



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

ODI RESUME

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

Investigation: PE21017

Prompted By: VOQ Review

Date Opened: 07/09/2021

Date 01/15/2025

Closed:

Investigator: Nate Seymour

Reviewer: Joshua Neff

Approver: Tanya Topka

Subject: Extended Stopping Distance

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: Triumph Motorcycles America, Ltd.

Products: 2019 TRIUMPH SPEED TRIPLE S, 2017 TRIUMPH THRUXTON R, 2016-2019 TRIUMPH SPEED TRIPLE, 2017 TRIUMPH THRUXTON 1200R, 2016-2017 TRIUMPH SPEED TRIPLE R, 2016-2019 TRIUMPH THRUXTON, 2019 TRIUMPH SPEED TRIPLE RS

Population: 3,571

Problem Description: The motorcycles may unexpectedly have a soft front brake lever resulting in inconsistent braking and an extended stopping distance, requiring a double pull of the front brake lever.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	EWR D&I	Other	Total	EWR Field Reports
All Incidents:	42	81	0	0	94*	CONF
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0	0	0	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 Preliminary Evaluation (PE) is closed without a manufacturer action.

Summary:

The Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) opened this Preliminary Evaluation (PE21017) on July 9, 2021 for model year (MY) 2016-2019 Triumph Thruxton and Speed Triple model motorcycles based on allegations of loss of front braking performance. Vehicle Owner Questionnaires (VOQ) indicated riders were experiencing a soft front brake lever that could result in an unexpected extended stopping distance.

On July 28, 2021, ODI sent an Information Request letter to Triumph to learn more about the subject components and alleged defect. On September 24, 2021, Triumph submitted its response, which ODI analyzed. ODI learned that the majority of the VOQ incidents occurred two or more years after the motorcycle was manufactured. The manufacturer recommends changing the brake fluid every two years, regardless of mileage. As the manufacturer's warranty lasts for two years from the date of sale, many dealers covered the complicated brake fluid replacement procedure under warranty. However, most of the motorcycles involved in these incidents were overdue to have their brake system serviced.

Triumph conducted testing of the brake system to better quantify what riders were experiencing. Triumph found pulling the lever a second time immediately after an initial pull did result in less lever travel for the same force exerted on the lever. This reduction was two millimeters or less. Additional testing was conducted to ascertain the caliper force generated relative to various lever forces. Triumph found that the caliper force varied +/- 2% between the first and second pull of the front brake lever and any given applied force.

Triumph claimed that the lack of proper maintenance was the cause of the soft brake lever. Triumph conducted additional testing to quantify this claim. The lever travel between the first and second pull increased 150% on an improperly maintained system versus a properly maintained system. However, the caliper force only decreased 2-3% on average with this increased lever travel, further indicating that the subject motorcycles are capable of fully stopping.

ODI located and evaluated a subject motorcycle. Measurements were taken and confirmed there was a small decrease in lever travel between the first and second pull. ODI then conducted a series of hard braking events, which did not produce evidence that the difference in lever travel resulted in an extended stopping distance.

ODI also considered Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS) data. ODI identified six fatal events that involved a subject vehicle. The service history records were reviewed for each motorcycle, however, none of the records included any mention of braking problems and thus there is no indication that the alleged defect may have contributed to the fatal crashes.

As of this time there are no VOQ or manufacturer claims reporting an injury, fatality, or crash arising from this issue. Based on the available information, including the absence of such events after nine years of service on the oldest motorcycles, ODI is closing this investigation. 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. To review the ODI reports cited in the Closing Resume ODI Report Identification Number document, go to [NHTSA.gov](https://www.nhtsa.gov).