



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: EA 03-005
Prompted By: PE02-086
Date Opened: 04/23/2003
Principal Investigator: CHRIS LASH
Subject: REAR AXLE TRAILING ARM BREAKAGE

Manufacturer: GENERAL MOTORS CORP.
Products: 1997-1999 VENTURE/TRANSPORT/SILHOUETTE (GM "U-VAN")
Population: 507016

Problem Description: CONSUMERS ALLEGE WHILE DRIVING AND WITHOUT WARNING, A REAR-AXLE TRAILING ARM COULD BREAK AND CAUSE THE DRIVER TO LOSE CONTROL OF THE VEHICLE

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	7	8	15
Crashes/Fires:	0	2	2
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
# Injuries:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	3	3

*Description Of Other: PROPERTY DAMAGE

Action: AN ENGINEERING ANALYSIS HAS BEEN OPENED.

Engineer:

Div. Chief:

Office Dir.:

Date:

4/23/03

Date:

4/23/03

Date:

4/23/03

Summary: ANALYSIS OF ODI AND GM DATA HAS IDENTIFIED 14 INCIDENTS OF REAR TRAILING ARM FAILURES IN MODEL YEAR (MY) 1997 THROUGH 1999 GM U-VANS, INCLUDING TWO THAT ALLEGEDLY RESULTED IN CRASHES.

☐ THE TRAILING ARM DESIGN IN THESE VEHICLES IS USED IN THE U-VANS FROM MY 1997 THROUGH 2003. ACCORDING TO GM, THE SUBJECT TRAILING ARMS CAN CRACK OR BUCKLE IF THEY HAVE BEEN DAMAGED DURING ASSEMBLY, PRE-DELIVERY HANDLING, OR CERTAIN SERVICE RELATED ABUSE CONDITIONS (E.G., IMPROPER TOWING OR JACKING). GM IDENTIFIED A PARTS HANDLING CONCERN THAT WAS CAUSING SOME TRAILING ARMS TO BE DAMAGED PRIOR TO INSTALLATION. TO ADDRESS THIS CONCERN, GM IMPLEMENTED CHANGES TO THE SHIPPING CONTAINERS FROM JANUARY 1999 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1999.

☐ EIGHT (8) OF THE REPORTED INCIDENTS IN MY 1997-99 U-VANS, INCLUDING THE TWO CRASHES, OCCURRED IN THE LAST 2 YEARS. THIS INVESTIGATION HAS BEEN UPGRADED TO AN ENGINEERING ANALYSIS TO ASSESS THE TREND AND SAFETY RISK ASSOCIATED WITH THE ALLEGED DEFECT.

4/29/03