



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: RQ 04-003

Prompted By: IE04-040

Date Opened: 05/27/2004

Date Closed: 10/07/2004

Principal Investigator: Bruce York-B

Subject: Hydraulic brake line failure

Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company

Products: 1995-96 Windstar

Population: 273,256

Problem Description: Brake lines allegedly fail as a result of corrosion and/or abrasion from contact with the vehicles undercarriage.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	9	59	68
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	14	14

*Description of Other: Warranty claims

Action: This Recall Query has been closed.

Engineer: Bruce York *BY*

Date: 10/07/2004

Div. Chief: Jeffrey L. Quandt

Date: 10/07/2004

Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 10/07/2004

Summary: On April 4, 2002, Ford Motor Company notified ODI of a defect condition that could result in extended stopping distances in approximately 250 thousand model year (MY) 1995 and 1996 Windstar minivans sold or registered in salt belt states (Recall 02V-101). According to Ford, improper brake line routing in vehicles manufactured at the Oakville assembly plant from January 14, 1994 through May 21, 1996 resulted in some vehicles with mis-positioned brake lines that could contact a dash panel insulator. Such contact could abrade the brake line protection coating and result in corrosive failure of the brake lines.

ODI opened RQ04-003 to investigate complaints of brake line failure in Windstar vehicles that were: (1) located outside the recall region; or (2) built after the recall range. Regarding the latter group, Ford changed the assembly process after May 21, 1996 to eliminate the mis-build problem. The failure rates in the MY 1996 Windstar vehicles built after the process change are relatively low in both the salt-belt states and non salt-belt states.

With respect to the MY 1995 and 1996 vehicles built during the period of concern that were not sold or registered in salt belt states, the failure rate is also low. The related brake line warranty claim rate for those vehicles is also low.

Accordingly, a safety-related defect trend has not been identified in the MY 1995-96 Windstar vehicles that were not included in recall 02V-101. Further use of agency resources does not appear to be warranted. The closing of this investigation does not constitute a finding by NHTSA that no safety-related defect exists. The agency reserves the right to take further action if warranted by the circumstances.

*2/23
4-15-04*