



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

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE06-002
Date Opened: 01/04/2006 Date Closed: 05/09/2006
Principal Investigator: Kyle Bowker
Subject: Fuel Tank Leakage

Manufacturer: Kia Motors America, Inc.
Products: 1999-2000 Kia Sportage
Population: 104,752

Problem Description: The steel fuel storage tank allegedly leaks.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	7	40	40
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	1,212	1,212

*Description Of Other: Warranty claims paid to replace or repair the fuel storage tank for any or unspecified cause.

Action: This Preliminary Evaluation has been upgraded to an Engineering Analysis (EA06-007).

Engineer: Kyla M. Bowker KMB

Date: 05/09/2006

Div. Chief: Jeffrey L. Quandt

Date: 05/09/2006

Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 05/09/2006

Summary: On January 4, 2006, the Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) opened a Preliminary Evaluation to investigate alleged fuel leakage from the steel fuel storage tank in certain model year 1999-2000 Kia Sportage vehicles. ODI sent a letter to the manufacturer on January 25, 2006 requesting information about these and other Kia Sportage vehicles.

ODI is aware of 40 non-duplicative complaints that allege fuel storage tank leakage in the subject vehicles. Analysis of manufacturer data indicates that alleged fuel leakage at or near the storage tank may be attributed to several different failure modes involving the fuel containment and distribution system.

Kia has identified corrosion as a primary causal factor related to fuel storage tank complaints and continued fuel system part sales. According to Kia, fuel tank corrosion claims related to leakage can be divided into two categories: lower tank claims associated with exterior corrosion due to disruption of the polyvinyl chloride (PVC) protective coating and upper tank claims associated with corrosion at the fuel sending unit mounting plate area.

The manufacturer's investigation into alleged fuel tank corrosion resulting in leakage is ongoing. Accordingly, this investigation has been upgraded to an Engineering Analysis (EA06-007) to further study the frequency, scope, and safety consequences of the alleged defect.