder #5 has low compression due to scored walls from the piston. The car was pristinely inspected by a tech with a bore scope. Further, I was devastated to learn that my 2015 GL-550 with less than 70,000 miles needed a new engine to remedy the problem. The car is immaculately kept and driven with special care by my wife who is a Board-Certified Surgeon mostly on the highway to work.

In utter disbelief at these findings, I decided to conduct a search for a viable explanation. It turns out that "the scored # 5-cylinder problem" is a well-known occurrence. Perhaps the most plausible explanation was offered by Mercedes Benz dealerships in Massachusetts and Illinois. Their analysis is quoted and referenced below:

1. I'm told that the #5 Cylinder misfire issue is due to a factory press being employed to push the sleeve in place. As a result, the sleeve was not pushed in place, which causes a leak. The leak results in the scoring of the No. 5 cylinder and continued misfire. It is believed that this problem would not exist if the factory did not employ the press. Reference: Customer Dealership Illinois 07-11-2019, 10:51 AM [REDACTED]
2. This is a common issue and I am baffled it's not accepted as a recall. Reference: Herb Chambers Natick in MA 10-22-2019, 04:23 PM [REDACTED]

There are many blogs, articles, YouTube videos, and documentation of the scored #5-cylinder Mercedes-Benz Engine 278928 defect. This problem will occur despite the meticulous care and maintenance of the vehicle. I originally believed that the problem would be addressed as part of the recent emission recall campaign. However, this problem is much more severe, and I have every hope that Mercedes Benz Leadership will address this issue as part of a recall campaign because the problem is well known and there is nothing that I did to cause the problem. In fact, the maintenance record of the vehicle and extremely low mileage supports a diagnosis of a mechanical or manufacturing defect and not improper vehicle maintenance as the cause of the # 5-cylinder defect.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the sender's name and signature.

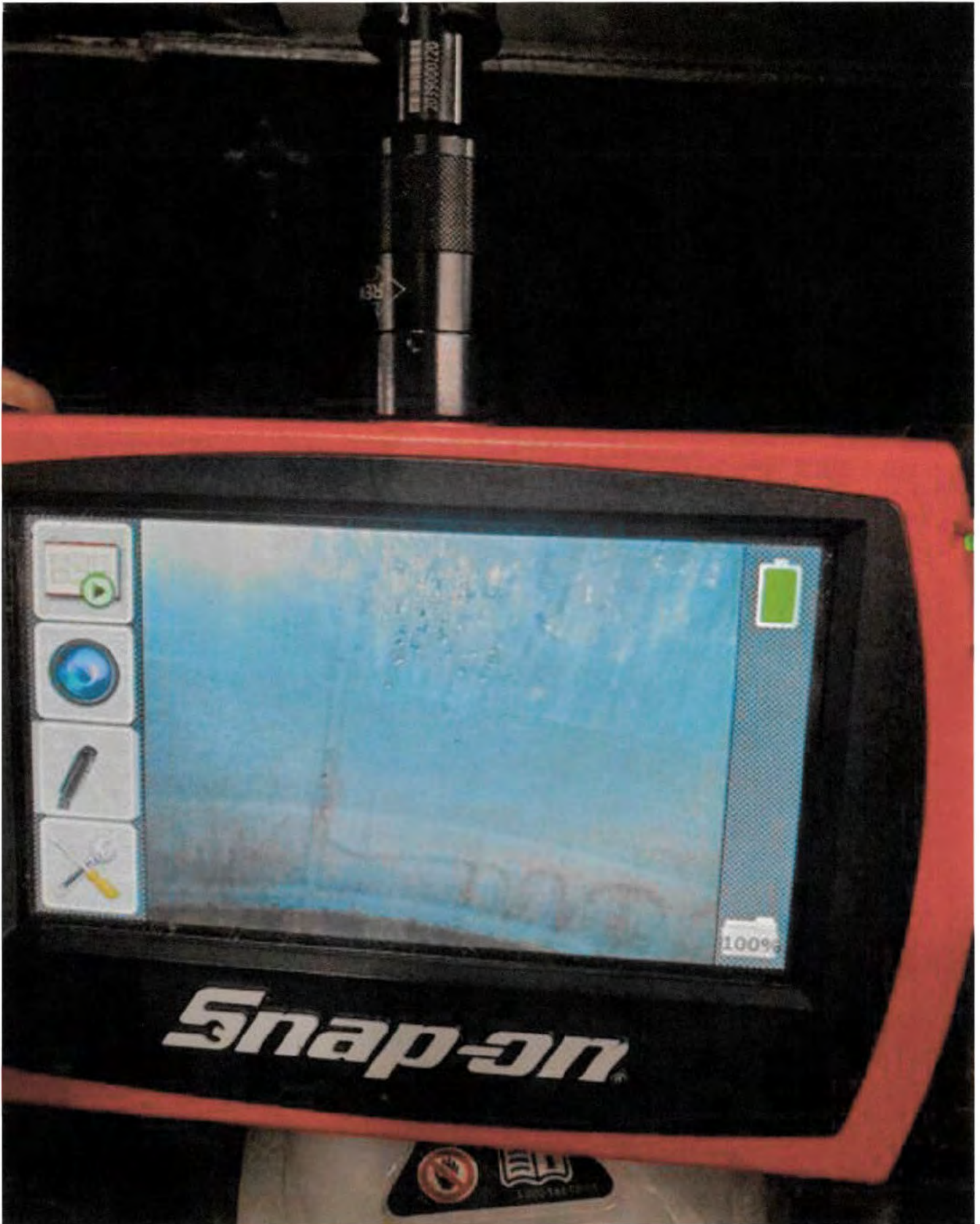
July 5, 2023

CC Ola Källenius, CEO, Mercedes-Benz Group, Am Wall graben 110, 70565 Stuttgart, Germany
Joe Agresti, CEO, Mercedes-Benz of Birmingham, 1800 Montgomery Hwy S, Hoover, AL 35244
Britta Seeger, Marketing & Sales, 1 Mercedes Benz Drive, Sandy Springs, GA 30328
Monique Harrison, Marketing, 1 Mercedes Benz Drive, Sandy Springs, GA 30328

1163661 Cylinder #1



1163661 Cylinder #2



1163661 Cylinder #3



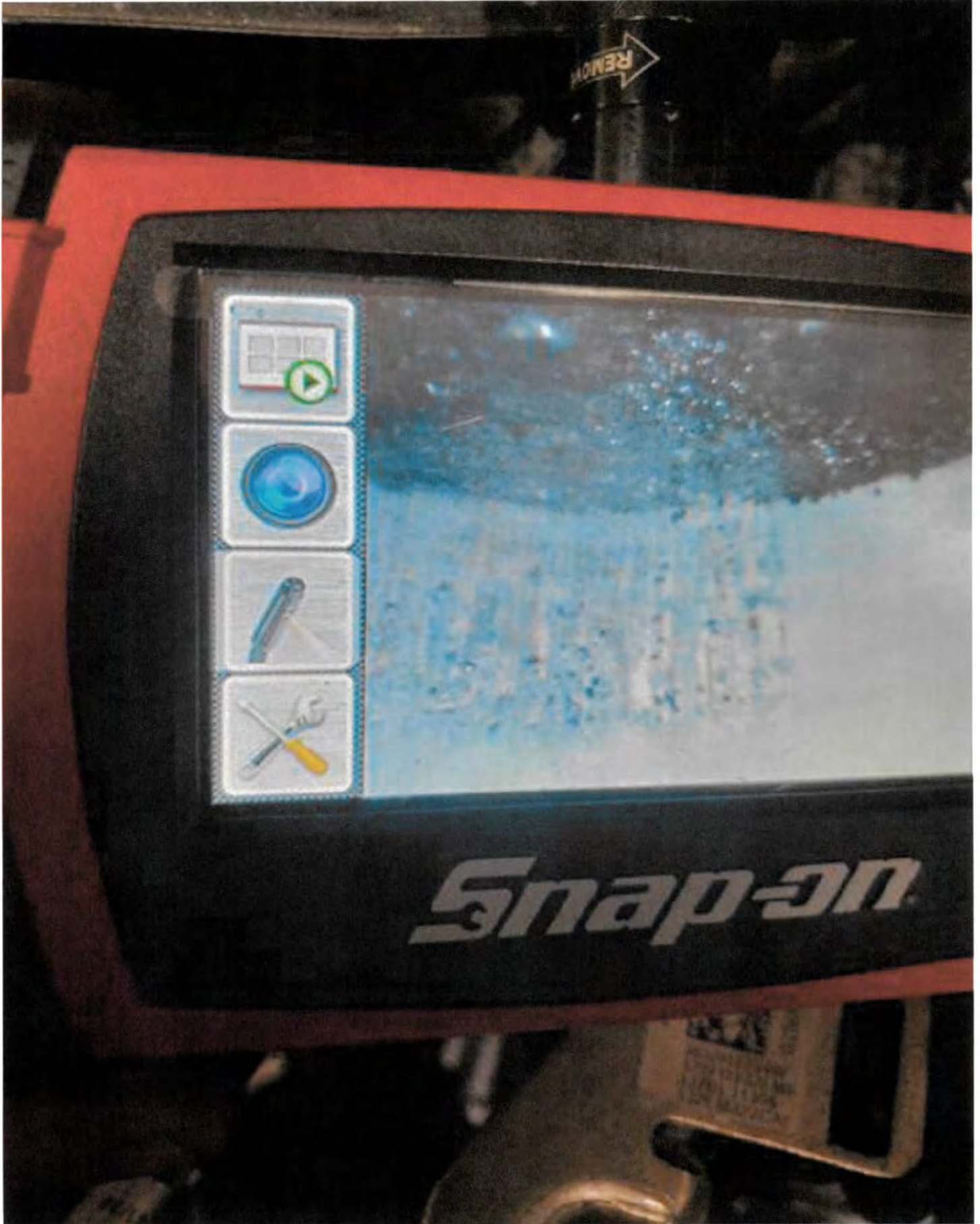
1163661 Cylinder #4



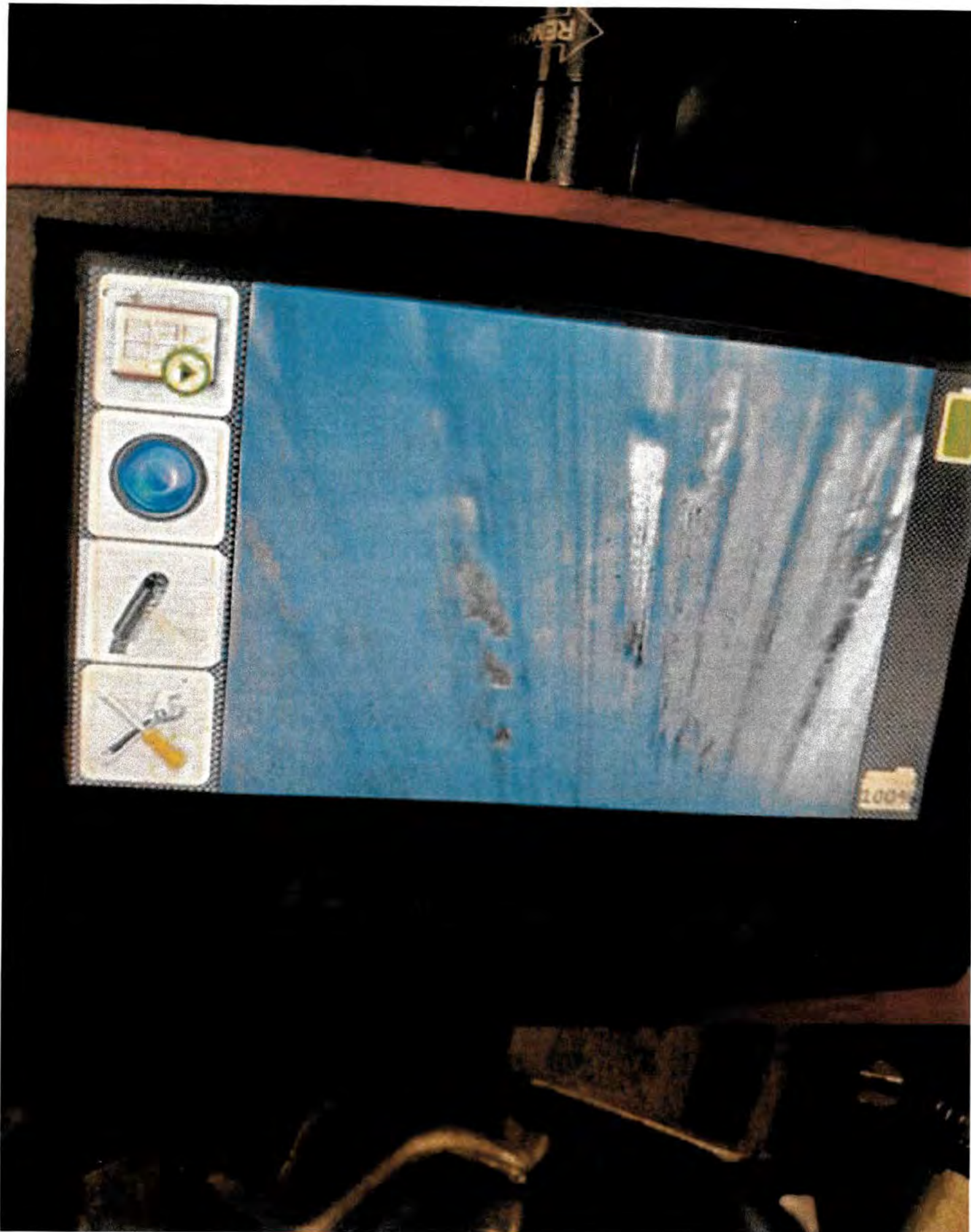
1163661 Cylinder #5



1163661 Cylinder #6



1163661 Cylinder #7



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