



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

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 06-017

Date Opened: 05/15/2006

Date Closed: 10/25/2006

Principal Investigator: Lee Strickland

Subject: Alleged Headlight Failure

Manufacturer: General Motors Corp.
Products: MY 2001-2003 Chevrolet Impala
Population: 646,038

Problem Description: Headlights fail during vehicle operation

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	15	277	292
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
# Injuries:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:		5,477	5,477

*Description of Other: Warranty claims filed under mfr. standard coverage

Action: This Preliminary Evaluation is closed.

Engineer: Leamon H. Strickland *LS*

Date: 10/25/2006

Div. Chief: Thomas Z. Cooper

Date: 10/25/2006

Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 10/25/2006

Summary: A total of 646,038 subject vehicles were sold during MY 2001-2003, and the complaint and warranty data tabulated above apply to the total vehicle population. Complaint reports alleging headlight outage represent slightly more than one-half of the total number of complaints and the balance are allegations of flickering and dimming.

Investigation disclosed the root cause of the malfunction to be wear of a contact plunger in the multifunction switch that may result in a temporary open circuit, with the plunger in a neutral position between high- and low-beam contact points. Consumers consistently reported that manipulation of the switch handle on the steering column restores either high or low beam headlight function. No other potential safety related issues, e.g., fires or windshield wiper failure, were found to be related to this issue.

The manufacturer recognized the subject headlight issues from failure and warranty reports, and issued a redesigned plunger in 2003. The manufacturer did not identify a defect requiring recall and remedy. ODI has determined that the rates of occurrence, the failure mode and the real-world consequence of the alleged defect as compared to other similar investigations fail to identify a safety-related defect trend.

This Preliminary Evaluation has been closed. The closing of this investigation does not constitute a finding that a safety-related defect does not exist. The Agency may take further action if warranted by the circumstances.

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