



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

# ODI RESUME

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION



**Investigation:** PE23013  
**Prompted By:** VOQ Review  
**Date Opened:** 07/07/2023      **Date Closed:** 01/24/2024  
**Investigator:** Jayson Winick      **Reviewer:** Peter Kivett  
**Approver:** Tanya Topka  
**Subject:** Failed Door Check Arm Attachment Point

## MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

**Manufacturer:** Ford Motor Company  
**Products:** 2020-2021 FORD ESCAPE HYBRID, 2020-2021 FORD ESCAPE  
**Population:** 507,520

**Problem Description:** The spot welds in the check arm attachment point in the door assembly may fail causing the door to not operate as intended.

## FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	EWR D&I	Other	Total	EWR Field Reports
<b>All Incidents:</b>	593	1,968	0	7,170	2,561	CONF
<b>Crashes/Fires:</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Injury Incidents:</b>	3	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Number of Injuries:</b>	4	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

## ACTION/SUMMARY INFORMATION

**Action:** This (PE) Preliminary Evaluation is closed with a manufacturer action customer satisfaction campaign 23B56.

**Summary:**

On July 7, 2023, the Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) opened PE23-013 to investigate instances of check arm bracket failure in the front doors in model year (MY) 2020-2021 Ford Escape vehicles. At the time of opening, ODI received 118 Vehicle Owner Questionnaires (VOQs) alleging this failure.

To date, ODI has received 593 VOQs alleging this failure, with a variety of reported failure conditions. The most common reported failure condition was reduced door functionality (e.g. door was more difficult to open

or close) and the least common was inadvertent door opening. Other reported failure conditions include inability to latch and inability to open. Three VOQs reported injuries, one of which requiring medical attention. ODI conducted a consumer survey which yielded an additional 44 injuries (although the VOQs did not indicate any injury), none of which requiring medical attention. All these injuries were bumps/bruises from the door closing on occupants' arms and legs while entering and exiting the vehicle.

The function of the check arm system is to provide hold-open assist at specific angles and to assist with door closing energy. It does not provide vertical support of the door and is independent of the latching mechanism. This failure is progressive and detectable by vehicle occupants. Consumers commonly report hearing a popping or snapping noise when opening and closing the door. This noise is caused by some of the welds between the bracket and door structure failing and detaching. There may also be visible damage present to the welds in the door structure. Continued use of the door may result in all welds separating and the bracket fully detaching from the door structure, which could lead to increased resistance in closing and opening the door, restrained window operation, and the door freely rotating when open.

ODI inspected 3 consumer vehicles in the field, and 2 test vehicles at Ford's testing facility. The test vehicles were retrofitted with the failed component. ODI observed an increased door closing resistance, however, was unable to reproduce an inadvertent open while parked or driving, or a failure to latch or open condition. Testing also verified this failure did not affect the door ajar warning system. This system provides an audible and visual warning in the event a door did not achieve primary latch position.

Ford has provided details on a one-time-repair customer satisfaction program (23B56), stating that they will provide customers with a letter, currently targeted for March 2024, to bring their vehicle to a Ford dealership for a proactive repair. Dealers will inspect the door check arm welds for damage and will either provide a rivet plate to reinforce the existing door check arm or will provide a replacement door, depending on the level of damage present. Customers will be eligible for reimbursement if they previously paid to repair this issue.

In view of the high detectability of failure, low potential hazard to drivers, and Ford's customer satisfaction program to provide a proactive repair, this Preliminary Evaluation (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).