



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION



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Investigation: PE 14-029
Date Opened: 09/11/2014
Investigator: Nate Seymour
Approver: Frank Borris
Subject: Headlight failures/fires

Date Closed: 02/27/2015
Reviewer: Bruce York-B

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: Navistar, Inc.
Products: 2013 Navistar ProStar
Population: 19,340

Problem Description: 2013 ProStar models may experience a loss of illumination or a thermal event from the headlight assembly and/or wiring.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	1	0	1
Crashes/Fires:	1	1	1**
Injury Incidents:	1	1	1**
Number of Injuries:	2	2	2**
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	250	250

*Description of Other: Warranty Claims

** Total eliminates duplicates received by ODI and manufacturer.

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: This PE is closed.

Summary:

This investigation was opened based on a consumer complaint alleging a headlight fire on a MY 2013 International Prostar. A fire cause and origin report accompanied the complaint and placed the origin at the headlight assembly but did not confirm the first material ignited. The complainant reported two injuries due to smoke inhalation by the driver and passenger as well as a broken ankle suffered by the passenger when they jumped out of the vehicle.

During the investigation, ODI collected and reviewed subject and peer vehicle information related to the alleged defect. ODI selected model year 2012 and 2014 Navistar Prostar vehicles as peer vehicles. ODI sent an Information Request letter to Navistar in order to collect production, complaint, warranty, part sales, and design information. Navistar provided all requested information.

A thorough review of available data revealed the only known complaint and injury event was the single complaint submitted to NHTSA. Navistar reported having received 250 warranty claims relative to the alleged defect on the subject vehicle. A detailed review of these claims indicated that single headlights failed sporadically over the life of the truck. No incidents were found to include simultaneous failure of both the left and right headlights. ODI also analyzed data for 39,687 peer MY 2012 and 2014 Prostar vehicles. Navistar used the same search criteria on the peer vehicles as the subject vehicles and identified 439 warranty claims. Again, no fires, injuries or simultaneous failures were identified.

No design changes were reported for the headlights on subject vehicles. However, Navistar reported three design

changes for the 2014 peer vehicles. One of the changes was to offer LED headlights. Another involved a changed in the headlight assembly supplier as a cost savings initiative, and the third was in response to warranty claims. All designs are interchangeable with the subject vehicles. Change 91885Z was put into vehicle production on November 4, 2013 and improved the headlight connections. The majority of warranty claims received reported the headlight failed as a result of the connection melting. This change was implemented to correct this issue. ODI surveyed five fleets and all reported they did not have repeat headlight failures with the new harness connectors.

Navistar assessed the alleged fire reported to ODI. While the fire did originate in the headlight assembly area, Navistar does not believe it was due to the headlight harness or connections. Navistar believes it originated in the marker/turn signal harness or connection, which is also located in the headlight assembly. Pictures in the cause and origin report clearly show the headlight harness intact, which wouldn't be the case if it was the initial material ignited. This correlates with the driver's statement that the headlights weren't on at the time of failure as there would be no current in the headlight harness if the headlights were not illuminated.

ODI does not dispute Navistar's assessment of the alleged defect and did not identify a trend of headlight failures or fires. There is redundancy when a single light fails and it is easily identified and remedied. Additionally, the Prostar features software to alert the driver when a headlight goes out and if properly equipped with satellite communication can simultaneously alert fleet management.

This investigation is closed as further use of agency resources does not appear warranted. The closing of this investigation does not constitute a finding by NHTSA that no safety-related defect exists. The agency reserves the right to take further action if warranted by the circumstances.

The ODI report cited above can be reviewed at:

<http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/owners/SearchNHTSAID>

using the following complaint identification numbers: 10564939, 10564940 (both complaints are related to one incident)