



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: DP 10-005
Prompted by: Consumer Petition
Date Opened: 12/15/2010
Investigator: Kerrin Bressant **Reviewer:** Jeff Quandt
Approver: Richard Boyd
Subject: Rear Axle Fracture Recall Scope

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Products: 2003 Ford Windstar vehicles in Salt Belt built after 2/28/03
Population: 30,300 (Estimated)
Problem Description: The rear axle may experience corrosion related fracture, which may result in loss of vehicle control.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	5	TBD	5
Crashes/Fires:	0	TBD	0
Injury Incidents:	0	TBD	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	TBD	0
Other*:	0	TBD	TBD

*Description of Other:

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: A Defect Petition has been opened.

Summary:

In a letter dated August 26, 2010, Ford Motor Company (Ford) submitted a Defect Information Report to NHTSA regarding a rear axle defect in model year (MY) 1998 through 2003 Ford Windstar vehicles built at the Oakville assembly plant from September 1, 1997 through February 28, 2003 and either sold or currently registered in high corrosion ("Salt Belt") states where the use of salt and other corrosive chemicals may be used to treat snow/ice covered roads (NHTSA Recall No. 10V-385, Fprd Recall 10S13). The following states were included in Ford's recall: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia and Wisconsin. See PE10-016 for additional information about the ODI investigation that influenced Ford's recall.

On November 5, 2010, NHTSA received a Defect Petition from the owner of a MY 2003 Ford Windstar vehicle registered in the state of New York requesting that the scope of Recall 10V-385 be expanded to include additional MY 2003 vehicles experiencing the defect condition. The petitioner initially filed a complaint (VOQ 10345125) with ODI on July 25, 2010, two days after the axle failure. The complaint was subsequently amended and the petition filed after the consumer was denied compensation and repair under the recall. ODI has identified a total of five complaints from owners of MY 2003 Ford Windstar vehicles in Salt Belt states that were built after February 28, 2003, Ford's original cutoff date for 10V-385.

On November 30, 2010, Ford submitted a letter supplementing recall 10V-385 (Ford 10S13) to add certain vehicles to the program. Ford's analysis of parts and information from the field showed: 1) that the revised heat treated axle introduced in production on February 28, 2003, may still have the potential for cracks due to corrosion related stress; and 2) that vehicles operated in Utah may be exposed to the same combination of environmental factors that can make them susceptible to cracks from stress related corrosion. Based on this analysis, Ford expanded the scope of 10V-385 to include MY 2003 vehicles built after February 28, 2003 and sold or currently registered in Salt Belt states

and MY 1998 through 2003 vehicles sold or currently registered in Utah. Ford estimated that approximately 29,900 vehicles in the expanded scope may currently remain in service.

ODI will evaluate the petition for a grant or deny decision.