



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: EA 10-004
Prompted by: PE09-044
Date Opened: 05/23/2010
Investigator: Peter Ong
Approver: Frank Borris
Subject: Interior Door Handle Laceration Risk

Date Closed: 07/18/2011
Reviewer: Scott Yon

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: GENERAL MOTORS LLC
Products: MY 2007 Chevrolet Tahoe/GMC Yukon (through Oct 2006)
Population: 266,611

Problem Description: Peeling or separation of chrome plating from base material of interior door handle may pose risk of laceration injury to vehicle occupants

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	29	419	448
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	29	170	199
Number of Injuries:	43	232	275
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	52,546	52,546

*Description of Other: 23,493 unique VIN regular warranty claims from the 52,546 total warranty claims

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: Close this Engineering Analysis

Summary:

The investigated concern involved chrome plating on interior door handles that could peel or separate from the plastic base material. This de-lamination could result in a sharp edge and pose a risk of laceration. In some cases, consumers reported minor hand/skin lacerations. Of these reported injuries, the vast majority of injuries were to adults. Ninety percent of claims associated with interior door handle de-lamination were related to the front doors.

In addition to the above Tahoe/Yukon vehicles, other GMT 900 series C/K vehicles (Avalanche, Escalade, Sierra, Silverado, and Suburban) have a trim level that utilizes the chrome plated interior door handles and were included in the analysis. The resultant population group had a total of 746 complaint reports with 309 injury incidents and 43,619 unique VIN regular warranty claims over a combined 451,745 vehicle population. The door handle supplier was changed in September 2006 with new tooling and process in place by October 2006. The base population prior to the September 2006 vendor change accounted for the bulk (or 89%) of all complaints and comparable injury reports and warranty claims. Due to the nature of the failure (thin chrome plating peeling off the door handle), only minor hand/skin laceration injuries similar to a "paper cut" were recorded. All but a few did not require professional medical treatment such as surgical or liquid sutures (i.e. stitches). Less than 10% of injury reports had specifically involved a 3-10 year old child. This was due to the fact that 90% of the claims were associated with door handles located in the front seating area (where the window glass panels usually have less solar tinting than rear window glass panels) where children are not normally seated.

In July 2010, GM issued a Special Coverage Policy (SCP 09239) on the base vehicles to extend the warranty coverage to 10 years/100k miles. Recent data indicate that the base population complaint and injury reporting have

subsided since the implementation of the SCP campaign. In June 2011, GM added the remaining interim population (Sep-Oct 2006) to the SCP.

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 monitor this issue and reserves the right to take further action if warranted by the circumstances.