



U.S. Department
of Transportation

Memorandum

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

Subject: Test Request: Evaluation of Floorpan and Crossmember and other PE11-037 related testing Date: December 6, 2011

From: Frank Borris, Director Office of Defects Investigation Reply to: NVS-212eer Attn of:

To: Roger Saul, Director Vehicle Research and Test Center

This memorandum requests the Vehicle Research and Test Center (VRTC) to conduct a specific inspection and evaluation as described below, and any additional testing that may be required and agreed at a later date.

BACKGROUND: The Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) is conducting a Preliminary Evaluation (PE11-037) concerning intrusion into the battery in model year (MY) 2011 and 2012 Chevrolet Volts. Three weeks after a NCAP side pole impact test, a 2011 Chevrolet Volt caught fire, which completely consumed the vehicle along with three other vehicles in close proximity at a test facility. Subsequent testing to reproduce the fire incident has resulted in two more thermal events. The PE has been opened to examine the potential risks involved from intrusion damage to the battery in the Chevrolet Volt.

ALLEGED DEFECT: Intrusion into the battery in a post-crash event may lead to fire.

OBJECTIVES: The objectives of this test program are to document if any changes in the welding process are visible at the area of intrusion. Any additional objectives will be discussed and agreed on an ongoing basis.

TEST SAMPLE: VRTC has five Chevrolet Volts currently at the testing facility.

RECOMMENDED APPROACH: VRTC should take photographs of the floorpan/crossmember near the battery tunnel on both the driver and passenger sides of the vehicle. A sample photograph of the location has been submitted to Bill Collins for clarification. The manufacture date of the vehicle being photographed should also be noted.

REPORTS: No formal report is necessary at this time, only labeled photographs with note of the vehicle(s) manufacture date is needed.

SCHEDULE: We would like to have the inspection completed at VRTC's earliest opportunity.