



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

**ODI RESUME**

**Investigation:** PE23003  
**Date Opened:** 03/04/2023  
**Date:** 04/24/2026  
**Closed:**  
**Investigator:** Matthew Martens  
**Reviewer:** Gregory Magno  
**Approver:** Tanya Topka  
**Subject:** Steering Wheel Detachment

**MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION**

**Manufacturer:** Tesla, Inc.  
**Products:** 2023 Tesla Model Y  
**Population:** 120,089  
**Problem Description:** Steering wheel detachment from the steering column due to the absence of the retaining bolt.

**FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY**

	ODI	Manufacturer	EWR D&I	Other	Total	EWR Field Reports
<b>All Incidents:</b>	1	2	0	0	2*	0
<b>Crashes/Fires:</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Injury Incidents:</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Number of Injuries:</b>	0	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:**

\*Total eliminates duplicates received by the manufacturer

**ACTION/SUMMARY INFORMATION**

**Action:** This (PE) Preliminary Evaluation is closed without a manufacturer action.

**Summary:**

On March 4, 2023, the Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) opened PE23003 to investigate two reports of steering loss on model year (MY) 2023 Tesla Model Y vehicles due to the detachment of the steering wheel from the steering column while the vehicle was in motion.

ODI confirmed from Tesla that in both cases, the vehicles were delivered to the owners missing the retaining bolt (P/N 1036655-00-A) used to secure the steering wheel to a splined shaft on the steering column. Tesla repaired both vehicles under warranty. ODI further learned that both 2023 MY Model Y vehicles had been manufactured in the first week of January 2023 at Tesla's Austin, TX and Fremont, CA manufacturing facilities, respectively. Both vehicles had received end of production line repairs (rectification) requiring removal and reinstallation of the steering wheel before release from the factory.

End of line rectification is an offline process manufacturers use to repair any defects found prior to vehicle release from the factory. It often requires removing and reinstalling unrelated components to access and correct the issue detected during inspections. This service process usually takes place outside the assembly line's standard quality-control safeguards, introducing the risk of an incomplete or incorrect repair.

On April 28, 2023, ODI sent an Information Request letter to Tesla requesting production data and steering wheel detachment reports for all MY 2022 – 2023 Tesla models; numbers of vehicles undergoing end of line steering wheel removals / reinstallations; information about Tesla's procedures and process controls pertaining to this activity; and Tesla's assessment of the alleged defect.

ODI sent three sets of follow-up questions to Tesla in April, May, and June of 2025 to request a field data update, fleet mileage data, and further information concerning Tesla's rectification processes and its 2023 internal assessments.

ODI's analysis of Tesla's submissions and other relevant data revealed that:

- No additional related incidents have occurred in either the subject or peer vehicles.
- The subject vehicles suffered their steering wheel detachments below 400 miles of service, indicating that any other vehicles experiencing this issue would have already experienced a steering wheel detachment.
- ODI identified additional circumstances indicating that rectification taking place outside of January 2023 do not exhibit missing steering wheel fasteners.
- After the recognition of both failures, Tesla applied additional controls on vehicles receiving end of line rectification.

Since this investigation's opening, the subject and peer fleet have accumulated an average of 33,000 miles of service with three vehicles reporting under 500 miles and six reporting no mileage, making the likelihood of any undiscovered missing steering wheel fasteners extremely low.

Accordingly, no evidence has been identified to indicate that the alleged defect exists outside the two 2023 incidents that prompted the opening of PE23003, and this PE is closed.

The closing of this investigation does not constitute a finding by NHTSA that a safety-related defect does not exist. The Agency reserves the right to take additional action if warranted by future circumstances. To review the ODI reports cited in the Closing Resume ODI Report Identification Number document, go to [NHTSA.gov](https://www.nhtsa.gov).