



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 14-009
Date Opened: 03/26/2014
Investigator: Peter Kivett **Reviewer:** Bruce York-B
Approver: Frank Borris
Subject: Front A-arm failing

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: Pierce Manufacturing
Products: 2010-2011 Pierce Arrow Fire Trucks w/ TAK-4 Front Suspension
Population: 500 (Estimated)
Problem Description: The lower ball joint may fail causing the wheel and brake components to separate from the truck increasing the risk of a crash

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	0	0	0
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
Other*:	2	0	2

*Description of Other: Media event and fleet contacts

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: This Preliminary Evaluation is opened

Summary:

On February 27th, the Office of Defects Investigations (ODI) received a media inquiry regarding the loss of a left front wheel on a Portland, OR fire department aerial fire truck responding to an emergency call.

ODI interviewed the Deputy Chief of Logistics for the Portland fire department to learn more about the failure details. ODI was made aware that the 2011 Arrow model fire truck was travelling approximately 30mph and as it crossed through an intersection it allegedly experienced a wheel off event. The incident occurred after the truck drove over a change in the road surface height where new asphalt was being applied. The driver alleges he felt the normal "bump" and then suddenly the truck dropped on the driver's side, losing steering control. A second wheel-off incident was reported in November 2013, in Edmonds, Oklahoma on a 2010 Pierce aerial ladder truck. In this event, it was the passenger side front suspension that failed.

An ODI investigator spoke with Pierce and they are aware of the reports and have taken possession of the two failed control arms in an effort to better understand the failure mechanism. Pierce made ODI aware of a potential third failure that occurred in Milwaukee, WI on the passenger side of a 2011 Arrow.

This Preliminary Evaluation has been opened to assess the scope and risk associated with the alleged defect.