



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

# ODI RESUME

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION



**Investigation:** PE23001  
**Prompted By:** VOQ Review  
**Date Opened:** 01/27/2023      **Date Closed:** 02/08/2024  
**Investigator:** Daniel Hillman      **Reviewer:** Peter Kivett  
**Approver:** Tanya Topka  
**Subject:** Windshield trim molding Item detachment

## MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

**Manufacturer:** Ford Motor Company  
**Products:** 2013-2019 Ford Explorer Police Intercept and 2011-2019 Ford Explorer  
**Population:** 1,858,944

**Problem Description:** A windshield trim panel can detach while driving at highway speeds. This could cause the detached piece to strike a following vehicle, causing an increased risk of crash.

## FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	EWR D&I	Other	Total	EWR Field Reports
<b>All Incidents:</b>	671	175	0	14,171	15,017*	0
<b>Crashes/Fires:</b>	1	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Injury Incidents:</b>	2	0	0	0	2	0
<b>Number of Injuries:</b>	2	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Fatality Incidents:</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Number of Fatalities:</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Description of Other:** Warranty Claims, Lawsuits, and Legal Claims

\*Total eliminates duplicates received by the manufacturer

## ACTION/SUMMARY INFORMATION

**Action:** This Preliminary Evaluation (PE) is closed with 24V031.

**Summary:**

On January 27, 2023, the Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) opened PE23-001 to investigate allegations of A-pillar trim panel detachment on model year (MY) 2011-2019 Ford Explorer vehicles. At the time of opening, the office had received 164 Vehicle Owner Questionnaires (VOQs) reporting this failure.

ODI has received 671 VOQs regarding this failure, including 1 alleged crash and 2 alleged injuries. Some consumers have reported that the failure occurred while they were driving at highway speeds, with the detached trim panel entering the path of travel of the vehicle behind them, requiring the driver of the following vehicle to take evasive action. It is noteworthy that motorists who experience this type of road hazard are less likely to accurately identify the subject vehicle the item detached from and report the event to the NHTSA.

In its April 17, 2023 response to ODI's information request, Ford provided 175 consumer complaints (including field reports) and 14,162 warranty claims related to A-pillar trim panel detachment. Ford relayed that the subject vehicles utilize a plastic A-pillar bracket, which is bolted to the vehicle structure during assembly. The A-pillar trim panel is attached to the bracket utilizing 7 plastic clips. Contributory factors which have been identified by Ford as leading to the subject defect include incomplete installation at the assembly plant, inadequate part stack up, damage to fasteners during installation, and failure to follow proper repair procedure during windshield replacements or other services.

On January 19, 2024, Ford filed safety recall 24V-031 for MY 2011-2019 Ford Explorer vehicles to address the subject defect. In the Part 573 Safety Recall Report, Ford identified that a detached A-pillar trim panel can create a road hazard for other road users, increasing the risk of a crash. The recall remedy includes an inspection of the existing A-pillar trim panel and, if necessary, the replacement of the component. The remedy A-pillar trim panels will be installed with an additional adhesive for robustness and utilize an inspection procedure to ensure full engagement of all the retention clips during installation.

In view of the recall action being taken by Ford, ODI is closing this Preliminary Evaluation. The agency reserves the right to take additional action if warranted by future circumstances. To review the reports cited in the Closing Resume ODI Report Identification Number document, go to [NHTSA.gov](https://www.nhtsa.gov).