DAIMLERCHRYSLER

8/3/05

DaimlerChrysler Corporation
Stephan J. Speth
Director
Vehicle Compliance & Safety Affairs

July 28, 2005

Mr. Jeffrey L. Quandt
Office of Defects Investigation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Quandt:

Reference: NVS-213cla; PE05-027

This document contains DaimlerChrysler Corporation's ("DCC") response to the referenced inquiry regarding for 2004 through 2005 Dodge Durango sport utility vehicles and Ram pickup trucks equipped with 5.7L V8 engines that have been manufactured for sale or lease in the United States. By providing this information contained herein, DCC is not waiving its claim to attorney work product and attorney-client privileged communications.

DCC has not identified a single universal causal factor responsible for the small volume of reports of stalling while driving in the subject vehicle population. Aside from a number of vehicles in which specific random and isolated issues have been identified and corrected, the majority of reports reflect that the vehicle has only stalled once and has immediately restarted. All, or nearly all, of these vehicles were evaluated by our trained dealership service technicians, and the condition was not repeatable nor did it leave any fault codes or evidence of a problem with the vehicle. In addition, all of the vehicles in the population are covered by DCC's 8 year / 80,000 mile emission system warranty, which will correct free of charge any identified issue with the powertrain control module (PCM).

Complaints of stalling while driving in the subject vehicle population are small in magnitude when compared to other NHTSA inquiries. NHTSA's closing report from the recent Ford Focus investigation (EA02-022) properly states that each case should be analyzed on its own unique circumstances:

> *"ODI does not agree with Ford's assertions with respect to the safety consequences associated with stalling and related symptoms in the subject vehicles. While ODI recognizes that, over a decade ago, it closed some stalling investigations without seeking a recall, the position of the Office has evolved. As discussed earlier, vehicle stalling problems can vary in the frequency and*

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severity of their nature, their effect on vehicle control, and the extent that prior warnings or symptoms are provided. In recognition of this, the facts and circumstances of each investigation must be considered in evaluating the safety risks."

The facts and data contained in this response letter illustrate a significantly lower frequency of stalling reports and little or no safety risk in the subject population compared with previous NHTSA stalling investigations. The recent Focus investigation shows an input rate of twenty (20) times that of DCC's subject vehicles on a volume adjusted basis.

There are no allegations of accident, injury or property damage. This data indicates that the condition is benign from a vehicle control standpoint, and that operators have successfully dealt with it in the rare situations where it has occurred. Most of the complaints confirm that the vehicle was able to be immediately restarted. In addition, DCC has taken corrective actions to prevent further occurrences in the cases where a specific cause has been identified, and has communicated these diagnostics and repairs to the field. This is evidenced by the absence of complaints for any type of stalling in vehicles built after January of 2005. Therefore, based on the evidence provided and on NHTSA's recent statements, there is little, if any, risk to motor vehicle safety.

Nonetheless, DCC is concerned about customer satisfaction and is continuing to evaluate the situation. The planned activities include engineering evaluation of several buy back vehicles that have allegedly experienced a stalling condition, and a survey of our corporate lease car fleet. This information will be provided to NHTSA as it becomes available.

Sincerely,

For Stephan J. Speth

Attachment and Enclosures

ATTACHMENT

1. **State, by model and model year, the number of subject vehicles DaimlerChrysler has manufactured for sale or lease in the United States. Separately, for each subject vehicle manufactured to date by DaimlerChrysler, state the following:**

   a. **Vehicle identification number (VIN);**
   b. **Make;**
   c. **Model;**
   d. **Model Year;**
   e. **Date of manufacture;**
   f. **Date warranty coverage commenced; and**
   g. **The State in the United States where the vehicle was originally sold or leased (or delivered for sale or lease).**

   Provide the table in Microsoft Access 2000, or a compatible format, entitled "PRODUCTION DATA." See Enclosure 1, Data Collection Disc, for a pre-formatted table that provides further details regarding this submission.

A1. The chart below lists the production volumes for 2004 and 2005 MY Dodge Durango sport utility vehicles and Dodge Ram pickup trucks with 5.7L V8 engines that have been manufactured by DaimlerChrysler Corporation ("DCC") for sale or lease in the United States built through June 8, 2005.

Vehicle Type	2004 MY	2005 MY	Total
Durango	63,244	47,125	110,369
Ram	221,885	160,535	382,420
Total Vehicle Volume = 492,789			

The detailed response listing the production data as requested in Items a. through g. is provided in Enclosure 1 as a Microsoft Access 2000 table, titled "PRODUCTION DATA".

2. **State the number of each of the following, received by DaimlerChrysler, or of which DaimlerChrysler is otherwise aware, which relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles:**

   a. **Consumer complaints, including those from fleet operators;**
   b. **Field reports, including dealer field reports;**
   c. **Reports involving a crash, injury, or fatality, based on claims against the manufacturer involving a death or injury, notices received by the manufacturer alleging or proving that a death or injury was caused by a possible defect in a subject vehicle, property damage claims, consumer complaints, or field reports;**

d. Reports involving a fire, based on claims against the manufacturer involving a death or injury, notices received by the manufacturer alleging or proving that a death or injury was caused by a possible defect in a subject vehicle, property damage claims, consumer complaints, or field reports;
e. Property damage claims; and
f. Third-party arbitration proceedings where DaimlerChrysler is or was a party to the arbitration; and
g. Lawsuits, both pending and closed, in which DaimlerChrysler is or was a defendant or codefendant.

For subparts "a" through "e" state the total number of each item (e.g., consumer complaints, field reports, etc.) separately. Multiple incidents involving the same vehicle are to be counted separately. Multiple reports of the same incident are also to be counted separately (i.e., a consumer complaint and a field report involving the same incident in which a crash occurred are to be counted as a crash report, a field report and a consumer complaint).

In addition, for items "c" through "g," provide a summary description of the alleged problem and causal and contributing factors and DaimlerChrysler's assessment of the problem, with a summary of the significant underlying facts and evidence. For items f and g, identify the parties to the action, as well as the caption, court, docket number, and date on which the complaint or other document initiating the action was filed.

A2. The following summarizes the non-privileged reports received by DCC that relate to, or may relate to, the alleged condition in the subject vehicles. DCC has conducted a reasonable and diligent search of our records kept in the ordinary course of business for such information.

a. There are a total of 278 customer complaints (230 unique) that may be related to the alleged condition based on text within the complaint narrative showing that the vehicle stalls while driving. DCC's analysis shows that these complaints are likely due to multiple causes, where any cause has been identified.

b. There are a total of 119 field reports, of which 15 are from fleet operators, that may be related to the alleged condition based on text within the complaint narrative showing that the vehicle stalls while driving within the warranty system.

c. There are no legal claims or lawsuits that allege crash, injury, or fatality.

d. There are no legal claims or lawsuits that allege fire.

e. There are no reports that alleged property damage that are responsive to this inquiry. For the purposes of this response, "property damage" is defined as any non-vehicle component that was allegedly damaged during the reported incident.

f. There are no third-party arbitration proceedings where DCC is, or was, a party to the arbitration, that are responsive to this inquiry.

g. There are 20 legal claims and 17 lawsuits involving DCC which allegations of vehicle stalling which may potentially be related to the alleged condition.

In summary, there are a total of 434 non VOQ field inputs, of which 355 are unique vehicles, received through June 8, 2005.

Subject Vehicle Population 492,789					
Category Description	**CAIR**	**Field Reports**	**Claims/Lawsuits**	**VOQ's**	**Total Unique VINS**
Steady State Stalls > than 15 MPH	163	57	16	28	208
Low Speed Stalls < than 15 MPH	69	36	16	15	107
Stalls – garage shift, idle or while stopped	17	18	2	3	36
Indeterminate	29	8	3	4	42
Not related	0	0	0	4	4

3. Separately, for each item (complaint, report, claim, notice, or matter) within the scope of your response to Request No. 2, state the following information:

a. DaimlerChrysler's file number or other identifier used;
b. The category of the item, as identified in Request No. 2 (i.e., consumer complaint, field report, etc.);
c. Vehicle owner or fleet name (and fleet contact person), address, and telephone number;
d. Vehicle's VIN;
e. Vehicle's make, model and model year;
f. Vehicle's mileage at time of incident;
g. Incident date;
h. Report or claim date;
i. Whether a crash is alleged;
j. Whether a fire is alleged;
k. Whether property damage is alleged;
l. Number of alleged injuries, if any; and
m. Number of alleged fatalities, if any.

Provide this information in Microsoft Access 2000, or a compatible format, entitled "REQUEST NUMBER TWO DATA." See Enclosure 1, Data Collection Disc, for a pre-formatted table that provides further details regarding this submission.

A3. The information requested in Items a. through m, is provided in the detailed response to Question No. 2, Enclosure 2, as part of a Microsoft Access 2000 table, and titled "REQUEST NUMBER TWO DATA.

4. Produce copies of all documents related to each item within the scope of Request No. 2. Organize the documents separately by category (i.e., consumer complaints, field reports, etc.) and describe the method DaimlerChrysler used for organizing the documents.

A4. Copies of all documents within the scope of Question No. 2 are provided in Enclosure 3 – CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS, FIELD REPORTS, LEGAL CLAIMS and LAWSUITS.

5. State, by model and model year, a total count for all of the following categories of claims, collectively, that have been paid by DaimlerChrysler to date that relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles: warranty claims; extended warranty claims; claims for good will services that were provided; field, zone, or similar adjustments and reimbursements; and warranty claims or repairs made in accordance with any technical service bulletin or customer satisfaction campaign.

Separately, for each such claim, state the following information:

a. DaimlerChrysler's claim number;
b. Vehicle owner or fleet name (and fleet contact person) and telephone number;
c. VIN;
d. Repair date;
e. Vehicle mileage at time of repair;
f. Repairing dealer's or facility's name, telephone number, city and state or ZIP code;
g. Labor operation number;
h. Problem code;
i. Replacement part number(s) and description(s);
j. Whether there is a coincident claim for towing (within one week of the claim relating to the alleged defect);
k. Concern stated by customer; and
l. Comment, if any, by dealer/technician relating to claim and/or repair.

Provide this information in Microsoft Access 2000, or a compatible format, entitled "WARRANTY DATA." See Enclosure 1, Data Collection Disc, for a pre-formatted table that provides further details regarding this submission.

A5. There are eight applicable labor operation codes that may apply to the alleged condition. The claims by vehicle count for the 2004 MY through 2005 MY Dodge Durango sport utility vehicles and Dodge Ram pickup trucks with 5.7L V8 engines that have been manufactured for sale or lease in the United States are shown in the chart below:

Vehicle Model	2004 MY	2005 MY	Total Vehicles
08-19-06-01	23	293	316
08-19-06-02	2121		2121
08-19-06-50	10	1	11
08-19-06-94	540		540
08-19-43-91	1290	1696	2986
08-19-48-99	774	210	984
85-41-08-00	8191	756	8947
85-41-09-00	2089	204	2293

DCC's warranty system is designed to compensate dealers for repairs made, and cannot be reliably used to determine any trend related to the alleged condition. It is impossible to determine the reason for each particular warranty claim. There are other random issues that are not related to the alleged condition, yet may still trigger replacement of the subject components.

The detailed response that lists the warranty claims as requested in Items a. through l. is provided in Enclosure 4 as a Microsoft Access 2000 table, titled "WARRANTY DATA".

6. **Describe in detail the search criteria used by DaimlerChrysler to identify the claims identified in response to Request No. 5, including the labor operations, problem codes, part numbers and any other pertinent parameters used. Provide a list of all labor operations, labor operation descriptions, problem codes, and problem code descriptions applicable to the alleged defect in the subject vehicles. State, by make and model year, the terms of the new vehicle warranty coverage offered by DaimlerChrysler on the subject vehicles (i.e., the number of months and mileage for which coverage is provided and the vehicle systems that are covered). Describe any extended warranty coverage option(s) that DaimlerChrysler offered for the subject vehicles and state by option, model, and model year, the number of vehicles that are covered under each such extended warranty.**

A6. The search criteria used by DCC to identify claims to Question No. 5 can be found in the chart below:

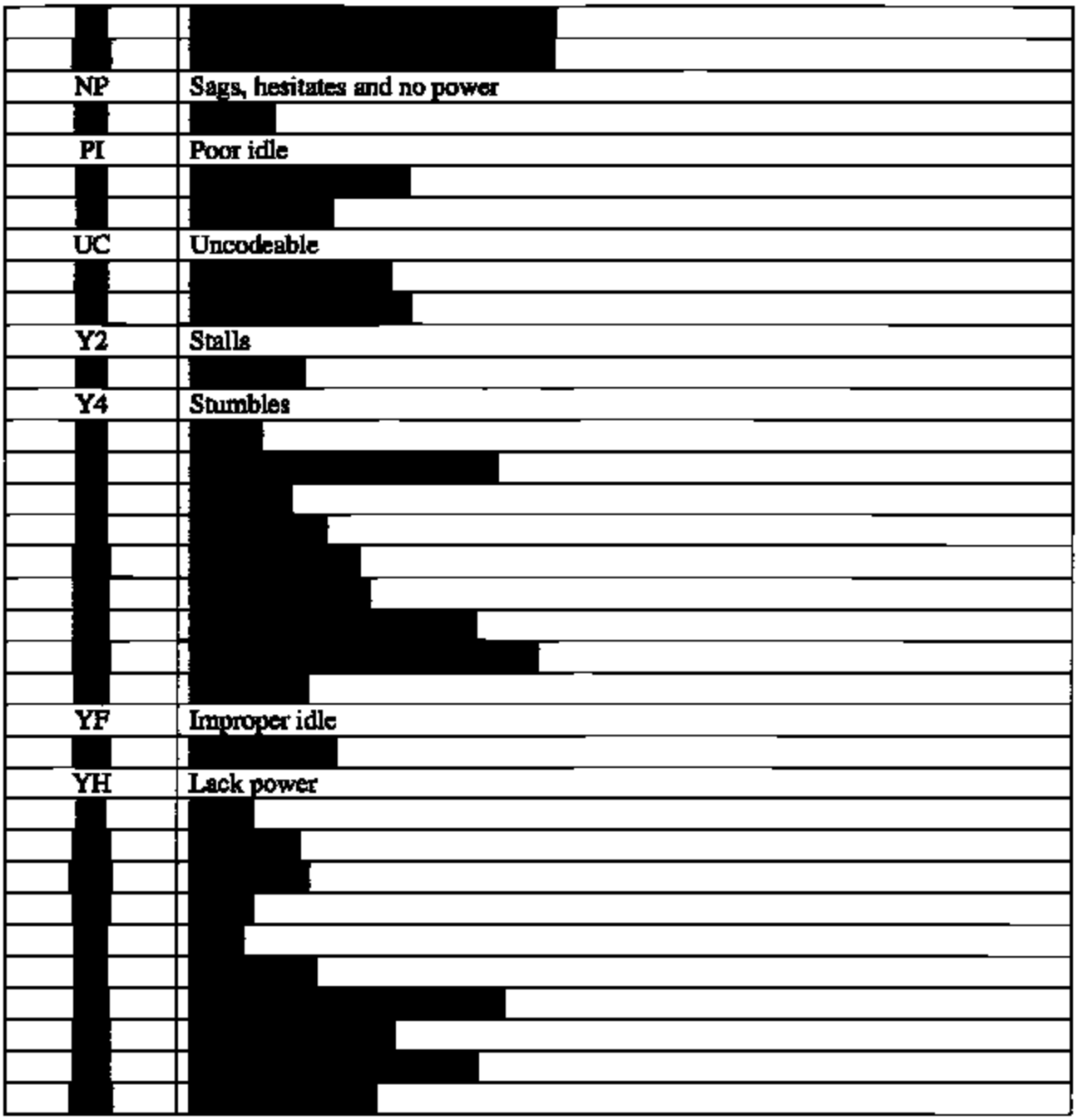
Labor Operation Code	Description
08-19-06-01	Replace powertrain/trans control module
08-19-06-02	Replace powertrain/trans control module – 5.7L only
08-19-06-50	Program powertrain/trans control module
08-19-06-94	Module, Powertrain/trans control (NGC3): Check and adjust
08-19-43-91	Reprogram control module: Check and adjust
08-19-48-99	Reprogram control module: Check and adjust
85-41-08-00	Diagnostic LOP: engine
85-41-09-00	Diagnostic LOP: electrical

Note: The following table below contains the failure codes for all of the Labor Operation codes in the above table.

Failure Codes	14	15	18	58	83	C8	DE	DO	DR	DT	FC	FE	FG	FM	FR	ML	NP	NS
LOP Qty	3	432	337	4	6	43	115	191	107	163	2	23	3	3971	32	1986	196	249
Failure Codes	PI	SC	SE	UC	UP	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y7	Y8	Y9	YA	YB	YC	YD	YE
LOP Qty	61	113	1	2979	2	14	542	581	153	58	50	28	41	26	14	10	3258	67
Failure Codes	YF	YG	YH	YJ	YK	YM	YN	YP	YS	YT	YU	YV	YW					
LOP Qty	314	70	525	111	60	23	607	26	33	38	310	187	72					
Total Failure Code Counts = 18,237																		

Problem codes for the referenced labor operations are provided below. The failure codes shaded below do not necessarily directly relate to the alleged defect. The total number of failure code counts may be inflated. As stated above, DCC cautions against drawing any conclusions from warranty data.

F.C.	Description
14	Short or open
15	Calibration
[redacted]	[redacted]
48	Grounded or shorted
[redacted]	[redacted]
58	Internal defect
83	Connection loose
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
DM	Damaged module
DO	Die outs
DR	Controller internal faults
DT	No response – DRB/MDS
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
[redacted]	[redacted]
FM	Flash module



The standard warranty offered on the 2004 MY through 2005 MY Dodge Durango sport utility vehicles and Ram pickup trucks with 5.7L V8 engines that have been manufactured for sale or lease in the United States was 3 years/36,000 miles for basic coverage and 7 years/70,000 miles for the powertrain. The subject component (Powertrain Control Module - PCM) is covered under the 8 year/80,000 mile emission system warranty. There were no extended warranty coverage options related specifically to the subject components. Owners may have purchased additional warranty coverage

through third-party providers not affiliated with DCC; this warranty data is not available to DCC and is not included in this response.

7. Produce copies of all service, warranty, and other documents that relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles, that DaimlerChrysler has issued to any dealers, regional or zone offices, field offices, fleet purchasers, or other entities. This includes, but is not limited to, bulletins, advisories, informational documents, training documents, or other documents or communications, with the exception of standard shop manuals. Also include the latest draft copy of any communication that DaimlerChrysler is planning to issue within the next 120 days.

A7. The following documents are being provided in Enclosure 5 (summarized briefly below).

Technical Service Bulletin (TSB) # 18-013-05 Rev A. - This bulletin outlines a change in the engine calibration for 2004 and 2005 model year Dodge Durango sport utility vehicle and Dodge Ram pickup trucks equipped with the 5.7L V8 engine. It involves reprogramming of the Powertrain Control Module (PCM) in the case when a vehicle operator is experiencing rough idle, idle fluctuation, or a MIL illumination.

Technical Service Bulletin (TSB) # 18-002-05 - This bulletin outlines a change in the engine calibration and the application of adhesive to the roof supports for 2005 model year Dodge Durango vehicles equipped with the 5.7L engine. It involves the reprogramming of the Powertrain Control Module and the application of adhesive to the roof supports when a vehicle operator is experiencing a rough idle or a booming sound at idle or in drive with the air conditioning on.

8. Describe all assessments, analyses, tests, test results, studies, surveys, simulations, investigations, inquiries and/or evaluations (collectively, "actions") that relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles that have been conducted, are being conducted, are planned, or are being planned by, or for, DaimlerChrysler. For each such action, provide the following information:

a. Action title or identifier;
b. The actual or planned start date;
c. The actual or expected end date;
d. Brief summary of the subject and objective of the action;
e. Engineering group(s)/supplier(s) responsible for designing and for conducting the action; and
f. A brief summary of the findings and/or conclusions resulting from the action.

For each action identified, provide copies of all documents related to the action, regardless of whether the documents are in interim, draft, or final form. Organize the documents chronologically by action.

A8. The following documents describing completed "actions" that may relate to the alleged defect are provided in Enclosure 11:

5.7L Idle Undershoot While Turning. Customer Problem Resolution Team (CPRT) internal presentation by DCC Engineering describing calibration change to correct potential engine rpm undershoot during turning maneuver.

Ignition Switch PQM. CPRT internal presentation by DCC Engineering describing ignition switch corrective actions to address intermittent problems with accessory operation and no-start condition.

Open Issue List 2004-12-02. DCC Engineering tracking document describing actions relating to alleged vehicle stalling during stopping and parking lot maneuvers.

Perfection June 2003 PowerPoint. DCC Engineering presentation document describing updates to the 5.7L V8 powertrain including identification of key issues.

DCC is in the process of conducting a survey of the approximately 3,000 Dodge Durango sport utility vehicles and Dodge Ram pickup trucks within the DCC company fleet. Each of the respondents will be asked a series of questions to potentially identify the subject condition may exist on their vehicle. An update will be submitted to NHTSA when the survey is complete, expected in August of 2005.

In addition, DCC is in the process of buying back three customer vehicles that have allegedly experienced the subject condition. Engineering analysis of these vehicles will follow.

9. Describe all modifications or changes made by, or on behalf of, DaimlerChrysler in the programming of the subject component, from the start of production to date, which relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles. For each such modification or change, provide the following information:

a. The date or approximate date on which the modification or change was incorporated into vehicle production;
b. A detailed description of the modification or change;
c. The reason(s) for the modification or change;
d. The part numbers (service and engineering) of the original component;
e. The part number (service and engineering) of the modified component;
f. Whether the original unmodified component was withdrawn from production and/or sale, and if so, when;
g. When the modified component was made available as a service component; and
h. Whether the modified component can be interchanged with earlier production components.

Also, provide the above information for any modification or change that DaimlerChrysler is aware of which may be incorporated into vehicle production within the next 120 days.

A9. DCC has one PCM which controls both the engine and transmission function. The PCM is controlled by DCC's engine/transmission control software which is then executed based on engine or transmission requirements. There are no other software programs, modules, or controllers that control engine function.

A PDF file (Enclosure 8 - Change History) is provided to document the changes that have taken place during the subject model years on the subject component.

10. Furnish DaimlerChrysler's assessment of the alleged defect in the subject vehicle, including:

- **a. The causal or contributory factor(s), including a detailed assessment of the factors affecting the occurrence of engine stall;**
- **b. The failure mechanism(s) – for software related failures, state the specific conditions necessary to produce a stall event;**
- **c. The ability to restart the engine following a stall event – state as percentages involving (1) immediate, (2) delayed, and (3) no restart;**
- **d. Stalling incident rates at 12- and 24-months in service based on the subject vehicle populations that have reached those service intervals;**
- **e. The stalling incident rates estimated by DCC at 36- and 60-months in service based on statistical modeling;**
- **f. The risk to motor vehicle safety that it poses;**
- **g. What warnings, if any, the operator and the other persons both inside and outside the vehicle would have that the alleged defect was occurring or subject component was malfunctioning; and**
- **h. The reports included with this inquiry.**

A10.

a.) DCC has not identified a single universal causal factor responsible for the small volume of reports of stalling while driving in the subject vehicle population. Aside from a number of vehicles in which specific random and isolated issues have been identified and corrected, the majority of reports reflect that the vehicle has only stalled once and has immediately restarted. All, or nearly all, of these vehicles were evaluated by our trained dealership service technicians, and the condition was not repeatable nor did it leave any fault codes or evidence of a problem with the vehicle. All of the vehicles in the population are covered by DCC's 8 year / 80,000 emission system warranty, which will correct free of charge any identified issue with the powertrain control module (PCM).

b.) Aside from the vehicles in which specific random and isolated issues were diagnosed and corrected, DCC has not identified a single failure mechanism responsible for the alleged stalling events. Based on calibration development experience, most stalling conditions can be explained by idle undershoot during transient load and/or environmental conditions. The field input suggests that stalling due to calibration related issues does not typically occur during steady state operation with a warm engine. In addition, problems with any of the hardware providing input to the engine

control software would generate a fault code and/or illuminate the MIL, which is not the case here.

Also, because the software embedded within the PCM completely controls the internal combustions process in the engine under all possible conditions, the specific states of air/fuel mixture and engine load that may induce a stalling condition cannot be determined. Indeed, there are potentially an infinite number of combinations. DCC relies on rigorous bench testing and vehicle development programs to prove out engine calibration algorithms. Any remaining conditions that could produce an inadequate air/fuel mixture for the given load conditions on the subject vehicles have not been identified at this time.

c.) With respect to the 208 unique VIN complaints of stalling while steady state driving in which no causal condition has been identified, 89% have reported immediate restart. Another 4% reported difficulty or delay in restarting, and the remaining 7% reported an inability to restart the vehicle.

d.) With respect to the 208 unique VIN complaints of stalling while steady state driving in which no single causal condition has been identified, 74% were reported during the 0-12 month interval (78c/100k) and 26% were reported during the 12-24 month interval (18c/100k). None of the subject vehicles are older than 24 months. This is evidence that the rate significantly declines over time, and that vehicles with identified issues have been successfully repaired by DCC's dealer body.

e.) As stated in a) above, DCC has not identified any singular universal causal factor that can explain the small number of reports of stalling while driving in the subject population. All or nearly all of these vehicles have been evaluated by our trained dealership service technicians, and the condition is not repeatable nor has it left any fault codes or evidence of a problem with the vehicle. Most report the condition only occurring once. In addition, all of the vehicles in the population are covered by DCC's 8 year/80,000 mile emission system warranty, which will correct free of charge any identified issue with the Powertrain Control Module. Vehicles that have been identified with a specific causal issue have been repaired under warranty free of charge.

f.) Complaints of stalling while driving in the subject vehicle population are small in magnitude. NHTSA's closing report from the recent Ford Focus investigation (EA02-022) properly states that each case should be analyzed on its own unique circumstances:

"ODI does not agree with Ford's assertions with respect to the safety consequences associated with stalling and related symptoms in the subject vehicles. While ODI recognizes that, over a decade ago, it closed some stalling investigations without seeking a recall, the position of the Office has evolved. As discussed earlier, vehicle stalling problems can vary in the frequency and severity of their nature, their effect on vehicle control, and the extent that prior warnings or symptoms are provided. In

recognition of this, the facts and circumstances of each investigation must be considered in evaluating the safety risks."

The facts and data contained in this response letter illustrate a significantly lower frequency of stalling reports and little or no safety risk in the subject population compared with previous NHTSA stalling investigations. For example, when compared to NHTSA's recent Ford Focus investigation, the Focus shows an input rate of twenty (20) times that of DCC's subject vehicles on a volume adjusted basis.

There are no allegations of accident, injury or property damage. This data indicates that the condition is benign from a vehicle control standpoint, and that operators have successfully dealt with it in the rare situations where it has occurred. Most of the complaints confirm that the vehicle was able to be immediately restarted. In addition, DCC has taken corrective actions to prevent further occurrences in the cases where a specific cause has been identified, and has communicated these diagnostics and repairs to the field. This is evidenced by the absence of complaints for any type of stalling in vehicles built after January of 2005. Therefore, based on the evidence provided and on NHTSA's recent statements, there is little, if any, risk to motor vehicle safety.