



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: EA 11-005
Prompted by: Consumer complaints, PE10-038
Date Opened: 05/04/2011
Investigator: Cynthia Glass
Approver: Frank Borris
Subject: Loss of Power Steering Assist
Reviewer: Scott Yon

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: BMW OF NORTH AMERICA, LLC
Products: 2004-2005 Mini Cooper
Population: 59,614

Problem Description: Loss of power steering assist due to power steering pump and/or power steering cooling fan failure.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	339	180	519
Crashes/Fires:	8	0	8
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	4,508	4,508

***Description of Other:** Warranty claims related to power steering loss.

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: This Engineering Analysis is opened.

Summary:

ODI has received 339 complaints alleging an unexpected loss of power steering assist while driving the vehicle. When the power steering assist stops working, drivers experienced difficulty in steering and/or controlling the vehicle.

According to BMW drivers may experience either a temporary or permanent loss of power steering assist. BMW further advised that a temporary loss of power steering assist may be due to a malfunctioning cooling fan or an under-voltage condition in the power steering system. A permanent loss of power steering assist may be due to an error in the internal electronics, and may also result in the continuous running of the power steering pump.

The VOQ complaints allege 5 minor crashes and 3 fires. The crashes are described as "hit the curb". The fires are described as "melted wires". There were no property damage claims.

ODI has received similar complaints for other model year Mini Cooper vehicles. Additional information is required to evaluate the frequency, consequence, and scope of this issue. Accordingly, the investigation has been upgraded to an Engineering Analysis.