



ODI RESUME

U.S. Department
of Transportation

National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

INVESTIGATION: RQ99-016
SUBJECT: Liftgate Support bracket Failure
PROMPTED BY: IE99-051, 95V-164
PRINCIPAL ENGINEER: Nha Nguyen

DATE OPENED: 7/29/99
DATE CLOSED:

MANUFACTURER: Ford Motor Company and Mazda North American Operations
MODEL(S): Explorer and Navajo
MODEL YEAR(S): 1993-1995 Explorer and 1993-1994 Navajo
VEHICLE POPULATION: 481,800 vehicles

PROBLEM DESCRIPTION: The rear liftgate support brackets can separate resulting in a sudden collapse of the rear hatch door.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	MANUFACTURER	TOTAL
COMPLAINTS:	53	3190	3243
CRASHES:	0	0	0
INJ CRASHES:	0	0	0
# INJURIES:	19	97	116
FAT CRASHES:	0	0	0
# FATALS:	0	0	0
OTHER:	0	0	0

DESCRIPTION OF OTHER: None.

ACTION: Ford and Mazda will conduct recall 99V-310.001 and 99V-310.002, respectively. The RQ is closed.

ENGINEER: _____ DIV CHF: _____ OFC DIR: _____

DATE

DATE

DATE

SUMMARY: On August 22, 1995, Ford conducted safety recall, 95V-164.001, on 1992 and 1993 model year Explorer due to liftgate failures. The rear liftgate hydraulic cylinder bracket can become unattached allowing the liftgate to suddenly drop. The recall remedy was to install reinforcements on the brackets. Ford also initiated a safety improvement campaign, 95M87, in October 1995, for 1991-1995 model year Explorer vehicles which were not included in the recall, to install reinforcements on those bracket that were found to be loose or detached. This campaign ended in October 1996. In addition, a similar safety recall was conducted by Mazda, 95V-164.002, to correct liftgate hydraulic cylinder bracket problems on certain 1992 and 1993 Navajo vehicles. The Navajo vehicles were manufactured by Ford.

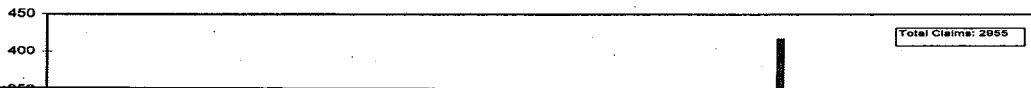
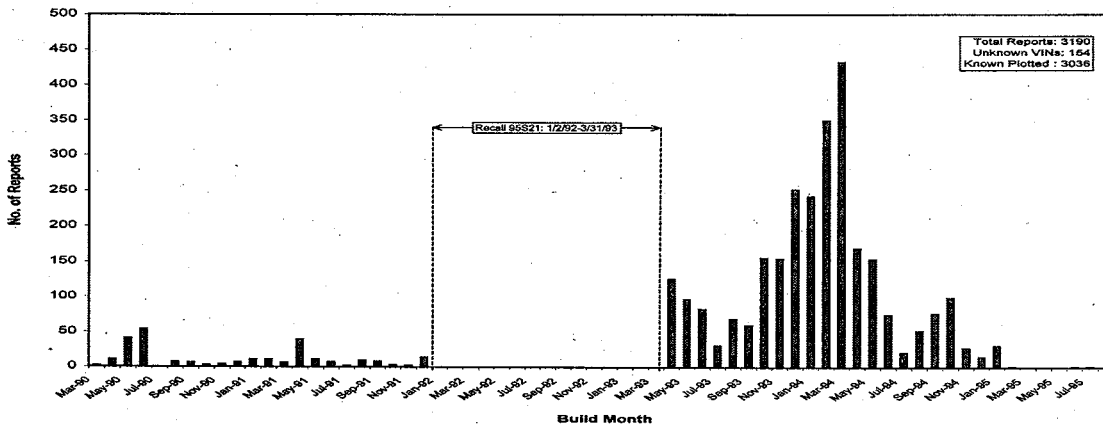
This RQ was opened to determine the extent of the problem experience and the scope of safety recall 95V-164.

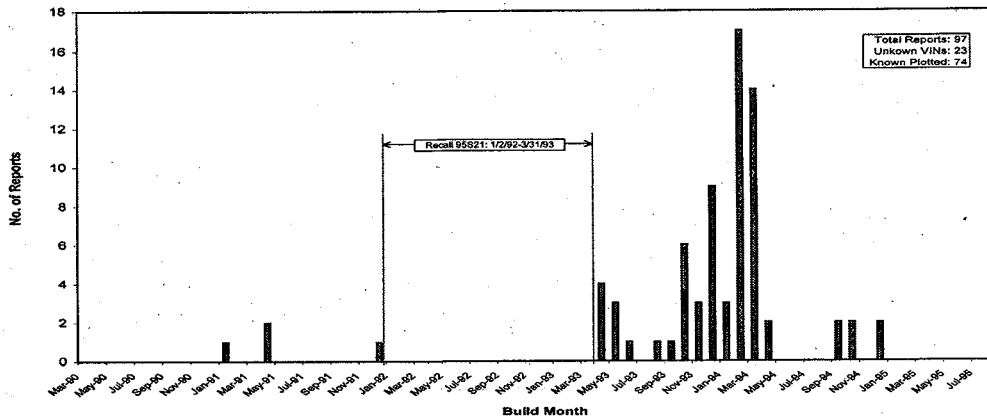
(Continue)

Summary (continue):

Since November 1996, ODI has received 53 consumer complaints alleging liftgate failures caused by the bracket separation, of which 19 reported the liftgate struck the occupant causing 12 injuries. Fifty two of these complaints occurred on the Explorer vehicles: one complaint was on 1992 model year vehicle, three complaints were on 1993 model year vehicles, and 47 complaints were on 1994 model year vehicles. There was one complaint on a 1994 model year Mazda Navajo.

Based on the analysis of field, owner, legal claims, lawsuits, and warranty reports that allege improper installation, failure, malfunction, or other unsatisfactory performance of the liftgate hydraulic cylinder bracket, Ford has determined that the vast majority of reports involved vehicles built immediately following the build period for the population of the recalled 1992-1993 Explorer vehicles that were under safety recall 95V-164. The following figures present the owner reports, warranty claims, and alleged injury reports for 1991-1995 model year Explorers. Consequently, Ford decided to conduct a safety recall on certain 1993-1995 model year Explorers. Due to the low number of reports and injuries, 1991 model year Explorers are not included in this safety recall.





Since Ford decided to conduct the safety recall, ODI agreed that a written response to the information request letter was not necessary. However, ODI requested Ford provide the summary problem experience information on the 1991 through 1995 model year vehicles discussed above.

On November 3, 1999, Ford issued a safety recall on approximately 475,000 1993-1995 model year Explorer vehicles built at Louisville Assembly Plant and St. Louis Assembly Plant from April 1, 1993 through the following dates:

- January 25, 1995 for Explorers with rear wiper and built at Louisville Assembly Plant.
- February 7, 1995 for Explorers with rear wiper and built at St. Louis Assembly Plant.
- February 14, 1995 for Explorers without rear wiper and built at St. Louis Assembly Plant.
- February 17, 1995 for Explorers without rear wiper and built at Louisville Assembly Plant.

In addition, on November 24, 1999, Mazda issued a safety recall on 6,800 1993-1994 model year Navajo vehicles built at Ford Louisville Assembly Plant from April 1, 1993 through November 1, 1994. The Navajo was discontinued after the 1994 model year.

Ford and Mazda are planning to notified owners on or about the week of January 3, 2000.

ODI has assigned safety recall identification numbers 99V-310.001 and 99V-310.002 for Ford's and Mazda's recall, respectively.

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