



U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

ODI RESUME

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION



Investigation: EA18006
Prompted By: PE18005
Date Opened: 11/16/2018 **Date Closed:** 04/02/2024
Investigator: Matthew Martens **Reviewer:** Gregory Magno
Approver: Tanya Topka
Subject: Steering Column Separation

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: Toyota Motor Corporation
Products: 2008-2013 Toyota Highlander and Highlander Hybrid
Population: 708,067

Problem Description: Upper steering column may separate from lower column while driving if adjustments are made to the steering wheel position (tilt and/or telescoping).

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

| | ODI | Manufacturer | EWR D&I | Other | Total | EWR Field Reports |
|------------------------------|-----|--------------|---------|-------|-------|-------------------|
| All Incidents: | 10 | 42 | 0 | 0 | 42* | CONF |
| Crashes/Fires: | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Injury Incidents: | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Number of Injuries: | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fatality Incidents: | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Number of Fatalities: | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Description of Other:

*Total eliminates duplicates received by the manufacturer

ACTION/SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: This (EA) Engineering Analysis is closed with a manufacturer action updating vehicle inspection documentation following frontal collisions.

Summary:

On November 16, 2018, the Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) opened an Engineering Analysis (EA18-006) as an upgrade to a Preliminary Evaluation (PE18-005). The investigation focused on allegations of steering wheel separation from the lower steering column after using the tilt and/or telescoping mechanism.

Given the separation occurring when operating the tilt and/or telescoping function and failure of both shear capsules to maintain the lower steering column mounting position, potential for shear capsule damage in the known failures due to collisions, the overall low rate of occurrence, and the updated manufacturer documentation, this investigation is closed. The closing of this investigation does not constitute a finding by NHTSA that no safety-related defect exists. The agency reserves right to take further action if warranted by the circumstances.

A detailed summary of the investigation is attached to this closing resume.

To review the ODI reports cited in the Closing Resume ODI Report Identification Number document, go to [NHTSA.gov](https://www.nhtsa.gov).