



**Dale E Dawkins**  
Director  
Vehicle Compliance & Safety Affairs

December 8, 1995

**Ms. Kathleen C. DeMeter, Director**  
**Office of Defects Investigation, Safety Assurance**  
**U. S. Department of Transportation**  
**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**  
**400 Seventh Street, S.W.**  
**Washington, DC 20590**

VIA UPS

Reference: NSA-111jdw / 95I-001

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

In response to your telefaxed letter of December 4, 1995, Chrysler provides the following responses and enclosures to your questions regarding the service action on 1984-1995 Chrysler Corporation minivan liftgate latches. Chrysler will provide the periodic status reports as requested.

If you require further assistance, contact Mr. W. R. Edwards of my staff at 810-576-7303.

Sincerely,

for **D. E. Dawkins**

**Q1. Mr. Lewis H. Goldfarb, Assistant General Counsel for Chrysler, by letter dated October 18, 1995, described several actions that Chrysler intended to take to assure an appropriate response rate in this campaign. Among other things, Chrysler stated that it planned to send a follow-up notification letter to all owners who did not respond to the original notification. Please state the time frame when such letters will be sent (i.e., how long after the original notification is sent) and provide a draft to the undersigned prior to mailing the letter to owners.**

**A1. Chrysler will send follow-up notification letters to all owners of incomplete vehicles according to our records. Normally, follow-up notification letters are sent about six months following the initial notification letters. It is Chrysler's intent to send the follow-up notification letters in this service action earlier. For example, we plan to send follow-up letters to Phase 1 owners of incomplete vehicles in January 1996. In this case (also in all subsequent phases), the time frame between initial notification and follow-up notification will vary since the initial Phase 1 notification mailing schedule extended from September 4 through September 29, 1995. This is a compressed follow-up mailing schedule and we plan to conduct similar follow-up mailings for Phases 2, 3, & 4. Since the initial mailings for Phases 5 through 8 (power remote release) have not occurred, the follow-up schedule is not yet defined. We will keep the NHTSA informed of our progress as it unfolds.**

**Our overriding objective regarding liftgate latch replacement is to achieve the maximum rate of replacement and to insure the satisfaction of our minivan owners. We will provide a draft of our Phase 1 follow-up notification to you as requested.**

**Q2. In the October 18 letter, Chrysler also stated that it would send a letter to all owners within 30 days of the closing of NHTSA's investigation outlining the status of the campaign and encouraging owners to obtain the replacement latch when they are advised that parts are available. We note that the letter was not sent by Chrysler. You have advised the agency that Chrysler now believes that such a letter would not be beneficial. You have requested that, in lieu of such a letter, NHTSA agree that Chrysler may take additional actions beyond those described in the October 18 letter. Please describe in detail the actions that Chrysler wishes to substitute for this letter immediately.**

Ms. Kathleen C. DeMeter  
NSA-111jdw/95I-001  
December 8, 1995  
Page 3

- A2. For response to this item, please refer to a letter in Enclosure 1 from Mr. L. H. Goldfarb to Mr. P. H. Recht dated December 5, 1995.
- Q3. In the October 18, 1995, letter, reference is made to dealer instructions. Please furnish a copy of all of Chrysler's communications to dealers describing or pertaining to this campaign. This includes instructions or communications of any type or medium including the "videotaped announcement from Chrysler's top management," and the "special education materials updating (dealers) on the owner service action and providing answers to owner questions," referenced in that letter.
- A3. Enclosure 2 contains all dealer communication in chronological order pertaining to the minivan liftgate service action following the 3/27/95 understanding between Chrysler and the NHTSA. Most of these have been provided to NHTSA previously. Enclosure 2 includes:
- 1) 3/28/95 letter from Theodor Cunningham to All Chrysler Corporation Dealers and attachments regarding liftgate issues. See Enclosure 3 for the referenced videotape press conference.
  - 2) 4/3/95 letter from Theodor Cunningham to All Chrysler Corporation Dealers and pocket information brochure.
  - 3) 4/27/95 letter from Theodor Cunningham to All Chrysler Corporation Dealers regarding solenoid issue.
  - 4) 5/12/95 letter from Theodor Cunningham to All Chrysler Corporation Dealers and attachment regarding '95 MY minivan solenoid upgrade.
  - 5) 6/20/95 liftgate update letter from Theodor Cunningham to All Chrysler Corporation Dealers.
  - 6) 8/24/95 D-Mail from Theodor Cunningham to Dealer Principals and Parts Managers regarding owner notification timing.
  - 7) September 1995 Dealer Service Instructions, Service Action #640 - Liftgate Latch. See Enclosure 4 for videotape.

- 8) **September 1995 Service Action Supplement - Videotape of Service Procedure**
- 9) **September 1995 Service Action Supplement - Phase 2 Owner Mailing.**
- 10) **October 1995 Service Action Supplement - Phase 3 Owner Mailing.**
- 11) **October 1995 Service Action Supplement - Phase 4 Owner Mailing.**
- 12) **10/13/95 D-Mail from Sales & Service Division regarding obsolete information brochure scrappage.**
- 13) **10/24/95 D-Mail from MOPAR Parts Division to All Chrysler/Plymouth and Dodge Dealers, Principals/Service Managers/Parts Managers/Body Shop Managers, and Chrysler Corporation Field Offices regarding manual latch replacement parts package numbers.**
- 14) **10/25/95 D-Mail from Theodor Cunningham to All Chrysler Corporation Dealers and attachment regarding service action status.**
- 15) **10/29/95 D-Mail from MOPAR Parts Division to All Chrysler/Plymouth and Dodge Dealers, Principals/Service Managers/Parts Managers/Body Shop Managers, and Chrysler Corporation Field Offices regarding service action parts versus normal service parts requirements.**
- 16) **11/3/95 D-Mail from Office of the General Managers to Dealer Principals, Parts and Service Managers regarding "20/20" issues.**
- 17) **11/8/95 Dealer Personnel meeting materials regarding minivan liftgate service action (received by dealers ~ 11/17/95). The VHS video tape is provided to NHTSA for convenience of viewing. The dealers only received the compact disc. See Enclosure 5 for meeting materials, the CD and the videotape.**

- Q4. Furnish a copy of all other notifications, bulletins (including service, warranty, "special policy," etc.), engineering service letters, and similar communications that have been issued, or will be issued, by Chrysler pertaining to this campaign that were not submitted to this office previously.**
- A4. All dealer communications to date have been included in response to question 3. Future communications will also be provided.**
- Q5. You previously advised NHTSA that minivan owners will be notified of the availability of replacement latches in eight phases. The first three of these phases have been completed, and the fourth (which began on October 30, 1995) is continuing. The remaining four phases, which apply to vehicles equipped with a remote release mechanism, are to begin on December 18, 1995; April 1, 1996; May 27, 1996; and June 10, 1996, respectively. If there are any significant changes in this schedule, Chrysler must notify the agency promptly.**
- A5. The dates for the owner notification letters included in your letter of December 4, 1995 are correct except that we indicated the dates to be "week of" rather than the specific dates indicated. The beginning dates for the owner notification letters for Phases 5, 6, 7 and 8 are still being refined, and you will be informed of any changes in schedule.**
- Q6. We request that Chrysler notify NHTSA of any incidents in which a replacement liftgate latch opens in a crash within 7 days of becoming aware of the incident. Chrysler must also include its views as to the circumstances and cause of the latch opening.**
- A6. Chrysler will forward any information obtained regarding crash related replacement liftgate latch openings to the NHTSA if and when we become aware of such information.**