



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

Memorandum

Subject: **TEST REQUEST:** PE08-002, Brake line failure, MY 2002
Mercedes ML500/AMG55 vehicles

Date: MAR 31 2008

From: Kathleen C. DeMeter, Director
Office of Defects Investigation

Reply to
Attn. of: NVS-213cnl

To: Michael Monk, Director
Vehicle Research and Test Center

BACKGROUND: Model year (MY) 2002 Mercedes-Benz (MB) ML500 and AMG-55 vehicles may experience failures of the brake line from the master cylinder to the ABS pump caused by chafing from the primary fuel line.

ODI received Early Warning Reporting data from MB indicating that the brake tube from the master cylinder to the ABS pump may be damaged by contact with the main fuel line near the master cylinder in the subject vehicles. The contact can result in chafing damage to the brake line from the steel braided cover of the fuel line. ODI has observed contact between the brake line and fuel line during an inspection of a subject vehicle. As a result of this condition the vehicle inspected had complete loss of the front brakes.

OBJECTIVE: The objective of the testing is to perform a field inspection and survey of subject vehicles to:

1. Assess the frequency of the alleged condition by inspecting at least 20 subject vehicles to assess the routing and retention of the subject brake line, the orientation of the subject brake line and fuel line, and note/document any evidence of contact/wear of the brake line;
2. Assess the effects of a rupture of the subject brake line of subject vehicle braking.

TEST VEHICLES, EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURE: Initial evaluation/focus should be performed on original condition MY 2002 vehicles, combined with owner interviews and digital imagery of the subject components as observed for all vehicles inspected for the alleged condition. Inspection of some similar MY2001 and MY2003 vehicles may be desirable for comparison and to assess the scope of the condition.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The ODI investigator is Chris Lash, chris.lash@nhtsa.dot.gov, 202-366-2370. The ODI division chief is Jeffrey Quandt, jeff.quandt@dot.gov, 202-366-5207. The investigator and division chief should be updated at least bi-weekly of test program status/progress.



FINAL REPORT: It is requested that the test work and draft report be completed to a schedule to be determined in discussion with ODI.

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