



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 11-039
Date Opened: 12/21/2011
Investigator: Michael Lee
Approver: Frank Borris
Subject: Corrosion of Third-Row Seat Attachment

Date Closed: 04/27/2012
Reviewer: Scott Yon

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Products: 2004 Ford Freestar/Mercury Monterey (in salt-belt states)
Population: 82,343 (Estimated)

Problem Description: The third-row stowable seat can experience severe corrosion and structural degradation at the seat anchor mechanism mounted to the rear wheel wells.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	18	4	22
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	1	1

*Description of Other: Warranty claims

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: This Preliminary Evaluation has been upgraded to an Engineering Analysis (EA12-003).

Summary:

ODI has received 18 complaints on the subject vehicles from the salt belt states that allege severe corrosion at the rear wheel wells. Additionally, ODI identified 4 similar reports from Ford's response to the investigation. Ford submitted a total of 10 reports to ODI (6 of 10 Ford reports are duplicates of ODI reports). The complaints indicated difficulty or inability to latch the rear seat as some of the complaints reported the entire anchor plate completely detached from the vehicle (rear wheel well). The first report of this condition was received in March 2011 and subsequent reporting frequency indicates a potentially increasing trend over time.

ODI seeks to evaluate the potential occupant safety risks resulting from structurally degraded seat anchorages. In addition to the subject vehicles, ODI also will collect and review information on MY 2005-2007 Freestar/Monterey vehicles that appear to have a seat design identical to the subject vehicles. To date, ODI is not aware of any similar complaints on the MY 2005-2007 vehicles. ODI also will collect and review information on Freestar/Monterey vehicles used outside of the salt belt states.

This Preliminary Evaluation has been upgraded to an Engineering Analysis (EA12-003) to further assess whether a safety defect exists in the subject vehicles.

The ODI reports cited above can be reviewed online at www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/complaints under the following identification (ODI) numbers: 10454977, 10453826, 10452933, 10450587, 10450559, 10450295, 10446564, 10442809, 10441641, 10441489, 10440616, 10438529, 10436592, 10433928, 10424850, 10420028, 10410491 and 10399896.