



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 11-019

Date Opened: 05/23/2011

Investigator: Peter Ong

Approver: Frank Borris

Subject: Airbag Clockspring Failure

Date Closed: 11/07/2011

Reviewer: Scott Yon

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: CHRYSLER GROUP LLC

Products: Model Year 2007-2008 Jeep Wrangler

Population: 223,033

Problem Description: Airbag light illumination indicating an airbag clockspring failure

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	60	153	213
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	6,270	6,270

***Description of Other:** Airbag clockspring warranty claims that may relate to the issue.

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: Close this investigation (see Safety Recall Campaign 11V528)

Summary:

In its July 29, 2011 response to ODI's May 27, 2011 information request letter, Chrysler provided 153 MY 2007-2008 owner reports, additional to the 28 ODI Vehicle Owner Questionnaires (VOQs), which related to the illumination of the air bag light (ABL) due to a faulty clockspring (CS) wiring circuit. The right hand drive (RHD) vehicles, which were first produced in MY 2008 and account for only 1% of vehicle production, accounted for 82 of these 181 reports (45%). The MY2007 left hand drive (LHD) vehicle accounted for 61 of the remaining 92 LHD reports and exhibited a higher complaint rate than the MY 2008 LHD vehicles. ODI did not identify any incidents of crashes/injuries attributable to the CS circuit failure. Since May 27, 2011, ODI has received another 32 consumer complaints bringing the total to 213 reports at this closing. In addition, and for comparative purposes, Chrysler provided another 42 owner reports it received on the MY2006 and MY2009-2010 Wrangler vehicles; these populations showed a lower incident rate than the subject vehicles, especially in comparison to the RHD subject vehicles.

Chrysler's investigation showed that the higher rate of RHD Wrangler CS failures were due to a more severe duty cycle for these vehicles which are primarily used by US Postal workers/mail carriers delivering mail in rural regions. Chrysler concluded the unique vehicle usage, much of which occurs with the driver's window open and under dusty environmental conditions, is the cause of premature CS failure. Chrysler's analysis also indicated that the somewhat elevated MY2007 LHD rate, which showed a declining failure trend, was the result of start-up production/assembly issues that occurred with the introduction of a new design CS. The new design CS incorporated both dual airbag inflator circuitry and a steering wheel angle sensor (for the electronic stability control system).

On November 1, 2011, Chrysler submitted a defect notice indicating it will conduct a recall of all MY 2008-2012 RHD Wrangler vehicles (11V528). The estimated 5,334 RHD Wrangler vehicles include the 2,297 MY 2008 RHD Wrangler vehicles, which were the subject of this investigation, plus an additional 3,037 MY 2009-2012 RHD Wrangler vehicles that Chrysler determined potentially have a similar CS concern as the MY 2008 RHD vehicles. Chrysler intends to

replace the existing CS with a yet-to-be-produced improved CS assembly, or an improved steering housing assembly that is less susceptible to dusty environments. Owner notice is scheduled to begin in November, 2011.

Chrysler also informed ODI that it intends to initiate a consumer satisfaction campaign for MY2007 LHD Wrangler which will extend the CS warranty coverage for 10 years or 150,000 miles. Accordingly the investigation is closed.