U.S. Department of Transportation

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

ODI RESUME

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION
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Investigation: PE 20-017
Date Opened: 10/09/2020 **Date Closed:** 05/06/2021
Investigator: Xiaoming Tan **Reviewer:** Joshua Neff
Approver: Stephen Ridella
Subject: The steering arm may fall onto roadway

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: DEXTER AXLE
Products: 2019-2020 Dexter Smart-Steer 2.0 Axles
Population: 4,043 (Estimated)

Problem Description: The mounting bolts attaching the steering arm to Smart-Steer 2.0 axles may fail resulting in steering components detaching and falling onto the roadway.

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*:	1	Confidential	Confidential

***Description of Other:** TSB #10168802, Manufacturer claims

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: Close the Preliminary Evaluation as Dexter filed recall 21E-019

Summary:

The Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) opened this Preliminary Evaluation (PE) on October 9, 2020 to investigate a Technical Service Bulletin (TSB #10168802) submitted by Dexter Axles (Dexter) in December 2019 regarding the failure of Smart-Steer 2.0 steering arm mounting bolts. The failure of these steering arm mounting bolts allows the steering arm assembly to detach and fall into the roadway.

In response to an Information Request (IR) letter, Dexter submitted additional information regarding these failures, including warranty claim data and pictures of tie rods with lost clamps and steering arms. Through data analysis, ODI identified a trend of warranty claims with multiple occurrences of steering arm mounting bolts failing on Dexter Smart-Steer 2.0 axle assemblies. ODI was also aware of a comparable defect being addressed by recall 20E-055 on other steering axles that may have a similar configuration to Smart-Steer 2.0 Dexter Axles.

Discussions and analysis of the data between ODI and Dexter resulted in Dexter submitting recall 21E-019 on March 15, 2021. This recall includes and provides a remedy for the entire U.S. population of axles that were the subject of this PE20-017.

ODI is closing this PE with Dexter's safety recall 21E-019.