



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

ODI RESUME

Investigation: EA 04-021
Prompted By: PE04-032
Date Opened: 08/03/2004
Principal Investigator: Ali Motamedamin
Subject: Brake Lamp Failure

Manufacturer: General Motors Corp.
Products: 2002-04 Chevy Trailblazer/GMC Envoy/Olds Brav./Buick Rainier
Population: 1,208,780

Problem Description: Brake lamp bulb fails to illuminate when the brake pedal is depressed.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

| | ODI | Manufacturer | Total |
|---------------------|-----|--------------|-------|
| Complaints: | 65 | 622 | 687 |
| Crashes/Fires: | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Injury Incidents: | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| # Injuries: | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fatality Incidents: | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| # Fatalities: | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other*: | 0 | 0 | 0 |

*Description Of Other:

Action: An Engineering Analysis (EA) is opened.

Engineer: Ali Motamedamin A.M.
Div. Chief: Thomas Z. Cooper
Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

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Summary: The subject vehicles are the Model Year (MY) 2002-2004 Chevrolet Trailblazer, EXT; GMC Envoy, XL, XUV; Oldsmobile Bravada and 2004 Buick Rainier sport utility vehicles. Complaints allege that the rear brake lamp does not operate when the brake pedal is depressed. There is no indication to the driver from inside the vehicle that the one or more brake lamp bulbs are not functioning.

GM found that heat from the bulb could deform the lamp socket, produce electrical arcing and an inoperative bulb. To correct the condition, GM changed the bulb to a bulb that transmits less heat to the socket and changed the socket to a thermoplastic polymer to improve thermal stability. These changes were implemented into production vehicles on October 1, 2003.

GM implemented a "Special Policy" by notifying consumers that if they should experience a brake lamp failure to go to their GM dealership to have the circuit board containing the brake lamp sockets replaced along with new bulbs. This policy is good for the first 6 years or 72,000 miles of the life of the vehicle.

ODI will open an engineering analysis to further examine this issue.

EB 7.5.04