



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

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 09-008
Date Opened: 02/12/2009
Principal Investigator: John Abbott
Subject: Fire

Date Closed: 06/16/2009

Manufacturer: Honda (American Honda Corporation Co.)
Products: 2006 Honda Ridgeline
Population: 76,000

Problem Description: Instrument Panel Fire

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	3	3	6
Crashes/Fires:	3	3	6
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
# Injuries:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:	3	11	14

*Description Of Other: Reports of Smoke

Action: Close Investigation.

Engineer: John Abbott
Div. Chief: Thomas Cooper
Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 06/16/2009
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Summary: The Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) opened this investigation based on three Vehicle Owner Questionnaire (VOQ) reports alleging a fire occurred in the instrument panel. In addition, there were three VOQ reports alleging a "burned," "melted," or "shorted" HVAC fan motor wiring harness.

Honda reports that during August and September, 2006, it conducted a study regarding melting of the HVAC fan motor harness connector. Honda concluded that the damage to the harness connector could result from contact by a passenger's foot or handling of the HVAC unit during vehicle assembly. Honda instituted changes to address these issues. All complaint vehicles were manufactured before Honda implemented these changes.

ODI's analysis of the data (both ODI and Honda) show there are six reports (duplicates removed) alleging a fire in or near the instrument panel. Four of those resulted from an unknown cause, one resulted from an HVAC fan motor failure, and one is reported to have been arson. In addition, there were nine reports of HVAC fan motor harness failure that resulted in smoke in the passenger compartment but no vehicle fire. The remaining five reports resulted in smoke in the passenger compartment and included failures of the air conditioning compressor, HVAC fan motor, and a power

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transistor. This investigation did not find that failure of the HVAC fan motor connector, which can result in smoke, would also lead to a fire. Similarly no defect trend was identified from examination of the six reported fires.

A safety related defect has not been identified at this time and further use of agency resources does not appear to be warranted. Accordingly this investigation is closed. The closing of this investigation does not constitute a finding by NHTSA that a safety-related defect does not exist. The agency will take further action if warranted by the circumstances.

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