

Ford Motor Company

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Automotive Safety Office
Environmental and Safety Engineering

January 23, 2006

Mr. Jeffrey Quandt, Chief
Vehicle Control Division
Office of Defects Investigation Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Quandt:

Subject: EA04-034:NVS-213day

In a December 21, 2005 e-mail, the agency requested additional information relating to wheel measurement data from Hayes-Lemmerz (HL). The following information is being provided in response to your request. We have listed each of your requests and then provided our response.

Request 1

Please advise the total number of leaking CF/AA (or later) level wheels (i.e. wheels with the thicker rim, not the CD wheels) for which HL has produced 1) wheel maps, 2) Akron data, and 3) CMM plots for.

Answer

HL has not yet completed their search for the requested measurement data. Those searches are expected to be complete by January 31, 2006. CMM, Akron Standard and wheel map data is not normally recorded for wheels returned from warranty repairs. Included in the files that have been searched to date, HL has located 13 additional CF/AA wheels that were measured in the past year, in addition to the data from the six wheels delivered to VRTC and the 43 wheels provided by the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) of which the agency is already aware. HL estimates 10 to 20 additional wheels were measured prior to 2005. Of wheels that were measured prior to 2005, four are 4W73-1007-AA wheels that underwent vehicle durability testing in January 2004. Akron Standard and CMM measurements of these four durability test wheels are provided electronically in Appendix A (2006-01-23_Appendix_A) on the attached CD.



Request 2

Questions on HL wheel maps, Akron and CMM data:

1. VIN 3X212302/PA8: Missing the 4 CMM plots
2. ??/PA20: Missing VIN (I assume it was not provided, please confirm)
3. 3X213906/PA24: CMM outer flange roundness reading missing (page cut off)
4. 3X212326/PA28: CMM outer flange roundness reading missing (page cut off)
5. 3X212326/PA28: CMM outer flange diameter reading missing (page cut off),
CMM outer flange roundness reading missing (page cut off)
6. 3X131440/PA35: CMM outer flange roundness reading missing (page cut off)
7. 3X135580/PA37: CMM outer flange roundness reading missing (page cut off)
8. 3X144158/PA38: CMM outer flange diameter reading abnormally low
9. 3X144177/PA38: CMM outer flange roundness reading missing (page cut off)
10. 3X220624/VRTC wheel: CMM outer flange diameter reading abnormally low

Answer

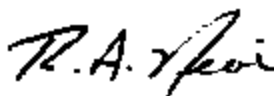
The CMM plots for wheel PA8 are provided electronically in Appendix B (2006-01-23_Appendix_B). The wheel identified as PA20 that was provided by the PSP was not labeled with a VIN when it was received by HL. When several of the CMM plots were scanned, the roundness, and in some instances the diameter dimension was inadvertently cut off. HL re-scanned the identified pages to show each dimension; these pages are also provided in Appendix B.

HL believes the abnormally low diameter reading shown on two of the CMM plots was due to a software issue with the measurement equipment. HL was able to reproduce the error by resetting the equipment while a wheel was being measured. The flange diameter of all the wheels is approximately 442 mm, not the 375 mm reported on the wheel identified as PA38 and the wheel from vehicle number 3X220624 provided to VRTC.

In a telephone conversation on January 10, 2006, the agency also requested revised wheel maps for three wheels provided by PSP that were found to have more than one crack. Updated wheel maps, as well as the corresponding CMM plots are provided electronically in Appendix C (2006-01-23_Appendix_C) on the attached CD.

If you have questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,



R. A. Nevi
Assistant Director
Global Automotive Safety and Compliance

Attachments