

May 6, 1999 - Nha Nguyen

Investigation Action Plan

RQ98-014: Air Brake Reservoir Failure

Opened: 9/21/98

Issue: These vehicles may have air brake reservoirs that have poor weld fusion at the weld seams. This poor weld fusion could result in rupture of the seam and subsequent release of the compressed air. Rapid release of the compressed air could result in damage to the cab floor or the surrounding components and could result in personal injury. Loss of pressure from the reservoir would also result in loss of air supply to the affected brakes. The purpose of this RQ is to determine whether recall 97V-150 should be expanded in scope to include the trucks with similar defective air tanks.

Recall: 97V-150; the safety recall filed by Ford in the Defect Information Report dated September 4, 1997, involving certain 1994 model year L-Series trucks built at the Kentucky Truck Plant, from August 21 through September 1, 1993. These trucks may have air brake reservoirs that have poor weld fusion at the tank weld seams.

Scope: 1994-95 L-Series trucks.

Population: Unknown.

Reports: 1 from ODI:

- On December 6, 1997, the air tank in a 1995 Ford LNT 8000 truck ruptured along the weld seam, similar to the failure mode described in safety recall 97V-150. As a result of the air tank rupture, the driver was seriously injured from the explosion that sent metal shrapnel through the floor and into the cab, as well as piercing the fuel tank. The brakes also locked due to the sudden loss of air pressure causing the truck to skid to a halt on the interstate. This truck is outside of the scope of the recall 97V-150.

Current Status:

- Review of Ford material indicates that there is no defect trend in the subject air tanks, nor does the scope of recall 97V-150 require modification.
- However, a lawsuit was just settled with Ford on the driver of the ODI report. The law firm was contacted and the analysis was obtained. The analysis was a preliminary report (the lawsuit was settled before further analysis was required). The summary of the report is as follows:

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Next Action: Review the report.

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