



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



1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590

FEB 07 2019

CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Mr. Brian Latouf, Director
Field Product Investigations and Evaluations
General Motors Vehicle Engineering Center
30001 Van Dyke
Mail Code: 480-210-2V
Warren, Michigan 48090

NEF-101cl
PE18-012

Dear Mr. Latouf:

This letter is to inform you that the Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has opened a Preliminary Evaluation (PE18-012) to investigate allegations of Brake Vacuum Assist Pump failures in certain model year (MY) 2014-2016 Chevrolet, GMC and Cadillac light trucks and SUVs manufactured by General Motors LLC (GM)

This office has received 487 reports of brake vacuum assist pump failures in above listed subject vehicles. Drivers allege that the brake pedal becomes hard to depress and a commensurate increase in vehicle stopping distance with no warning. A copy of each of the reports is enclosed for your information.

Unless otherwise stated in the text, the following definitions apply to these information requests:

- **Subject vehicles:** All MY2014 – 2016 Silverado/Sierra, Escalade ESV, Escalade EXT, Suburban, Tahoe, and Yukon XL, 1500 series model trucks manufactured with a belt-driven brake vacuum assist pump for sale or lease in the United States, including, but not limited to, the District of Columbia, and current U.S. territories and possessions.
- **Subject component:** Belt- driven brake vacuum assist pumps used in the subject vehicles.
- **Alleged defect:** Any malfunction of the subject component that extends vehicle stopping distance or diminishes braking feel or effectiveness by the vehicle operator.
- **GM:** General Motors LLC, all of its past and present officers and employees, whether assigned to its principal offices or any of its field or other locations, including all of its divisions, subsidiaries (whether or not incorporated) and affiliated enterprises and all of their headquarters, regional, zone and other offices and their employees, and all agents, contractors, consultants, attorneys and law firms and other persons engaged directly or indirectly (e.g., employee of a consultant) by or under the control of GM (including all business units and persons previously referred to), who are, in or after 1995, were

involved in any way with any of the following related to the alleged defect in the subject vehicles:

- a. Design, engineering, analysis, modification or production (e.g. quality control);
 - b. Testing, assessment or evaluation;
 - c. Consideration, or recognition of potential or actual defects, reporting, record-keeping and information management, (e.g., complaints, field reports, warranty information, part sales), analysis, claims, or lawsuits; or
 - d. Communication to, from or intended for zone representatives, fleets, dealers, or other field locations, including but not limited to people who have the capacity to obtain information from dealers.
- **Document:** “Document(s)” is used in the broadest sense of the word and shall mean all original written, printed, typed, recorded, or graphic matter whatsoever, however produced or reproduced, of every kind, nature, and description, and all non-identical copies of both sides thereof, including, but not limited to, papers, letters, memoranda, correspondence, communications, electronic mail (e-mail) messages (existing in hard copy and/or in electronic storage), faxes, mailgrams, telegrams, cables, telex messages, notes, annotations, working papers, drafts, minutes, records, audio and video recordings, data, databases, other information bases, summaries, charts, tables, graphics, other visual displays, photographs, statements, interviews, opinions, reports, newspaper articles, studies, analyses, evaluations, interpretations, contracts, agreements, jottings, agendas, bulletins, notices, announcements, instructions, blueprints, drawings, as-builts, changes, manuals, publications, work schedules, journals, statistical data, desk, portable and computer calendars, appointment books, diaries, travel reports, lists, tabulations, computer printouts, data processing program libraries, data processing inputs and outputs, microfilms, microfiches, statements for services, resolutions, financial statements, governmental records, business records, personnel records, work orders, pleadings, discovery in any form, affidavits, motions, responses to discovery, all transcripts, administrative filings and all mechanical, magnetic, photographic and electronic records or recordings of any kind, including any storage media associated with computers, including, but not limited to, information on hard drives, floppy disks, backup tapes, and zip drives, electronic communications, including but not limited to, the Internet and shall include any drafts or revisions pertaining to any of the foregoing, all other things similar to any of the foregoing, however denominated by GM, any other data compilations from which information can be obtained, translated if necessary, into a usable form and any other documents. For purposes of this request, any document which contains any note, comment, addition, deletion, insertion, annotation, or otherwise comprises a non-identical copy of another document shall be treated as a separate document subject to production. In all cases where original and any non-identical copies are not available, “document(s)” also means any identical copies of the original and all non-identical copies thereof. Any document, record, graph, chart, film or photograph originally produced in color must be provided in color. Furnish all documents whether verified by GM or not. If a document is not in the English language, provide both the original document and an English translation of the document.

- **Other Terms:** To the extent that they are used in these information requests, the terms “claim,” “consumer complaint,” “dealer field report,” “field report,” “fire,” “fleet,” “good will,” “make,” “model,” “model year,” “notice,” “property damage,” “property damage claim,” “rollover,” “type,” “warranty,” “warranty adjustment,” and “warranty claim,” whether used in singular or in plural form, have the same meaning as found in 49 CFR 579.4.

In order for my staff to evaluate the alleged defect, certain information is required. Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30166, please provide numbered responses to the following information requests. Insofar as GM has previously provided a document to ODI, GM may produce it again or identify the document, the document submission to ODI in which it was included and the precise location in that submission where the document is located. When documents are produced, the documents shall be produced in an identified, organized manner that corresponds with the organization of this information request letter (including all individual requests and subparts). When documents are produced and the documents would not, standing alone, be self-explanatory, the production of documents shall be supplemented and accompanied by explanation.

Please repeat the applicable request verbatim above each response. After GM’s response to each request, identify the source of the information and indicate the last date the information was gathered.

1. State, by model and model year, the number of subject vehicles GM has manufactured for sale or lease in the United States. Separately, for each subject vehicle manufactured to date by GM, state the following:
 - a. Vehicle identification number (VIN);
 - b. Make;
 - c. Model;
 - d. Model Year;
 - e. Subject component supplier name, part number and design version installed as original equipment;
 - f. Date of manufacture;
 - g. Date warranty coverage commenced; and
 - h. The State in the United States where the vehicle was originally sold or leased (or delivered for sale or lease).

Provide the table in Microsoft Access 2010, or a compatible format, entitled “PRODUCTION DATA.”

2. State the number of each of the following, received by GM, or of which GM is otherwise aware, which relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles:
 - a. Consumer complaints, including those from fleet operators;
 - b. Field reports, including dealer field reports;
 - c. Reports involving a crash, injury or fatality;
 - d. Reports involving a fire;
 - e. Property damage claims;
 - f. Third-party arbitration proceedings where GM is or was a party to the arbitration; and
 - g. Lawsuits, both pending and closed, in which GM is or was a defendant or codefendant.

For subparts “a” through “g” state the total number of each item (e.g., consumer complaints, field reports, etc.) separately. Multiple incidents involving the same vehicle are to be counted separately. Multiple reports of the same incident are also to be counted separately (i.e., a consumer complaint and a field report involving the same incident in which a crash occurred are to be counted as a crash report, a field report and a consumer complaint).

In addition, for items “c” through “g” provide a summary description of the alleged problem and causal and contributing factors and GM’s assessment of the problem, with a summary of the significant underlying facts and evidence. For items “f” and “g” identify the parties to the action, as well as the caption, court, docket number, and date on which the complaint or other document initiating the action was filed.

3. Separately, for each item (complaint, report, claim, notice, or matter) within the scope of your response to Request No. 2, state the following information:
 - a. GM’s file number or other identifier used;
 - b. The category of the item, as identified in Request No. 2 (i.e., consumer complaint, field report, etc.);
 - c. Vehicle owner or fleet name (and fleet contact person), street address, email address and telephone number;
 - d. Vehicle’s VIN;
 - e. Vehicle’s make, model and model year;
 - f. Vehicle’s mileage at time of incident;
 - g. Incident date;
 - h. Report or claim date;
 - i. Whether a crash is alleged;
 - j. Whether a fire is alleged;
 - k. Whether property damage is alleged;
 - l. Number of alleged injuries, if any; and
 - m. Number of alleged fatalities, if any.

Provide this information in Microsoft Access 2010, or a compatible format, entitled “REQUEST NUMBER TWO DATA.”

4. Produce copies of all documents related to each item within the scope of Request No. 2. Organize the documents separately by category (i.e., consumer complaints, field reports, etc.) and describe the method GM used for organizing the documents. Describe in detail the search methods and search criteria used by GM to identify the items in response to Request No. 2.
5. State, by model and model year, a total count for all of the following categories of claims, collectively, that have been paid by GM to date that relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles: warranty claims; extended warranty claims; claims for good will services that were provided; field, zone, or similar adjustments and reimbursements; and warranty claims or repairs made in accordance with a procedure specified in a technical service bulletin or customer satisfaction campaign.

Separately, for each such claim, state the following information:

- a. GM's claim number;
- b. Vehicle owner or fleet name (and fleet contact person), street address, email address and telephone number;
- c. VIN;
- d. Repair date;
- e. Vehicle mileage at time of repair;
- f. Repairing dealer's or facility's name, telephone number, city and state or ZIP code;
- g. Labor operation number(s);
- h. Problem code(s);
- i. Diagnostic trouble code(s);
- j. Replacement part number(s) and description(s);
- k. Concern stated by customer;
- l. Cause as stated on the repair order;
- m. Correction as stated on the repair order; and
- n. Additional comments, if any, by dealer/technician relating to claim and/or repair.

Provide this information in Microsoft Access 2010, or a compatible format, entitled "WARRANTY DATA."

6. Describe in detail the search methods and search criteria used by GM to identify the claims in response to Request No. 5, including the labor operations, problem codes, diagnostic trouble codes, part numbers and any other pertinent parameters used.

Provide a list of all labor operations, labor operation descriptions, problem codes, and problem code descriptions, diagnostic trouble codes and diagnostic trouble code descriptions applicable to the alleged defect in the subject vehicles. State whether the diagnostic trouble codes are automatically reported to the warranty database electronically or manually entered into the warranty database by a claims administrator.

State, by make and model year, the terms of the new vehicle warranty coverage offered by GM on the subject vehicles (i.e., the number of months and mileage for which coverage is provided and the vehicle systems that are covered). Describe any extended warranty coverage option(s) that GM offered for the subject vehicles and state by option, model, and model year, the number of vehicles that are covered under each such extended warranty.

7. Produce copies of all service, warranty, and other documents that relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles, that GM has issued to any dealers, regional or zone offices, field offices, fleet purchasers, or other entities. This includes, but is not limited to, bulletins, advisories, informational documents, training documents, or other documents or communications, with the exception of standard shop manuals. Also include the latest draft copy of any communication that GM is planning to issue within the next 120 days.
8. Describe all assessments, analyses, tests, test results, studies, surveys, simulations, investigations, inquiries and/or evaluations (collectively, "actions") that relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles that have been conducted, are being conducted, are planned, or are being planned by, or for, GM. For each such action, provide the following information:

- a. Action title or identifier;
- b. The actual or planned start date;
- c. The actual or expected end date;
- d. Brief summary of the subject and objective of the action;
- e. Engineering group(s)/supplier(s) responsible for designing and for conducting the action; and
- f. A brief summary of the findings and/or conclusions resulting from the action.

For each action identified, provide copies of all documents related to the action, regardless of whether the documents are in interim, draft, or final form. Organize the documents chronologically by action.

9. Describe all modifications or changes made by, or on behalf of, GM in the design, material composition, manufacture, quality control, supply, or installation of the subject component, from the start of production to date, which relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles. For each such modification or change, provide the following information:
 - a. The date or approximate date on which the modification or change was incorporated into vehicle production;
 - b. A detailed description of the modification or change;
 - c. The reason(s) for the modification or change;
 - d. The part number(s) (service and engineering) of the original component;
 - e. The part number(s) (service and engineering) of the modified component;
 - f. Whether the original unmodified component was withdrawn from production and/or sale, and if so, when;
 - g. When the modified component was made available as a service component; and
 - h. Whether the modified component can be interchanged with earlier production components.

Also, provide the above information for any modification or change that GM is aware of which may be incorporated into vehicle production within the next 120 days.

10. State the number of each of the following that GM has sold that may be used in the subject vehicles by component name, supplier name, part number (both service and engineering/production), model and model year of the vehicle in which it is used and month/year of sale (including the cut-off date for sales, if applicable):
 - a. Subject component; and
 - b. Any subject components that have been released, or developed, by GM for use in service repairs to the subject component/assembly.

For each component part number, provide the supplier's name, address, and appropriate point of contact (name, title, and telephone number). Also identify by make, model and model year, any other vehicles of which GM is aware that contain the identical component, whether installed in production or in service, and state the applicable dates of production or service usage.

11. Furnish GM's assessment of the alleged defect in the subject vehicle, including:

- a. The causal or contributory factor(s);
- b. The failure mechanism(s);
- c. The failure mode(s);
- d. The risk to motor vehicle safety that it poses; and
- e. What warnings, if any, the operator and the other persons both inside and outside the vehicle would have that the alleged defect was occurring or subject component was malfunctioning; and
- f. The reports included with this inquiry.

Legal Authority for This Request

This letter is being sent to GM pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30166, which authorizes NHTSA to conduct any investigation that may be necessary to enforce Chapter 301 of Title 49 and to request reports and the production of things. It constitutes a new request for information.

Civil Penalties

GM's failure to respond promptly and fully to this letter could subject GM to civil penalties pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30165 or lead to an action for injunctive relief pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30163. (Other remedies and sanctions are available as well.) The Vehicle Safety Act, as amended, 49 U.S.C. § 30165(a)(3), provides for civil penalties of up to \$21,000 per violation per day, with a maximum of \$105,000,000 for a related series of daily violations, for failing or refusing to perform an act required under 49 U.S.C. § 30166. *See* 49 CFR 578.6 (as amended by Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (the "FAST Act"), Pub. L. 114-94, § 24110(a)(2), 129 Stat. 1312 (Dec. 4, 2015)). This includes failing to respond completely, accurately, and in a timely manner to ODI information requests.

If GM cannot respond to any specific request or subpart(s) thereof, please state the reason why it is unable to do so. If on the basis of attorney-client, attorney work product, or other privilege, GM does not submit one or more requested documents or items of information in response to this information request, GM must provide a privilege log identifying each document or item withheld, and stating the date, subject or title, the name and position of the person(s) from, and the person(s) to whom it was sent, and the name and position of any other recipient (to include all carbon copies or blind carbon copies), the nature of that information or material, and the basis for the claim of privilege and why that privilege applies.

Confidential Business Information

All business confidential information must be submitted directly to the Office of Chief Counsel as described in the following paragraph and should not be sent to this office. In addition, do not submit any business confidential information in the body of the letter submitted to this office. Please refer to PE18-012 in GM's response to this letter and in any confidentiality request submitted to the Office of Chief Counsel.

If GM claims that any of the information or documents provided in response to this information request constitute confidential commercial material within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4), or are protected from disclosure pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1905, GM must submit supporting information together with the materials that are the subject of the confidentiality request, in accordance with 49 CFR Part 512, as amended, to the Office of Chief Counsel (NCC-111), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room W41-227, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20590. GM is required to **submit two copies of the documents containing allegedly confidential information (except only one copy of blueprints) and one copy of the documents from which information claimed to be confidential has been deleted.** Please remember that the phrase “ENTIRE PAGE CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION” or “CONTAINS CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION” (as appropriate) must appear at the top of each page containing information claimed to be confidential, and the information must be clearly identified in accordance with 49 CFR 512.6. If you submit a request for confidentiality for all or part of your response to this IR, that is in an electronic format (e.g., CD-ROM), your request and associated submission must conform to the new requirements in NHTSA's Confidential Business Information Rule regarding submissions in electronic formats. See 49 CFR 512.6(c) (as amended by 72 Fed. Reg. 59434 (October 19, 2007)).

If you have any questions regarding submission of a request for confidential treatment, contact Otto Matheke, Senior Attorney, Office of Chief Counsel at otto.matheke@dot.gov or (202) 366-5253.

Due Date

GM's response to this letter, in duplicate, together with a copy of any confidentiality request, must be submitted to this office by **March 27, 2019**. GM's response must include all non-confidential attachments and a redacted version of all documents that contain confidential information. If GM finds that it is unable to provide all of the information requested within the time allotted, GM must request an extension from me at (202) 366-5226 no later than five business days before the response due date. If GM is unable to provide all of the information requested by the original deadline, it must submit a partial response by the original deadline with whatever information GM then has available, even if an extension has been granted.

Please send email notification to Chris Lash at chris.lash@dot.gov and to ODI_IRresponse@dot.gov when GM sends its response to this office and indicate whether there is confidential information as part of GM's response.

If you have any technical questions concerning this matter, please call Chris Lash of my staff at (202) 366-2370.

Sincerely,



Gregory Magno, Chief
Vehicle Defects Division A
Office of Defects Investigation

Enclosure 1: Copies of the subject reports referenced in the introduction of this letter identified by ODI reference numbers.

Enclosure 2: Disk containing data bases.

PE18-012 Attachment – ODI Numbers

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	11173052	11173036	11172775	11172741	11172587	11172435	11172362	11172341	11172215	11172145
2	11172000	11171742	11171487	11171339	11171277	11171262	11171169	11171155	11171099	11171079
3	11171028	11170955	11170699	11170825	11170676	11170662	11170564	11170527	11170633	11170425
4	11170356	11170401	11169960	11169868	11169844	11169956	11166663	11166353	11166193	11166155
5	11166038	11165996	11165980	11165943	11165931	11165893	11164941	11164930	11164844	11164737
6	11164739	11164598	11164578	11164466	11164418	11164321	11164170	11163659	11163484	11163288
7	11162586	11162427	11162421	11162400	11162580	11162377	11162275	11162271	11162172	11162147
8	11162164	11162126	11162087	11161935	11161999	11161829	11161350	11161324	11161207	11161178
9	11156586	11156437	11155992	11155989	11155980	11155837	11155926	11155777	11155741	11155677
10	11155653	11155650	11155567	11155559	11155552	11155673	11155484	11155468	11155349	11155326
11	11155321	11155340	11155359	11155214	11155202	11155154	11155144	11154920	11154888	11154829
12	11154776	11154728	11154677	11154827	11154621	11154601	11154582	11154558	11154541	11154527
13	11154520	11154516	11154507	11154493	11154483	11154456	11154452	11154427	11154407	11154441
14	11154492	11154333	11154310	11154290	11154281	11154266	11154264	11154234	11154198	11154191
15	11154175	11154173	11154146	11154141	11154260	11154182	11154195	11154228	11154316	11154127
16	11154102	11154056	11154019	11154013	11153997	11153964	11153936	11153931	11153930	11153745
17	11153733	11153717	11153715	11153700	11153699	11153692	11153672	11153748	11153683	11153690
18	11153709	11153736	11153937	11153955	11153973	11154041	11154054	11153662	11153655	11153640
19	11153625	11153615	11153572	11153570	11153587	11153603	11153635	11153563	11153543	11153537
20	11153513	11153512	11153511	11153492	11153486	11153479	11153474	11153471	11153460	11153452
21	11153551	11153446	11153438	11153427	11153394	11153389	11153378	11153363	11153356	11153340
22	11153330	11153318	11153308	11153290	11153286	11153404	11152986	11152958	11152468	11152408
23	11152422	11152187	11151976	11151947	11151980	11152114	11151750	11151680	11151676	11151673
24	11151600	11151216	11151117	11150901	11150912	11150711	11150701	11149853	11145284	11145304
25	11145176	11145175	11144950	11144904	11143937	11143710	11143759	11143349	11142826	11142685
26	11142662	11142544	11142374	11141831	11141673	11141678	11141592	11141392	11141329	11141195
27	11140624	11140519	11140312	11140321	11139980	11139614	11139356	11139264	11139225	11139210
28	11133153	11132847	11132841	11132455	11132014	11131979	11131959	11131903	11131066	11130896
29	11130530	11130345	11130321	11130227	11129715	11129455	11129487	11129377	11129227	11129398
30	11129146	11129143	11129140	11128867	11128490	11128191	11124506	11124227	11124155	11123567
31	11123463	11122933	11122741	11122443	11122129	11121979	11121611	11121618	11121172	11119907
32	11119847	11119696	11118870	11118984	11118723	11115892	11115151	11114688	11114340	11114244
33	11114005	11113548	11113270	11112722	11111834	11111748	11111160	11110640	11110451	11110393
34	11110264	11110372	11110010	11109842	11105051	11104203	11104097	11103950	11103906	11102448
35	11102108	11101822	11101726	11101165	11100502	11100297	11099907	11099906	11098785	11098687
36	11097335	11097151	11094120	11094113	11094026	11093803	11091924	11091404	11090895	11090809

PE18-012 Attachment – ODI Numbers

37	11090358	11090220	11089691	11089278	11089173	11088926	11084934	11084610	11084250	11083289
38	11082296	11082247	11081459	11081406	11080953	11080863	11080286	11078952	11078931	11078820
39	11078644	11076253	11075730	11074456	11073759	11073735	11073454	11072905	11072654	11067395
40	11067234	11066885	11065274	11065323	11064698	11064605	11064326	11064080	11063192	11063087
41	11062858	11062072	11060963	11060689	11058306	11056908	11056635	11056319	11055488	11055292
42	11055232	11054734	11054559	11054565	11054123	11053948	11053444	11053431	11052302	11048544
43	11048333	11047981	11047629	11047239	11047034	11046974	11046553	11045921	11045731	11045528
44	11044677	11043192	11042006	11041545	11041607	11040665	11035748	11034792	11034747	11034518
45	11033883	11033911	11033088	11032103	11031984	11030722	11030685	11030450	11030016	11025403
46	11022709	11021601	11021419	11021253	11020267	11020372	11020065	11018809	11014072	11013706
47	11013363	11011875	11006565	11006271	11005111	11003691	11002554	11001938	11001423	10995718
48	10995134	10993922	10992868	10992092	10991595	10984684	10984491	10967071	10956664	10930061
49	10928550	10919906	10911185	10904757	10896962	10826151	10818785			