

D. E. DAWKINS

April 4, 1995

FAX (202) 366-1767 2-pages

Ms. Kathleen DeMeter:

Dear Ms. DeMeter,

Enclosed is a copy of the letter we are sending to our 1995 model minivan owners. Please accept my apologies for not forwarding one to you earlier.

Frankly, its hard for me to understand what an owner of a 1995 model minivan would find confusing about this letter. If it would be helpful for us to contact any 1995 model owner confused by the letter, we would be happy to do so if you will forward information so we can make the contact.

Sincerely,





Dale E Dawkins
Director - Vehicle Compliance and
Safety Affairs

April 27, 1995

Mr. William A. Boehly
Associate Administrator, Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

Reference: NEF-12ja; EA94-005

Dear Mr. Boehly:

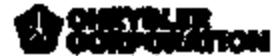
As I discussed in my telephone conversation with you yesterday, Chrysler is informing NHTSA that as part of a service campaign previously announced on March 27, 1995 Chrysler will modify the solenoid component of the liftgate latch, effectively resolving the inertia release issue. Moreover, we are expanding the service action to include 1995 models.

It is important to note that neither NHTSA nor Chrysler has seen any field evidence of liftgate openings due to inertia release -- no evidence, despite over 4 million vehicles in service, vehicles on the road over 10 years and mileage driven above 100 million miles per day.

We are taking this step, however, to ensure the peace of mind of our owners. We made this commitment when we announced the service campaign, with NHTSA's endorsement, and remain firmly committed in this regard.

Sincerely,

D. E. Dawkins



Dele E. Donohue
Vehicle Compliance and
Safety Affairs

May 1, 1985

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

Ref: NEF-12ja; EAS4-005

Dear Ms. Demeter:

This letter is in response to your request for launch timing information regarding Chrysler's liftgate latch service action on 1984 through 1985 Chrysler, Plymouth and Dodge minivans.

The vehicle population involved in this service action spans twelve model years and includes vehicles built for sale in the U.S., Canada, Mexico and Europe. In excess of 5 million vehicles are involved worldwide. Latch replacement component procurement activities were initiated immediately following Chrysler's decision, with NHTSA's support, to launch a service action to replace liftgate latches on 1984 through 1984 model minivans. Because of the large volume of vehicles involved, our latch supplier is required to create multiple sets of tools for latch components and to substantially expand latch assembly capacity. We have asked our supplier to expedite this process. Chrysler's objective is to have modified latch assemblies available in quantities sufficient to complete the entire service action within a 12 month period.

Chrysler plans to optimize the implementation of the service action by notifying owners in stages to contact their dealers for latch replacement as latches become available. This will allow the service action to be launched in the most timely and orderly manner possible.

Chrysler's recent decision (less than three weeks ago) to expand the service action to include modification of the remote release solenoid component in latches with this feature has complicated the launch of the service action for three reasons:

1. Engineering design and development of the solenoid replacement component(s) is not yet complete.

2. The service action will be extended to include 1995 model minivans.
3. Timing for the procurement of the solenoid replacement component(s) is not yet known.

Nevertheless, considerable work has been done to establish overall timing objectives, and it is useful to review the current anticipated schedule based on the work that has been done. Further, to expedite the service action already announced, Chrysler plans to launch the action by notifying first those owners of vehicles without the remote liftgate release feature.

Enclosed are two attachments:

- Attach. 1. Liftgate Latch Service Action Complexity and Estimated U.S. Volumes
- Attach. 2. Anticipated Service Action Launch Schedule

Please note that the information included in these attachments represents the best information we have at this time. This is a very complicated service action to execute covering a very large volume of vehicles. We will keep you informed as we develop and refine the details of the implementation schedule.

Chrysler requests that NHTSA keep the information included in this letter and attachments confidential. Because this service action will involve the progressive availability of replacement latches and related progressive notification to owners, it is important that owners not be unduly confused by the premature release of the overall schedule before individual notification occurs. Chrysler believes a higher rate of response can be anticipated if the service action is conducted in an orderly manner by avoiding potential confusion if these timing estimates are prematurely released.

Chrysler appreciates NHTSA's interest in monitoring our service action, and we will keep you informed as details become available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "John Deere", written over a horizontal line.

LIFTGATE LATCH SERVICE ACTION COMPLEXITY AND ESTIMATED U.S. VOLUMES

| | '84-'89 | '90 | '91-'92 | '93-'94 | '95 | Total Volumes |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|------------------|---------------|
| | Base Design | Lateral Restrictor Added to Latch | Key Release Linkage Changed | Liftgate Ajar Warning Controlled by Body Computer; Single Terminal Switch | Reinforced Latch | 4,388,200 |
| Non-remote Release | 460,500 | 79,000 | 54,800 | 59,300 | N/A | 653,600 |
| Remote Release | 1,281,800 | 380,900 | 714,200 | 992,300 | 385,400 | 3,714,600 |

ANTICIPATED SERVICE ACTION LAUNCH SCHEDULE

Attachment 2

| | <u>Revised Latch Availability Begins</u> | <u>Start of Owner Notification</u> |
|--|--|--|
| '93 - '94 Models <u>Without Remote Release</u> (Current single-terminal switch for dome light and liftgate-alarm warning) | June 5, 1995 | June 12, 1995 |
| '94 - '92 Models <u>Without Remote Release</u> (New tooled dual-terminal switch for dome light and liftgate-alarm warning) | August 7, 1995 | August 14, 1995 |

Owner notification timing is dependent upon anticipated availability of new tooled switch.

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| '94 - '95 Models <u>With Remote Release</u> | September 5, 1995 | September 12, 1995 |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|

Chrysler will begin sending owner notification letters in mid-September for vehicles with remote liftgate releases, if remote release solenoid replacement component(s) are available.

PROJECTED SUPPLIER LATCH VOLUME CAPABILITY

10,000 Latch Assemblies per week beginning mid-May 1995
 40,000 Latch Assemblies per week beginning mid-June 1995
 80,000 Latch Assemblies per week beginning mid-October 1995

PROJECTED OWNER LETTER MAILING SCHEDULE

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| June 1995 | 58,000 |
| July 1995 | -0- |
| August/Sept. 1995 | 600,000 |
| 4 Qtr. 1995 & Beyond | 3,709,000 |

Note: Owner notification in terms of the sequence of model year and vehicle type (remote release vs. no-remote release vehicles) beginning in the 3rd quarter 1995 will be tailored to the availability of various revised latch and switch combinations. Details to be determined as latch availability information becomes known.

Director of Communications
Executive Vice President - Sales and Marketing
Chrysler Group - Technical Services

May 19, 1995

Roslyn, CA

Dear

On March 31, I wrote to you regarding a minivan lifeline latch service action Chrysler will initiate shortly. At that point, your 1995 minivan was not included in that action. However, in the course of developing the service action for the 1994-1996 models, Chrysler identified an enhancement that could also benefit 1995 models.

Specifically, we will modify the remote release solenoid component of the latch for your minivan. We will make this change, at no charge to you, to ensure your confidence and peace of mind.

In the next few months, new components will be available for your 1995 minivan. We will notify you when they are available at your dealership. All you will need to do when you receive the notice is telephone your dealer to schedule an appointment. For more information, please call us toll-free at 1-800-MINIVAN (646-4226).

In addition, NHTSA has been conducting an investigation of the latch on these vehicles. If you have any concerns regarding this service action, you may call the NHTSA Toll Free Safety Hotline at 1-800-424-9393.

Chrysler Corporation continues to build upon its history of safety leadership. Your safety, your confidence, and your peace of mind are all important to us.

Sincerely,



Chrysler Corporation
P.O. Box 240
Warren, MI 48090



Dale E Dawkins

June 30, 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, D.C. 20590

Reference: NEF-12ja; EA94-006

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

As we have discussed on several occasions, Chrysler is addressing all known issues with the redesigned minivan liftgate latches to be used in our owner service action. However, assurance that the redesigned latches will meet all possible expectations is a concern because there are no defined performance requirements and no established confirmation test procedures. Chrysler is evaluating the new latch design(s) based on the best information available, but cannot be sure that someone else will not perform some random evaluation unrelated to any real-world potential vehicle crash circumstances. We aren't interested in any third-party "parlor trick" demonstrations.

You have informed us that NHTSA intends to technically evaluate Chrysler's new liftgate latch design(s). Because there are no defined strength requirements, inertia requirements or test protocols for liftgate latches, we would appreciate information from NHTSA regarding the tests and evaluations you will conduct on the new Chrysler designed latches. To make sure there is no potential misunderstanding, we would appreciate your defining for us in a written document the analyses and tests you plan to perform during your evaluation. These analyses and tests should be defined in sufficient detail to allow us to fully evaluate them.

In conjunction with this matter, in order to optimize the evaluation process, Chrysler would be willing to conduct the evaluations proposed by NHTSA and to do so in the presence of NHTSA technical observers. We believe it is in the best interests of both NHTSA and Chrysler that we establish ahead of time the latch evaluation criteria in order to minimize or eliminate "second guessing" in the future by other interested parties.

Sincerely,

951-001 Chrysler 1984-1995 Minivan Rear Hatch Latch Replacement

| Action Item | Done | To Be Done | Conditional |
|---|----------|------------|----------------|
| First Letters to Owners | 03/31/95 | | |
| Follow up Notice to Owners- Class Action | 05/02/95 | | |
| Toll Free 1-800-Minivan Established | 10/01/95 | | |
| Phased Owner Notification Letter | | | |
| 93-95 Models with Manual Latch (68,000 vans) | 09/04/95 | | |
| 91-92 Models with Manual Latch (57,000) | 10/02/95 | | |
| 90 Models with Manual Latch (75,000) | 10/16/95 | | |
| 84-89 Models with Manual Latch (460,000) | 10/30/95 | | |
| 93-95 Models with Power Latch (1,377,000) | | 12/18/95 | |
| 91-92 Models with Power Latch (714,000) | | 04/01/96 | |
| 90 Models with Power Latch (360,000) | | 05/27/96 | |
| 84-89 Models with Power Latch (1,262,000) | | 06/10/96 | |
| Owner Notification 30 Days After Investigation Closed | | 11/25/95 | |
| Quarterly Campaign Status Reports | | | |
| Due After Every Calendar Quarter from 12/95 to 6/98 | | 01/30/96 | First Due |
| Renotification by Letter to Owners of Unremedied Vans | | | As Necessary |
| Followup Telephone Renotification | | | As Necessary |
| Dealer to Install in Vans Brought for Service | | | As Available |
| Dealer Automatic Installation into Used Vans for Sale | | | When Available |
| Campaign Support Material To Be Submitted | | | |
| Video Tape to Dealers from Chrysler Management on Importance of Latch Replacement and Instructions for Motivating Owners | | | |
| Prepared Special Educational Material to Dealers on Service Action and Providing Answers to Owner Questions, Stressing Importance | | | |
| Campaign Instructions to Dealers: Replace Latches on Used Vans in Dealers' Used Car Lot, Provide Latch Replacement for Vans in for Service, and Appoint Latch Replacement Coordinator | | | |

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| Telephone Survey of Owners who have Not Responded | | Within 60 days of Notification Mailing |
| Telephone Survey of Phase 1 and 2 Owners | 01/02/96 | |
| Renotification by Letter to Owners of Unremedied Vans | | Within 60 days of Telephone Survey |
| Renotification Letter to Phase 1 Owners | | 01/30/96 |
| Renotification Letter to Phase 2 Owners | | 02/29/96 |
| Dealer to Install in Vans Brought for Service | | As Customer's Van is Available |
| Dealer Automatic Installation into Used Vans for Sale | | As Vans Are Prepared for Sale |

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I:/TAB/ MINIVAN

95I-001 Chrysler 1984-1995 Minivan Rear Hatch Latch Replacement

| Notification Phase | Latch Assembly | Owner Notification | | Affected Population | Latches Installed | Percent Completed |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | | Begin | Complete | | | |
| 1. 1993-95 Models | Manual | 9/08/95 | 9/29/95 | 66,407 | 21,158 | 31.9 |
| 2. 1991-92 Models | Manual | 10/06/95 | 10/13/95 | 52,719 | 14,774 | 28.0 |
| 3. 1990 Models | Manual | 10/17/95 | 10/27/95 | 72,845 | 17,113 | 23.5 |
| 4. 1984-1989 Models | Manual | 11/03/95 | 12/15/95 | 411,678 | 43,462 | 10.6 |
| 5. 1993-95 Models | Power | 12/22/95 | | 1,342,202 | 121,736 | 9.1 |
| 6. 1991-1992 Models | Power | | | 714,000 | | |
| 7. 1990 Models | Power | | | 360,000 | | |
| 8. 1984-1989 Models | Power | | | 1,262,000 | | |
| Next Quarterly Status Report Due: | | April 30, 1996 | | | | |
| Renotification Letters | | | | | | |
| Phase 1 | | January 1996 | | | | |
| Phase 2 & 3 | | March 1996 | | | | |
| Telephone Follow-up | | To be determined | | | | |

WEEKLY REPORT

| DATE | TIME | ACTIVITY | PERFORMER | STATUS | REMARKS | REMARKS | REMARKS | REMARKS |
|---------|---------|----------|-----------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1/15/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/16/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/17/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/18/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/19/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/20/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/21/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/22/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/23/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/24/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/25/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/26/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/27/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/28/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/29/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/30/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |
| 1/31/20 | 8:00 AM | WORK | JONES | OK | 10.50% | | | |

D. E. DAWKINS

January 10, 1990

Ms. Kathleen DeMeter: FAX (202) 385-1787 5 pages

Re: Minivan Liftgate Latch Field Action

Dear Ms. DeMeter,

As I discussed with you on the telephone, Chrysler is planning on sending follow-up notifications to Phase 1 minivan owners who have already received their initial notification letters to have the liftgate latches on their minivans replaced. This follow-up mailing is planned for late this month. We are planning on dividing the relative owner population into four segments and using a different follow-up notification for each. One of the four letter versions will be our normal follow-up type notification. We will then phone sample a number from each population to determine which type of follow-up approach is best received and is most likely to prompt owners to have latches replaced. We are convinced that we can maximize replacement latch completion rates by encouraging and helping owners rather than trying to "intimidate" them.

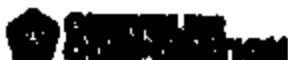
Enclosed are copies of the four follow-up letters we plan to send. I would appreciate any comments you might have because we are about ready to mail.

Thanks,



Safety Implication only in 1st letter - which is a long train out
being letter
OK I'm right and interesting - but NO IMPLICATION on status
sheet
Is the use of Safety "Intimidation" ??? !!

CHRYSLER
Chrysler Corporation
500 Chrysler Drive
 Auburn Hills, MI 48090-8707



TO: (Unique ID Number)
John Apple
1234 Plum Ave.
Oranga, MI 48000

SUBJECT: **FREE** minivan liftgate latch replacement. It's fast and convenient. Call your dealer to confirm your appointment.

A new, stronger rear liftgate latch is now available for your Chrysler minivan. In fact, an improved liftgate latch has been reserved for you.

Replacement is absolutely **FREE** and includes parts and labor. This service normally takes one hour, however, additional time may be necessary depending on your dealership's scheduled appointments. Please contact the dealer below for an appointment:

John Doe Dodge
4321 Apple
Anywhere, USA 00000
(000) 000-0000

Or contact the Chrysler/Plymouth or Dodge dealer of your choice, or for further assistance, call 1-800 Minivan (646-4836).

At Chrysler we care — about you, your driving pleasure and your continued satisfaction.

Regards,

Customer Service Field Operations

P.S. It's important and it's FREE. So call your dealer today to make your appointment for your rear liftgate latch replacement.

Customer's VIN





Dear Mr. Apple:

Chrysler Corporation requests the honor of your presence at our dealership so that we may replace your minivan's current rear liftgate latch with a new, stronger latch. This one-hour service is absolutely FREE and includes parts and labor. We are holding this new, improved liftgate latch for you, so please R.S.V.P. to the dealership indicated below to make an appointment or contact your local Chrysler/Plymouth or Dodge dealership.

This invitation for FREE customer service is simply our way of showing you we care -- about you, your driving pleasure and your continued satisfaction.

Sincerely,

T.H. Cunningham
Executive Vice President
Sales and Marketing
General Manager Minivan Operations

R.S.V.P. to: John Doe Dodge
4321 Apple
Anywhere, DEA 00000
(000) 000-0000

Or for further assistance, call 1-800-Minivan (544-4526).

Customer's VIN



CALL 482-00-00
Chrysler Corporation
800 Chrysler Drive
Auburn Hills, MI 48003-0717



Chrysler wants to replace
your minivan rear liftgate
latch at no charge. It's
fast, convenient and
important.

(Unique ID Number)
John Apple
1834 Plum Ave.
Orange, MI 48000

Dear Mr. Apple:

A new, stronger rear liftgate latch is now available for your Chrysler minivan. In fact, we have reserved an improved liftgate latch for you. Plus, we'll install it absolutely FREE — and that includes parts and labor.

The liftgate latch replacement takes about one hour, but might require some additional time, depending on the scheduling and processing of your dealer's appointments. So please make YOUR appointment today. To secure a convenient time, simply contact the dealer indicated below:

John Doe Dodge
4321 Apple
Anywhere, USA 00000
(000) 000-0000

Or contact the Chrysler/Plymouth or Dodge dealer of your choice. For further assistance, call 1-800-Minivan (642-4333).

This FREE customer service is simply our way of showing you we care — about you, your driving pleasure and your continued satisfaction.

Sincerely,

T.R. Cunningham
Executive Vice President
Sales and Marketing
General Manager Minivan Operations

P.S. It's important and it's FREE. So don't wait. Call your dealer for a convenient appointment to replace your rear liftgate latch — today. And please accept the enclosed, handy refrigerator magnet as a reminder that we care.

Customer's VIN



95I-001 Chrysler 1984-1995 Minivan Rear Hatch Latch Replacement

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May 16, 1996

MS. Kathleen D. DeMeter, Director
Office of Defects Investigation, Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh St. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

In response to your conversation with Mr. Dale Dawkins on May 15, 1996 regarding Mr. Ralph Hoar's request for liftgate latch replacement information, I am forwarding the attached zone communication of November 7, 1995. Point number three should positively answer how Chrysler will respond to customers demanding the stronger latches before the specified remote release replacement latch for their vehicle is produced and distributed to our dealers.

If you have further questions, I may be contacted at (810) 576-7303.

Sincerely,



W. R. Edwards, Manager
Vehicle Safety &
Emissions Compliance

2/27/96 Wall St Journal

Chrysler Corp. Reports a Sluggish Start To Repair Program for Minivan Latches

By Anna C. HUBBARD
Daily Report of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
WASHINGTON—Chrysler Corp.'s first progress report on its effort to replace the rear-door latches on about four million minivans indicates that the program has gotten off to a slow start.

In a filing with the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, the Big Three auto maker said it sent 603,448 notices to owners of 1994-1995 model minivans during the fourth quarter of 1994. The notices told the owners they needed to replace the vehicles' rear-door latches and that Chrysler dealers would do the work free of charge.

But only 71,834 minivans actually got repaired, the quarterly report stated. That amounts to repairs on only about 12% of the minivans for which Chrysler sent out notices. Chrysler is supposed to give the government quarterly reports for 25 months, and a senior safety agency official said that regulators will track returns over the next months for improvement.

A Chrysler spokesman said that once minivan owners are notified of the latch problem, most don't immediately go to the dealership to get it replaced. "There's a time delay," the spokesman said. "As out of the 600,000 people notified, more than half haven't come in yet because they just got their letters in December. You have the time delay, throw in the holidays and that's the lion's share."

Chrysler has taken "extraordinary measures to get people to come and NHTSA agrees because they know what we are up to and are very impressed with what we are doing," the spokesman said, citing follow-up mailings.

Until late last year, the safety agency had been investigating whether the latches tend to fail in crashes, ejecting passengers out the minivan's rear door. A critical part of the investigation was videotapes of

crash tests showing dummies tumbling through the rear door of test minivans. The government dropped the investigation in November after Chrysler said it would launch a national advertising campaign to tell owners that it would replace the latches on its 1994-1995 minivans. The repair campaign began in early September.

The safety agency had tied some 40 deaths to ejections from the vans, but it came under sharp criticism for ending the probe before concluding whether the latches were safe. As the government investigation ended, Chrysler agreed to settle class-action lawsuits charging the door latches were defective. As part of the settlement, it said it would follow through on the repair program it had told the government it would initiate. Chrysler agreed to spend at least \$14 million on the minivan owners of its repair program, at least 90% of minivan owners didn't bring in their vehicles for new latches within 90 months.

So far, the oldest minivans have the worst rate of repair, the government filing shows. Chrysler said it mailed 611,875 notices concerning its 1994-1995 minivans, but only 7% of the vehicles were repaired. The response rate for the 1993 minivans was much better: 19% of 71,945 owners got notices got their vehicles fixed; for the 1991-1992 model year, the rate was 23%, and it was 36% for 1990-1991 minivans.

Ralph Hear, an Arlington, Va., consultant who has worked with plaintiffs' lawyers suing Chrysler, blames the "mail piece" of owner repairs on a bit of national advertising for the repair campaign, in which he charges Chrysler downplayed the seriousness of the rear-latch safety risk. "Chrysler's steady stream of public-relations PR came billed to owners into feeling no danger," he said.

—Angelo B. Henderson in Detroit
contributed to this article



Inter Company Correspondence

SALES & SERVICE

Telephone/Fax 878-1000

Date

8100SLR/11-78
To—Name & Department

879-1001

November 7, 1995
CRM NumberZone Managers
From—Name & Department

CRM Number

S.L. Rhoads Corp. Customer Comm. Mgr. Troy 421-00-00

Subject: **HANDLING IRATE MINIVAN CUSTOMERS**

Our procedure at 1-800-MINIVAN for handling irate customers who want their latch replaced immediately is as follows:

1. Assure the owner that minivans, as a segment, are among the safest vehicles on the road (Reference Automotive New article attached), but strongly encourage the owner to have their latch replaced as soon as they are notified.
2. If owner does not accept this, offer to the owner that we will place them on a priority list and as soon as power latches for their vehicle are available, we will call them.
3. On extremely difficult to satisfy customers, offer them on an interim basis a manual latch until their power latch is available.

We then call the dealer and arrange with the service manager to install the service replacement manual latch.

| Application | Package P.N. | LOP | Time |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|------|
| 1993 - 1995 | 04874480 | 23-41-01-10 | .4 |
| 1991 - 1992 | 04874481 | 23-41-01-10 | .4 |
| 1990 | 04874482 | 23-41-01-10 | .3 |
| 1984 - 1989 | 04874483 | 23-41-01-10 | .3 |

We tell them to use the standard LOP number (not the service action LOP) on the claim with an authorization number.

We ask that, as appropriate, you should advise dealers using the same procedure, same part numbers, and same LOP.

We need to reiterate, however, that our supply of manual latches is limited, so the installation of a temporary manual latch should only be used with discretion and in the interest of calming any owner's fears about their latch. We are concerned that many dealers are installing a manual latch for any customer who asks.

If you have any questions, please call me.

attachment

cc: J.H. Casole M.C. Jacobs
L.A. Doehring E.F. Mahon
W.W. Hostynski R.J. Pellicola

Motor Wall St. Journal

Chrysler Corp. Reports a Sluggish Start To Repair Program for Minivan Latches

By Anna C. Stewart
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON—Chrysler Corp.'s first progress report on its effort to replace the rear-door latches on about four million minivans indicates that the program has gotten off to a slow start.

In a filing with the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, the Big Three auto maker said it sent 600,000 notices to owners of 1984-1985 model minivans during the fourth quarter of 1984. The notices told the owners they needed to replace the vehicles' rear-door latches and that Chrysler dealers would do the work free of charge.

But only 72,824 minivans actually got repaired, the quarterly report stated. That amounts to repairs on only about 12% of the minivans for which Chrysler sent out notices. Chrysler is supposed to give the government quarterly reports for 18 months, and a sector safety agency official said that regulators will track returns over the next months for improvement.

A Chrysler spokesman said that even minivan owners are notified of the latch problem, most don't immediately go to the dealership to get it replaced. "There's a time delay," the spokesman said. "So out of the 600,000 people notified, more than half haven't come in yet because they just got their letters in December. You have the time delay, draw in the holidays and that's the lion's share."

Chrysler has taken "extraordinary measures to get people to come and NHTSA agrees because they know what we are up to and are very impressed with what we are doing," the spokesman said, citing follow-up mailings.

Until late last year, the safety agency had been investigating whether the latches lead to fall in crashes, ejecting passengers out the minivan's rear door. A critical part of the investigation was videotapes of

crash tests showing occupants being thrown through the rear doors of 1984 minivans. The government dropped the investigation in November after Chrysler said it would launch a national advertising campaign to tell owners that it would replace the latches on its 1984-1985 minivans. The repair campaign began in early September.

The safety agency had had some doubts to objections from the vans, but it came under sharp criticism for ending the probe before concluding whether the latches were safe. As the government investigation ended, Chrysler agreed to settle class-action lawsuits charging the door latches were defective. As part of the settlement, it said it would follow through on the repair program it had said the government it would handle. Chrysler agreed to spend at least \$14 million to the minivan owners of the repair program. At least 60% of minivan owners didn't bring in their vehicles for new latches within 18 months.

So far, the oldest minivans have the worst rate of repair, the government filing shows. Chrysler said it mailed 611,400 notices concerning its 1984-1985 minivans, but only 7% of the vehicles were repaired. The response rate for the 1984 minivans was much better; 19% of 72,824 owners took notices got their vehicles fixed; for the 1981-1983 model year, the rate was 27%, and it was 30% for 1982-1983 minivans.

Naftali Beer, an Arlington, Va., consultant who has worked with plaintiffs' lawyers suing Chrysler, blames the "snail's pace" of owner repairs on a 60% national advertising for the repair campaign, in which he charges Chrysler did emphasize the seriousness of the rear-latch safety risk. "Chrysler's steady drip of public-relations PR came killed the owners into feeling no danger," he said.

—Joseph R. Anderson in Detroit
continued on this article



REC-1

Dale E Dawkins
Director - Vehicle Compliance and
Safety Affairs

95 JUN -6 PM 2:08
June 2, 1995
OFFICE
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

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

Reference: NEF-12ja; EA94-005

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

On May 1, 1995, I forwarded a letter to you outlining our best estimates for the timing of Chrysler's liftgate latch service action covering 1984 through 1995 Chrysler, Plymouth and Dodge minivans. I noted in this letter that we would keep you informed as more information became available. We are making progress in developing the latch components required for this service action, and I would like to update you on our latest best estimates regarding timing for the service action. Attached is a revised service action launch schedule following the same format as Attachment 2 in my letter of May 1, 1995. In summary:

The start of owner notification for '93 - '94 models without remote release now includes 1995 models and is anticipated to begin the week of September 4, 1995. Some changes required in the base latch assembly common with those being incorporated in the latch assemblies with remote release are controlling this timing.

The start of owner notification for '84 - '92 models without remote release is now anticipated to begin the week of October 2, 1995. As indicated in my May 1 letter, the previous schedule depended upon the availability of a new dome light and liftgate-ajar switch. The timing required to tool and produce the new switch is more lengthy than originally anticipated and controls the new date.

The start of owner notification for all models with remote release latch is now the week of December 18, 1995.

We will continue to keep you informed as more firm timing information becomes available.

Sincerely,

/rm
Attachment

ANTICIPATED SERVICE ACTION LAUNCH SCHEDULE

| | Revised Latch Availability Begins <u>Week of</u> | Start of Owner Notification <u>Week of</u> |
|--|---|---|
| '93 - '95 Models <u>Without Remote Release</u> (Current single-terminal switch for dome light and liftgate-ajar warning) | Aug. 14, 1995 | Sept. 4, 1995 |
| '84 - '92 Models <u>Without Remote Release</u> (New tooled dual-terminal switch for dome light and liftgate-ajar warning) | Sept. 18, 1995 | Oct. 2, 1995 |
| '84 - '96 Models <u>With Remote Release</u> | Nov. 27, 1995 | Dec. 18, 1995 |

PROJECTED SUPPLIER LATCH VOLUME CAPABILITY

10,000 Latch Assemblies per week for '93 - '95 models beginning mid-Aug. 1995
40,000 Latch Assemblies per week for '84 - '92 models beginning mid-Sept. 1995
80,000 Latch Assemblies per week for '84 - '95 models beginning end-Nov. 1995

PROJECTED OWNER LETTER MAILING SCHEDULE

| | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Sept. 1995 | 64,000 |
| Oct./Nov. 1995 | 600,000 |
| 1st Qtr. 1996 & Beyond | 3,709,000 |

June 2, 1995



Date F Dawkins

June 2, 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

Reference: NEF-12ja; EA94-005

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

On May 1, 1995, I forwarded a letter to you outlining our best estimates for the timing of Chrysler's liftgate latch service action covering 1984 through 1995 Chrysler, Plymouth and Dodge minivans. I noted in this letter that we would keep you informed as more information became available. We are making progress in developing the latch components required for this service action, and I would like to update you on our latest best estimates regarding timing for the service action. Attached is a revised service action launch schedule following the same format as Attachment 2 in my letter of May 1, 1995. In summary:

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|---|---|---|
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PROJECTED OWNER LETTER MAILING SCHEDULE

| | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Sept. 1995 | 64,000 |
| Oct./Nov. 1995 | 600,000 |
| 1st Qtr. 1996 & Beyond | 3,709,000 |

June 2, 1995

Dale E Dawkins
Director - Vehicle Compliance and
Safety Affairs

June 21, 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, D.C. 20590

OFFICE
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION
JUN 28 11 06:50

Reference: NEF-12ja; EA94-005

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

During our meeting in Washington, D.C. last week, I offered to provide you with additional information regarding the timing of the Chrysler owner service action on minivan liftgate latches.

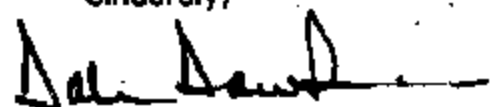
1. An overview of the Chrysler program to implement the minivan latch owner service action since the agreement to do so on March 27, 1995, including discussion of the timing associated with launching and completing the replacement of liftgate latches.
2. Detailed information supporting the timing of the availability of revised latches in volume and initiation of mailings to owners requesting they contact their local dealers to have the liftgate latch on their minivan replaced.

Enclosed is a program implementation summary discussing the Chrysler minivan liftgate latch owner service action.

A separate submission is being provided to Ms. Heidi Coleman, Esq., Assistant Chief Counsel, detailing timing regarding the availability of latches and subsequent owner mailings as summarized in my letter of June 2, 1995. It includes the timing required for critical path components and incremental actions required before the first owner mailings will be sent. Confidentiality is being requested for this submission as it includes proprietary information between Chrysler and its supplier dealing with the tooling, testing and verification of components.

As I indicated during our discussion last week, this service action is complicated because of the magnitude of vehicles involved and because of the complexity of the steps required before the first owner notice letters can be sent. Chrysler is interested in launching this service action as soon as possible and is taking all possible steps to expedite the process.

Sincerely,



**MINIVAN LIFTGATE LATCH
SERVICE ACTION
PROGRAM TIMING**

1994 - 1995 MODEL VEHICLES WITH REMOTE RELEASE

(THE ACTUAL BUILD SEQUENCE FOR VARIOUS MODEL YEARS IS YET TO BE DEFINED)

| WORK ITEM | 1994 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1995 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CRITICAL PATH SUMMARY: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TERMINAL SWITCH TOOLING, PPAP & VERIFICATION TEST COMPLETION* | ■ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NEW SOLENOID MOUNTING BRKT TOOLING COMPLETION* | ■ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ■ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NEW RELEASE LEVER AND BASE PLATE MODIFICATION TOOLING COMPLETION* | ■ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ■ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PRODUCTION PART APPROVAL PROCESS (PPAP) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| VERIFICATION TESTING | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| THIRD ASSEMBLY LINE AND THIRD SHIFT ADDED | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| BEGIN PRODUCTION @ RATE OF 80,000/ WEEK | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PACKAGE PARTS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SHIP PACKAGES TO FIELD DEPOTS AND DEALERS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OWNER NOTIFICATION | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

NOTE: ON-GOING ENGINEERING DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY CONTINUES THROUGH VERIFICATION TESTING.

*ITEM WAS INITIATED PRIOR TO 9/19/95

Lewis H Goldfarb
Assistant General Counsel

June 21, 1995

Ms. Heidi Coleman, Esq.
Assistant Chief Counsel
U. S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Reference: NEF-12ja; EA94-006

Dear Ms. Coleman:

In response to a request from the Office of Defects Investigation, Safety Assurance, Chrysler has prepared detail information supporting the timing associated with the minivan liftgate latch owner service action announced on March 27, 1995. In addition to summarizing timing information related to the initiation of owner notification mailings, included are specific date time-frames associated with selected component tooling completion, production part approval process, verification testing and information related to additional assembly capacity.

The proprietary processes developed between Chrysler and its supplier for component tooling, production part approval and verification testing would be valuable to competitors because this information indicates how these processes are optimized to expedite the availability of component parts and assemblies. By analyzing the individual time elements and "overlap" of various required actions, competitors could optimize their own planning processes to the disadvantage of Chrysler.

Chrysler is respectfully requesting confidential treatment of the timing schedules appended to this letter.

Sincerely,



Lewis H. Goldfarb

Copy: Ms. Kathleen C. DeMeter

Certificate in Support of Request for Confidentiality

I, Dale E. Dawkins, pursuant to the provisions of 49 C.F.R. Part 512, states as follows:

(1) I am Chrysler Corporation's "(Chrysler)" Director, Vehicle Compliance and Safety Affairs and I am authorized by Chrysler to execute documents on behalf of Chrysler;

(2) The information contained in the enclosed documents is confidential and proprietary data and is being submitted with the claim that is entitled to confidential treatment under 5 U.S.C. § 552 (b) (4).

(3) I have personally inquired of the responsible Chrysler personnel who have authority in the normal course of business to release the information for which a claim of confidentiality has been made to ascertain whether such information has ever been released outside Chrysler, except as to Chrysler suppliers with the understanding that such information be kept confidential.

(4) Based upon such inquiries, to the best of my knowledge, information and belief the information for which Chrysler has claimed confidential treatment has never been released or become available outside Chrysler, except as stated in Paragraph 3; and

(5) I make no representations beyond those contained in this certificate and in particular, I make no representations as to whether this information may become available outside Chrysler because of unauthorized or inadvertent disclosure; and

(6) I certify under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on this 21st day of June, 1995



Dale E. Dawkins

**CHRYSLER MINIVAN LIFTGATE LATCH
OWNER SERVICE ACTION**

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

Chrysler Corporation announced on March 27, 1995 the decision to conduct an owner service action to replace the liftgate latches on 1994 - 1994 Plymouth, Dodge and Chrysler minivans. NHTSA supported this initiative by Chrysler.

Chrysler announced on April 27, 1995 the decision to expand the previously announced service action to address a potential latch "solenoid inertia" issue in vehicles equipped with the remote liftgate release feature, and to include 1995 model minivans.

The decision to address the "solenoid inertia" issue necessitated a total reexamination of the design approach being considered to strengthen the latching mechanism and complicated the technical issues considerably. The preferred design approach requires significant changes to the latches utilizing the remote release solenoid, and some of these changes require modification of the non-solenoid latches as well.

Development and evaluation activity is still in process. Changes to the latching system require evaluation in terms of normal operating conditions as well as latch capabilities in crash impact circumstances. Testing will not be complete for several weeks. However, Chrysler has already initiated required tooling at the latch supplier.

Extensive actions are required by the supplier of the replacement latches. The announced service action involves millions of vehicles, and the volume of replacement latches required to support the high-volume portion of the service action is in the neighborhood of 80,000 latches per week. Major changes are required at the supplier to provide assembly capacity. Further, several components of the revised latch assembly require new production tooling with the associated verification steps. Once the supplier is producing latch assemblies at high rate, the remaining step is the packaging of revised latch assemblies and shipment to parts depots and to dealers. All of these actions must be complete before owners can be notified to contact their local dealers to have their liftgate latches replaced.

Because of the large volume of vehicles involved, Chrysler will be "phasing" notification of owners. Owners will be notified as revised latch assemblies become available. Owner notification of selected vehicles is expected to begin the week of September 4, 1995. The total owner service action is expected to require about one year to complete.

**MINIVAN LIFTGATE LATCH
SERVICE ACTION
PROGRAM TIMING**

**1993 - 1995 MODEL VEHICLES WITHOUT REMOTE RELEASE
(SINGLE TERMINAL SWITCH)**

| MILEAGE | YEAR | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 00 | 01 | 02 | 03 | 04 | 05 | 06 | 07 | 08 | 09 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| CRITICAL PATH ELEMENTS: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NEW PAINT - TOOLING COMPLETION* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NEW SPRING - TOOLING COMPLETION* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PRODUCTION PART APPROVAL PROCESS (PPAP) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| VERIFICATION TESTING | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| BEGIN PRODUCTION @ RATE OF 10,000/WEEK | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PACKAGE PARTS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SHIP PACKAGES TO FIELD DEPOTS AND DEALERS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OWNER NOTIFICATION | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NOTE: ON-GOING ENGINEERING DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY CONTINUES THROUGH VERIFICATION TESTING. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| * ITEM WAS INITIATED PRIOR TO 8/1995 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**1996 - 1998 MODEL VEHICLES WITHOUT REMOTE RELEASE
(DUAL TERMINAL SWITCH)**

| MILEAGE | YEAR | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 00 | 01 | 02 | 03 | 04 | 05 | 06 | 07 | 08 | 09 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| CRITICAL PATH ELEMENTS: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| TERMINAL SWITCH - TOOLING COMPLETION* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PRODUCTION PART APPROVAL PROCESS (PPAP) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| VERIFICATION TESTING | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SECOND ASSEMBLY LINE AND SECOND SHIFT ADDED | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| BEGIN PRODUCTION @ RATE OF 40,000/WEEK | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PACKAGE PARTS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SHIP PACKAGES TO FIELD DEPOTS AND DEALERS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OWNER NOTIFICATION | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| * ITEM WAS INITIATED PRIOR TO 8/1996 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |



Dale E Dawkins

June 30, 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, D.C. 20590

Reference: NEF-12ja; EA94-005

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

As we have discussed on several occasions, Chrysler is addressing all known issues with the redesigned minivan liftgate latches to be used in our owner service action. However, assurance that the redesigned latches will meet all possible expectations is a concern because there are no defined performance requirements and no established confirmation test procedures. Chrysler is evaluating the new latch design(s) based on the best information available, but cannot be sure that someone else will not perform some random evaluation unrelated to any real-world potential vehicle crash circumstances. We aren't interested in any third-party "parlor trick" demonstrations.

You have informed us that NHTSA intends to technically evaluate Chrysler's new liftgate latch design(s). Because there are no defined strength requirements, inertia requirements, or test protocols for liftgate latches, we would appreciate information from NHTSA regarding the tests and evaluations you will conduct on the new Chrysler designed latches. To make sure there is no potential misunderstanding, we would appreciate your defining for us in a written document the analyses and tests you plan to perform during your evaluation. These analyses and tests should be defined in sufficient detail to allow us to fully evaluate them.

In conjunction with this matter, in order to optimize the evaluation process, Chrysler would be willing to conduct the evaluations proposed by NHTSA and to do so in the presence of NHTSA technical observers. We believe it is in the best interests of both NHTSA and Chrysler that we establish ahead of time the latch evaluation criteria in order to minimize or eliminate "second guessing" in the future by other interested parties.

Sincerely,



Dale E Dawkins
Vice President
Safety Affairs

June 30, 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, D.C. 20590

Reference: NEF-1Zja; EA84-005

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

As we have discussed on several occasions, Chrysler is addressing all known issues with the redesigned minivan liftgate latches to be used in our owner service action. However, assurance that the redesigned latches will meet all possible expectations is a concern because there are no defined performance requirements and no established confirmation test procedures. Chrysler is evaluating the new latch design(s) based on the best information available, but cannot be sure that someone else will not perform some random evaluation unrelated to any real-world potential vehicle crash circumstances. We aren't interested in any third-party "parlor trick" demonstrations.

You have informed us that NHTSA intends to technically evaluate Chrysler's new liftgate latch design(s). Because there are no defined strength requirements, inertia requirements or test protocols for liftgate latches, we would appreciate information from NHTSA regarding the tests and evaluations you will conduct on the new Chrysler designed latches. To make sure there is no potential misunderstanding, we would appreciate your defining for us in a written document the analyses and tests you plan to perform during your evaluation. These analyses and tests should be defined in sufficient detail to allow us to fully evaluate them.

In conjunction with this matter, in order to optimize the evaluation process, Chrysler would be willing to conduct the evaluations proposed by NHTSA and to do so in the presence of NHTSA technical observers. We believe it is in the best interests of both NHTSA and Chrysler that we establish ahead of time the latch evaluation criteria in order to minimize or eliminate "second guessing" in the future by other interested parties.

Sincerely,

RECEIVED



95 OCT 11 AM 9:17

Dale E. Dawkins
Director
Vehicle Compliance & Safety Affairs

OFFICE
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

October 4, 1995

Mr. Michael B. Brownlee
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Brownlee:

This correspondence responds to your letters of Sept. 25, and Sept. 28, 1995 expressing concern over information given to callers to our 1-800-MINIVAN hotline regarding our minivan liftgate latch replacement service action. You noted that the hotline phone operators were provided a script that tended to minimize the safety concerns which prompted NHTSA to open its investigation by advising callers that NHTSA has made no finding of a safety defect. You asked Chrysler to take steps to encourage owners to have their liftgate latches replaced promptly upon being notified that the replacement parts are available.

Please be assured that Chrysler is totally committed to ensuring the greatest possible response to its service action to replace liftgate latches. We have already taken extraordinary steps to communicate to the more than 4,000,000 owners of our minivans the importance of having their liftgate latches replaced, and we will continue to do so until this service action is complete.

With regard to the misstatements contained in a script provided to our hotline operators, we have, as you know, corrected the problem and have taken steps to make sure that it does not happen again. The debate over whether there is a safety related defect in Chrysler minivan latches ended last March when Chrysler made the decision to launch a service action to replace latches with stronger latches. The important focus now is to make sure that our owners return their minivans to dealers to have their liftgate latches replaced and that the service action proceeds as intended.

Your letters refer to the recent coverage of the owner hotline issue by a tabloid TV show. I would like to comment on this issue and help put it in perspective. Tabloid media is exactly what you would expect: it is nothing more than sensationalistic journalism that attempts to shock the viewers with little regard to the truth or facts. Fortunately, most viewers understand the "entertainment" focus of these TV shows and view the accusations accordingly. We hope NHTSA views these shows the same way.

We have investigated the facts underlying this TV show's use of a hidden video camera at the site of our hotline and have uncovered the following:

The telephone calls that came in during the hidden camera taping were specifically planted. The "callers" used profanity and insults when talking to our hotline operators to incite an emotional response.

The so-called "outraged employee" who did the hidden camera video taping was really a video scam artist who set out specifically to create a story.

While this tabloid TV show may have succeeded in slandering the phone operators at our hotline, our survey following this TV episode showed that it generated about as much credibility as these types of programs typically do - zero.

Since you expressed concern about whether our minivan owners were receiving a confused and misleading message, I would like to review for you the steps we have taken to date:

We have already mailed two separate communications to more than 4,000,000 of our minivan owners advising them of Chrysler's replacement latch service action and the importance of having the liftgate latches on their minivans replaced when they receive notification.

The first round of notification letters was mailed to some owners the second week of September requesting them to make arrangements with their dealers to have their latches replaced. Subsequent notifications to other owners will be mailed as the appropriate replacement latches become available.

We have worked very closely with our liftgate latch supplier to make sure the maximum number of replacement latches are available as soon as possible. In fact, our supplier is now producing latches at a weekly rate 4 times the rate latches were produced when these minivans were in production. Early next year, they will be producing latches at a rate 8 times as great.

The overwhelming majority of our minivan owners are fully satisfied with the actions Chrysler is taking. About 130,000 owners have called our 1-800-MINIVAN hotline since it was set up in March of this year out of more than 4,000,000 owners contacted regarding our service action to replace liftgate latches. 97% of those 130,000 expressed satisfaction with the dialogue they had with the hotline operators. Less than 1% expressed dissatisfaction with the way Chrysler is handling the liftgate latch issue.

(D. Dawkins to M. Brownlee, October 4, 1995 - page 3)

Chrysler has committed more resources to this service action than any other field campaign in its history, and has pledged to achieve a response level that equals or exceeds the levels achieved in comparable campaigns.

I hope it is clear to you and to NHTSA that Chrysler is dedicated to making sure this service action is successful. It will be successful. We view NHTSA's recent announcement that it intends to close the investigation later this month as further endorsement for the steps Chrysler has taken to assure this field action is appropriate.

I appreciate your bringing to my attention these issues and concerns. Please contact me if you become aware of any further impediments to the successful completion of this important service action.

Sincerely,

Dale Dawkins



**U.S. Department of
Transportation**

News:

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20590

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, October 25, 1995

NHTSA 70-95
Contact: Barry McCahill
Tel. No.: (202) 366-9550

**TOP SAFETY OFFICIAL TELLS MINIVAN
OWNERS: GET YOUR VEHICLE FIXED**

In what he characterized as a "common sense, smart government solution," Ricardo Martinez, M.D., Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) said he is closing the investigation of Chrysler minivans, and urged owners of the more than four million 1984-1995 Chrysler minivans to have stronger, safer rear liftgate latches installed when notified that their dealer has the parts and is ready to make the free repairs.

"This is a safety issue that demands attention by Chrysler minivan owners. We all live busy lives and taking a vehicle in for service may be inconvenient. But in this case, take the time because the addition of a stronger, safer latch is very important."

Martinez explained that the agency has reports of 134 ejections by means of the rear liftgate, resulting in 98 injuries and 37 deaths to occupants of Chrysler minivans.

Martinez also announced that NHTSA was closing its formal investigation of Chrysler minivan rear latches because the latch replacement campaign is proceeding satisfactorily and on schedule. The agency will, however, continue to monitor progress to ensure a high completion rate, and Chrysler will submit quarterly reports.

"We negotiated an agreement with Chrysler, instead of pressing on with our investigation that may have led to a forced safety recall, because Chrysler's latch replacement campaign includes the key components of a formal safety recall. The company has agreed to go even further, taking extensive steps to ensure a high completion rate.

-more-



Leslie H. Goldfarb
Assistant General Counsel

October 18, 1985

VIA Telex

Mr. Philip R. Recht
Deputy Administrator
National Highway Traffic
Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Recht:

Now that our minivan liftgate latch replacement action is well under way, I thought it would be useful to describe for you the steps we have taken and will take to insure that this service action is successful. Please be assured that it is Chrysler's intention to achieve a rate of response comparable to or better than what NHTSA has considered acceptable in the past. I think you will agree that the actions outlined below should achieve that objective.

The success of this program requires that both our owners and our dealers fully appreciate the importance of the latch replacement and that they be given the resources and the information necessary to carry it out successfully. Our efforts to insure that our owners bring their vehicles in for latch replacement include the following:

- A letter was sent to all owners this Spring advising them of Chrysler's decision to conduct a service action and of our plans and general timing for latch replacements.
- A letter was sent to all owners in September, 1985, along with a class action notice, explaining the relationship of the class action procedure to the ongoing latch replacement program;
- A 1-800-844-4444 call center has been established to answer owner questions, to encourage owners to arrange for latch replacement when they receive notification, and to assist owners with any related problems.
- The first notification letters have been sent to owners of model year 1980-1985 vehicles with manual liftgate releases advising them to contact their dealers to arrange for the installation of replacement latches. This is a strongly worded letter that emphasizes the importance of having the latches replaced.

Mr. Phillip Recht
October 19, 1995
Page Two

- Another letter will be mailed to all owners within 30 days of the closing of the investigation outlining the status of the service action and the importance of contacting their dealers for a latch replacement when they receive their notification letter. This letter will also clarify any confusion that might occur surrounding various investigative documents placed on the public record at the time of closing;
- Owners who have not made arrangements for latch replacement after receiving a notification letter will be sent a follow-up notification, again urging them to bring their vehicles in for new latches; and
- Depending on the response rate after the second notification letter, the remaining owners will be contacted by telephone urging them to have a replacement latch installed and, if necessary, assisting them in making dealer arrangements. Chrysler is also prepared to accommodate the special needs of any owner who wishes a latch replacement.

In addition to the unprecedented effort to motivate owners to bring their vehicles in for new latches, there is a slingshot program of comparable magnitude. It includes the following:

- All dealers have been instructed to provide installation of replacement latches for vehicles in the dealership for service where an owner has received a notification letter and has not made arrangements for latch replacement. Since many of the earlier model minivans are still under a 770 power train warranty, it is likely that a substantial segment of the population will be brought to the dealer for some kind of servicing;
- Dealers have been instructed to automatically replace the latches as they become available on all minivans that are on their used car lot. Since minivans are frequently traded in for newer models, this will also cover a significant number of vehicles;
- All dealers will receive a videotaped announcement from Chrysler's top management outlining the importance of this service action, how to motivate owners to have the latch replaced and other actions dealers must take to insure the success of the program;
- All dealers will also receive special educational materials updating them on the owner service action and providing answers to owner questions. This material will

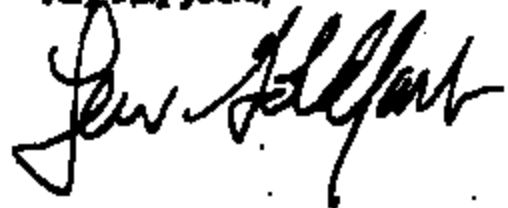
Mr. Philip R. Recht
October 19, 1995
Page Three

also stress the importance of encouraging owners to have their latches replaced when they receive their notification letters; and

- All dealers have been instructed to appoint a minivan/liftgate latch replacement Customer Satisfaction Coordinator. This coordinator will be the designated expert in the dealership and will work with all the dealership employees to make sure that the dealer does everything possible to insure the success of this program. This will include insuring the availability of latches at the dealership, providing accurate answers to questions from owners and making certain that owners understand the importance of bringing their vehicles in for latch replacement.

The above list of actions demonstrates Chrysler's commitment to the success of this program. If these actions do not achieve the desired response rate, we will devise additional measures to do so. As you know, we plan to report quarterly to NHTSA on the progress of this service action and will consider any suggestions that NHTSA may have in the event further action is necessary.

Very truly yours,





Inter Company Correspondence

SALES & SERVICE

Telephone/Fax 878-1040

Date

BLDASLRV11-78

879-1001

November 7, 1995

To-Name & Department

CRM Number

Zone Managers

From-Name & Department

CRM Number

S.L. Rhoads

Corp. Customer Comm. Mgr. Troy

421-00-00

Subject: **HANDLING IRATE MINIVAN CUSTOMERS**

Our procedure at 1-800-MINIVAN for handling irate customers who want their latch replaced immediately is as follows:

1. Assure the owner that minivans, as a segment, are among the safest vehicles on the road (Reference Automotive New article attached), but strongly encourage the owner to have their latch replaced as soon as they are notified.
2. If owner does not accept this, offer to the owner that we will place them on a priority list and as soon as power latches for their vehicle are available, we will call them.
3. On extremely difficult to satisfy customers, offer them on an interim basis a manual latch until their power latch is available.

We then call the dealer and arrange with the service manager to install the service replacement manual latch.

| Application | Package P.N. | LOP | Time |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|------|
| 1993 - 1995 | 04874460 | 23-41-01-10 | .4 |
| 1991 - 1992 | 04874461 | 23-41-01-10 | .4 |
| 1990 | 04874462 | 23-41-01-10 | .3 |
| 1984 - 1989 | 04874463 | 23-41-01-10 | .3 |

We tell them to use the standard LOP number (not the service action LOP) on the claim with an authorization number.

We ask that, as appropriate, you should advise dealers using the same procedure, same part numbers, and same LOP.

We need to reiterate, however, that our supply of manual latches is limited, so the installation of a temporary manual latch should only be used with discretion and in the interest of calming any owner's fears about their latch. We are concerned that many dealers are installing a manual latch for any customer who asks.

If you have any questions, please call me.

attachment

cc: J.H. Casola M.C. Jacobs
 L.A. Doehring E.F. Mahon
 W.W. Hootynald R.J. Pelliccia

Lewis H Goldfarb
Vice President, General Counsel

December 5, 1995

VIA TELEFAX

Mr. Philip R. Recht
Deputy Administrator
National Highway Traffic
Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Recht:

Shortly before NHTSA closed its investigation of the Chrysler minivan latch, Chrysler set forth a number of actions it intended to take to insure that the liftgate latch service action would be successful. Among the many actions, one was a letter to be sent to all owners about 30 days after the closing of the investigation. At that time Chrysler was concerned that negative media coverage might require a communication to owners to address the issues raised.

Our experience since the October 25 news conference has made it clear that such a communication would not only fail to serve its intended purpose, it would likely confuse our minivan owners. In fact, such a letter might actually discourage some owners from having their latches replaced.

In place of another generalized letter (we've already sent two to each owner) we propose to take a series of additional (and more costly) actions that will be specifically tailored to improve the responsiveness and satisfy the special needs of minivan owners. Our analysis of calls to our 800 hotline and a survey of owners who have already received notifications but have not had latches replaced reveals:

- A substantial segment of owners who received notification stated that they intend to have their latches replaced;

Mr. Phillip R. Recht
December 5, 1995
Page 2

- There is a high and continuing level of awareness of the NHTSA investigation and the Chrysler service action among minivan owners; and
- Owners are anxious to receive notice of the availability of the replacement latches, not another letter telling them to wait a little longer for the notice.

Chrysler intends to do whatever can be done to achieve the necessary completion rate for this action. Naturally, some strategies that seemed attractive at the time we embarked on this process will become less so as we learn more about the views and desires of our owners. In light of what we've learned since the closing, and consistent with our objective of insuring the success of this service action, we intend to take the additional steps listed below.

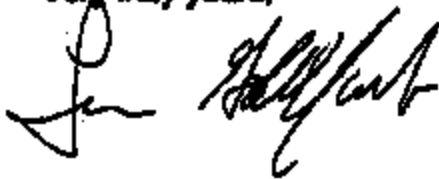
- Surveys of owners who receive notification will enable us to tailor our follow-up letters to achieve better results. Each mailing phase will be followed by such a survey before we contact non-responders.
- Our first follow-up contact to owners will take place within 60 days of the first notification phase. Normally, such contacts are made six months to one year after notification.
- As we indicated in the October 18 letter, owners who have not responded to the second notification will be contacted by telephone urging them to have replacement latches installed. This action will also be initiated earlier than we had planned, and we are expanding the range of assistance available to owners.
- The success of this action depends in large measure on our dealers' efforts to bring their customers in for replacement latches. We are developing a set of proposals for dealers to incentivize their customers to respond.
- Owners of minivans with the remote release latches who express special concern over the timeliness of replacement will be placed on a priority listing to be among the first to receive their latches when they become available.
- These additional steps will increase the cost of the service action significantly. Accordingly, we have increased the allocation of funds to be spent on this action from \$115 million to \$132 million.

Mr. Philip R. Recht
December 5, 1996
Page 3

The overriding and constant goal of all Chrysler's efforts regarding latch replacement is to achieve the maximum rate of replacement and to insure the satisfaction of our minivan owners, regardless of the cost. The strategies we use to achieve this have to be flexible enough to respond to the needs of our owners and whatever new obstacles we learn of as this huge campaign unfolds. It is likely that the steps described above will be expanded and modified as we learn from our surveys what additional steps may be useful to encourage latch replacement.

I trust that you will agree that these enhancements to our original plan will serve to increase the completion rate and that a flexible approach tailored to the needs of our owners will achieve the best results. Please note that this letter also responds to Request #2 of Kathleen DeMeter's letter of December 4 to Dale Dawkins. The additional information requested in Ms. DeMeter's letter will be provided under separate cover.

Very truly yours,



LHG/ngt

95I-001 Chrysler 1984-1995 Minivan Rear Hatch Latch Replacement

| Notification Phase | Latch Type | Owner Notification Begin | Owner Notification Complete | Minivans Involved | Latches Installed | Percent Completed | Quarters Reporting | Letter Follow-up | Telephone Follow-up |
|--|------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. 1993-95 | Manual | 9/08/95 | 9/29/95 | 86,407 | 39,560 | 59.6 | 4 | January 1996 | April 1, 1996 |
| 2. 1991-94 | " | 10/06/95 | 10/13/95 | 52,719 | 28,929 | 54.9 | 4 | April 11, 1996 | May 28, 1996 |
| 3. 1990 | " | 10/17/95 | 10/27/95 | 72,845 | 35,387 | 48.6 | 4 | " | " |
| 4. 1984-89 | " | 11/03/95 | 12/15/95 | 411,678 | 106,604 | 25.9 | 4 | May 30, 1996 | July 3, 1996 |
| 5. 1993-95 | Power | 12/22/95 | 3/22/96 | 1,342,202 | 832,889 | 62.1 | 3 | Planned | Planned |
| 6. 1991-92 | " | 3/29/96 | 6/21/96 | 689,656 | 285,882 | 42.9 | 2 | Planned | Planned |
| 7. 1990 | " | 7/10/96 | 8/07/96 | 328,053 | 95,894 | 29.2 | 1 | Planned | Planned |
| 8. 1984-89 | " | 7/12/96 | 9/06/96 | 1,174,700 | 168,288 | 14.3 | 1 | Planned | Planned |
| Population: | | | | 4,138,260 | 1,603,233 | | | | |
| | | | | Through 9/30/96 | | Beginning Dates for Follow-up | | | |
| | | | | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | 5th | 6th |
| Average Van Recall Completion by Quarters: | | | | 28% | 44% | 53% | 57% | 59% | 63% |
| Older Vehicle Average Completion by Quarters: | | | | 20% | 34% | 35% | 35% | 38% | 60%* |
| <small>Vehicles older than 5 years at the time of the recall</small> | | | | <small>*The increase in the 6th quarter is due to the low number of older vehicle recalls and the consequent effect of recalls that were completed early, before the 6th quarter.</small> | | | | | |
| Next Quarterly Status Report Due: | | | January 30, 1997 | | | | | | |

| From: | Date and time | 10/13/95 11:02:08 |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| To: DMAIL --CLIC | T4778JC --CLIC | Curran, Judy E |
| T0886KW --CLIC | T1307MH --CLIC | Harris, Mary L |
| T7046MH --CLIC | T7314DF --CLIC | Faria, Debra A |
| T1518MZ --CLIC | T7306MN --CLIC | Nordlinger, Marcia |
| T7811SM --CLIC | T2239FM --CLIC | Martin, Florence |
| T1204AL --CLIC | T2274DC --CLIC | Culverwell, D |
| T0248CD --CLIC | T828SLR --CLIC | Reichardt, Leslie |
| T7352DK --CLIC | T1358MJ --CLIC | Jenkins, Maureen |
| T9412JP --CLIC | T7328CS --CLIC | Stacks, Catherine |
| T8336RT --CLIC | T7355YK --CLIC | Kroetch, Yvonne C |
| T4780LC --CLIC | T568BDH --CLIC | Hancock, D K |
| T8653LL --CLIC | T4034MF --CLIC | Fiorucci, Mary L |
| T5268CE --CLIC | T6727DM --CLIC | McLarty, D M |
| T0793SR --CLIC | T0900SB --CLIC | Bowman, Sherri L |
| T6283BF --CLIC | T5721BS --CLIC | Slack, Betty R |
| T2927ME --CLIC | T0372PW --CLIC | Walch, P L |
| T9523AR --CLIC | T4419LS --CLIC | Shook, Laverne |
| T3077CE --CLIC | | |

From: Sales & Service Division

Subject: MINIVAN NHTSA RESPONSE BROCHURE
TO: DLRCPALL,DLRDGEALL*

THE GREEN AND WHITE 'CHRYSLER CORPORATION MINIVAN NHTSA RESPONSE' BROCHURE SHOULD BE SCRAPPED.

IF WE PROCEED TO IMPLEMENT THE SERVICE ACTION TO REPLACE MINIVAN LIFTGATE LATCHES, THESE BROCHURES ARE OBSOLETE.

WE WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH CURRENT INFORMATION NEXT WEEK.

IF YOUR CUSTOMERS HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE REFER THEM TO 1-800-MINIVAN (646-4826).

J.H. CASOLA AND M.C. JACOBS

Thanks,
Barbara

t+x

To: ** To view distribution list - Enter DIST on MLOf Menu **

From: MOPAR PARTS DIVISION

Subject: 1984 - 1995 MINIVAN LATCH FOR 'NORMAL' SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

TO: DLRCPALLS,DLRDEGALLS,ALLDM*,ALLSRVDM*,ALLPTSDM*,ALLSLSDM*

TO: ALL CHRYSLER/PLYMOUTH AND DODGE DEALERS
 ALL PRINCIPALS/SERVICE MANAGERS/PARTS MANAGERS/BODY SHOP MANAGERS
 ALL CHRYSLER CORPORATION FIELD OFFICES

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, BODY WORK OR MECHANICAL REPAIRS TO 1984 - 1995 MINIVAN LATCHES MUST BE PERFORMED WITH THE NEW DESIGN LATCHES. CURRENTLY, ONLY NEW DESIGN 'MANUAL' LATCHES ARE AVAILABLE. NEW DESIGN 'POWER' LATCHES WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL LATE 1995 / EARLY 1996.

THE OLD LATCH PART NUMBERS (PN#S 04673538, 04246540, 04378530, 04675171) HAVE BEEN RULED TO THE FOLLOWING MANUAL LATCH APPLICATIONS. THESE NEW MANUAL LATCH PACKAGES MUST BE USED FOR BOTH MANUAL AND POWER LATCH BODY WORK AND MECHANICAL REPAIRS UNTIL THE NEW POWER LATCHES BECOME AVAILABLE

| APPLICATION | PACKAGE PN # |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1993 - 1995 | 04874460 |
| 1991 - 1992 | 04874461 |
| 1990 | 04874462 |
| 1984 - 1989 | 04874463 |

FOR CUSTOMER NOTIFICATION PURPOSES, EACH PACKAGE CONTAINS AN ADHESIVE LABEL TO BE AFFIXED TO THE CUSTOMER'S RO RECEIPT, WHICH STATES:

 ***** NOTICE TO MINIVAN OWNER *****
 ***** MINIVAN LIFTGATE LATCH *****

PEACE OF MIND AMONG OUR MINIVAN OWNERS IS VERY IMPORTANT TO CHRYSLER. TO THAT END, A STRONGER LIFTGATE LATCH HAS BEEN DESIGNED. HOWEVER, AT THIS TIME, ONLY MANUAL LIFTGATE LATCHES ARE AVAILABLE WITH THE NEW DESIGN.

A MANUAL LATCH HAS BEEN INSTALLED IN YOUR VEHICLE.

IF YOUR MINIVAN IS EQUIPPED WITH A POWER LATCH:

- THE REMOTE RELEASE ON YOUR DASH WILL NOT OPEN THE LATCH.
- THE LIFTGATE MUST BE OPENED WITH A KEY FROM OUTSIDE THE VEHICLE.
- YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED WHEN A POWER LATCH IS AVAILABLE FOR YOUR VEHICLE.
- WE WILL REPLACE THE RECENTLY INSTALLED MANUAL LATCH WITH A POWER LATCH AT NO CHARGE TO YOU.

WE'RE SORRY FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE, BUT BELIEVE THIS ACTION WILL HELP ENSURE YOUR CONTINUED SATISFACTION.

* * * * *
* * * * *

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT OUR MINIVAN CUSTOMERS WHO REQUIRE BODY WORK /
MECHANICAL REPAIRS (OUTSIDE THE LATCH REPLACEMENT SERVICE ACTION) ARE
ADVISED THAT YOU WILL BE INSTALLING A MANUAL LATCH.

PLEASE PASS THIS NOTICE ON TO YOUR SUBLET BODY SHOPS AND / OR WHOLESALE
ACCOUNTS.

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| From: T7209BD --CLIC | Date and time | 08/24/95 16:23:43 |
| To: T6922KM --CLIC | T7384DG --CLIC | |
| T1778ZK --CLIC | T8007HM --CLIC | |
| T2726RS --CLIC | T7260GM --CLIC | |
| T4424GD --CLIC | T2256SG --CLIC | |
| T7251RM --CLIC | T8536RC --CLIC | |
| T0922GC --CLIC | T9857DC --CLIC | |
| T7616RR --CLIC | T3083JM --CLIC | |
| T6253HM --CLIC | T5573RC --CLIC | |
| T7137SC --CLIC | T6831RH --CLIC | |
| T0670TC --CLIC | T8111RB --CLIC | |
| T0898GM --CLIC | T5399NH --CLIC | |
| T7108JJ --CLIC | T3142DB --CLIC | |

From: Barbara Dinger (E.F. Mahon's & M.E. Yatsko's Office)
*** Resending note of 08/24/95 16:14
8-879-1019

Subject: MINIVAN LIFTGATE LATCH UPDATE
To: DMAIL --CLIC

From: T.R. Cunningham

Subject: MINIVAN LIFTGATE LATCH UPDATE
*TO:DLRCPALLS,DLRUDGEALLS,ALLPTS DMS,ALLSRV DMS,ALLSLSDMS

ATTENTION: DEALER PRINCIPALS, PARTS MANAGERS AND SERVICE MANAGERS

We previously advised you that the timing for owner notification for customers to return to their dealership for the replacement of liftgate latches would begin in the Fall of this year (1995).

We currently estimate that we will notify owners of non-solenoid equipped vehicles beginning with most current model years (1995 through 1993) the week of September 4, 1995; and we will phase in notification of subsequent model years (1992 through 1984) beginning early October 1995. These notifications will extend through the balance of 1995.

We estimate notification to owners of solenoid equipped vehicles to begin in December 1995 and will again be scheduled over several months beginning with the most current model years followed by subsequent model years. As we identified earlier, your service department will not replace latches in significant volume until the first quarter of 1996.

As this service unfolds, we urge you to be sensitive to the needs of these minivan owners and minimize their inconvenience whenever possible. We will keep you advised throughout this notification process. If your customers have any questions, please direct them to us at 1-800-MINIVAN (646-4826).

T.R. CUNNINGHAM
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT - SALES AND MARKETING
GENERAL MANAGER - MINIVAN OPERATIONS

Thanks,
Barbara

D. E. DAWSON

November 27, 1995

Miss Brewster:

Enclosed is the current owner notification schedule for (W)gate latch replacement. As I indicated to you on the phone, the "Approx. Customer Mailing" number will be in excess of the actual R. L. Falk registration numbers as we mail to a "last known address" (even if an old one) if a VIN does not show up in Falk. Completion rates will be evaluated against the Falk registration totals.

This schedule is continuing to change as new Falk data becomes available and as we optimize replacement latch production. For this reason, I would appreciate your treating this schedule with confidence.

Sincerely,



1984 - 85 AS MINION LATCH ESTIMATED MAILING SCHEDULE

| PHASE | MODEL YEAR | LATCH TYPE | R. L. FOLK RESERVED QUANTITIES | APPROX. CUSTOMER MAILING | APPROX. U.S. PRODUCTION | OWNERS MAILING DATE RANGE (TARGET) |
|---------------|------------|------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| 1 | '80 - '80 | MANUAL | | 57,000 | 60,000 | WEEK OF 8/26/80 THRU WEEK OF 9/6/80 |
| 2 | '81 - '82 | MANUAL | | 50,000 | 57,000 | WEEK OF 10/20/80 THRU WEEK OF 10/26/80 |
| 3 | '80 | MANUAL | | 73,000 | 75,000 | WEEK OF 10/10/80 THRU WEEK OF 10/26/80 |
| 4 | '84 - '85 | MANUAL | | 441,787 | 480,000 | WEEK OF 1/20/85 THRU WEEK OF 12/11/85 |
| 5* | '85 - '85 | POWER | | NA | 1,377,000 | WEEK OF 12/14/85 THRU WEEK OF 2/20/86 (18 WEEKS @ 76,500/WEEK) |
| 6* | '81 - '82 | POWER | | NA | 714,000 | WEEK OF 4/1/80 THRU WEEK OF 5/20/80 (8 WEEKS @ 89,250/WEEK) |
| 7* | '80 | POWER | | NA | 280,000 | WEEK OF 8/27/80 THRU WEEK OF 9/20/80 (3 WEEKS @ 93,333/WEEK) |
| 8* | '84 - '85 | POWER | | NA | 1,300,000 | WEEK OF 6/1/85 THRU WEEK OF 7/1/85 (8 WEEKS @ 212,500/WEEK) |
| TOTALS | | | | | 4,123,000 | |

* Attempting to pull forward Phases 5, 6, 7 and 8. Timing and rate of supply is not yet complete for simultaneous production and mailing of multiple phases. The result, if successful, should allow Phases 6, 7 and 8 to begin earlier than planned.

NSA-001

DEC - 4 1995

CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Dale F. Dawkins, Director
Vehicle Compliance and Safety Affairs
Chrysler Corporation - CIMS 482-00-91
800 Chrysler Drive
Auburn Hills, MI 48326-2757

NSA-111jdw
95I-001

Dear Mr. Dawkins:

As you know, Chrysler's campaign to replace the liftgate latch in 1984 through 1995 model minivans as described in your letters of March 27 and April 27, 1995, will be monitored by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) as a remedial campaign to improve the safety performance of these vehicles. As such, NHTSA has assigned an internal identification code, 95I-001, to the campaign.

We are requesting certain additional information regarding this product safety improvement campaign. Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30166 and 30163, please provide numbered responses to the following questions. Please repeat the applicable item verbatim above each response. The submitted information is to include, but not be limited to, all written reports or documents; transcriptions, notes, or other documentation of oral communications; and information transmitted or contained on electronic storage media.

1. Mr. Lewis H. Goldthrb, 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.
2. 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.

3. In the October 13, 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.

Please provide this information, referencing the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration identification code 951-001 to this office by December 11, 1995.

RECALL STATUS REPORTS

To assist the agency in monitoring the performance of this campaign, please provide the following information in Chrysler's periodic status reports:

- a. the number of notification letters mailed out;
- b. the number of letters returned undeliverable;
- c. the number of vehicles remedied;
- d. the number of vehicles scrapped or destroyed; and
- e. the number of vehicles whose owners were otherwise determined to be unreachable

These status reports must be provided at the conclusion of each calendar quarter in which notification to owners to take their vehicles in for replacement of the luggage latch began, and each consecutive quarter thereafter for 3 quarters following the quarter in which notification was completed. Please provide this information according to the model year, latch type, and Chrysler's owner notification phase. The first status report for this campaign is due on January 30, 1996.

If you have any questions on this matter, please contact Mr. Jon White at (202) 366-5227 or by Fax at (202) 366-7882.

Sincerely,

**Kathleen C. DeMeter, Director
Office of Defects Investigation
Safety Assurance**

CENTER FOR AUTO SAFETY

2001 S STREET, NW SUITE 410 WASHINGTON, DC 20009-1160 202-328-7700

February 2, 1996

Dr. Ricardo Martinez, M.D.
Administrator
National Highway Traffic
Safety Administration
400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Chrysler Minivan Liftgate Service Action

Dear Dr. Martinez:

Certain facts have recently come to the Center for Auto Safety's attention which may be of no small interest to NHTSA's supervision of the Chrysler minivan Service Action.

It seems that in the course of promulgating notice of the proposed settlement of the class action lawsuit arising out of the liftgate defect Chrysler failed to notify minivan owners registered in California and Puerto Rico, and also failed to notify fleet owners of the proposed settlement. Needless to say this is cause for some concern for the court presiding over the class action.

More importantly, though, this raises questions about the adequacy of Chrysler's notification efforts to minivan owners under the Chrysler/NHTSA agreement from October of 1995. Since the database Chrysler utilized to notify the class of the proposed settlement is very likely the same database used to conduct other minivan mailings, a substantial number of vehicle owners may have no idea as to the timing and availability of their latch replacements.

Moreover, the omission of California owners, Puerto Rico owners, and fleet owners from the record of vehicle owners entitled to the retrofit will skew the reporting of completion percentages. If Chrysler does not count these owners in its calculation of achievement rates for the total fleet, Chrysler's estimations will be grossly inflated. This could prompt NHTSA to terminate its supervision of the Service Action prematurely.

We strongly encourage NHTSA to inquire of Chrysler whether the addresses for the mailings associated with the Service Action derive from the same database as that employed in the class action settlement notice process. Further, in view of the fact that a number of the omitted vehicle owners may already have a retrofit available to them, an immediate supplemental notice is in order.

Thank you for your time and prompt attention. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at 202-328-7700. We look forward to hearing from you.

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ES012207

Dr. Ricardo Martinez
2/2/96
Page 2

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RAG', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert A. Graham
Staff Attorney

CENTER FOR AUTO SAFETY

2001 S STREET, NW SUITE 410 WASHINGTON, DC 20009-1160 202-328-7700

March 20, 1996

Suzanne Hopson
Executive Secretariat
National Highway Traffic
Safety Administration
400 Seventh St., S.W.
Rm. 5221
Washington, DC 20590

VIA FAX AND FIRST CLASS MAIL

Dear Ms. Hopson:

The Center for Auto Safety files this request pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552. The Center for Auto Safety ("CAS") is a nationwide consumer advocacy organization established in 1970 by Consumers Union and Ralph Nader. CAS works toward improved safety, environmental responsibility, and fair dealing in the automotive industry and the marketplace. We seek information relating to EA94-005, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's ("NHTSA") investigation into an alleged defect in Chrysler minivan rear hatch latches.

Specifically, we request the following:

1. All records of conversations, correspondence, and/or meetings between representatives of NHTSA and representatives of Chrysler Corporation since October of 1995 addressing the response rate to Chrysler's field service action to replace the existing liftgate latches on the 1984-1995 minivans; and
2. Any records, documentary or otherwise, that NHTSA shared with representatives of Chrysler Corporation or that Chrysler representatives shared with the agency in the course of NHTSA's conversations, correspondence, and/or meetings referenced above.

Because the records requested will primarily benefit the general public and will contribute to the public's understanding of the operations of the government, NHTSA should waive any fees associated with the request pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A) as amended. Should you deny the waiver of fees, we ask that you inform CAS before delivery of any materials.

In the event you refuse access to any of the records requested, please describe the materials you wish to withhold and specify your statutory justifications for the refusal. Also, please state separately your reasons for failing to invoke your discretionary powers to release the materials in the public interest.

Finally, if you have any questions about the scope of this

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Suzanne Hopson
3/20/96
Page 2

request, or if you believe there are any ambiguities in the way we have framed our request, please let us know as soon as possible.

We look forward to your response within 10 working days, as required under the Act. We will interpret any delay in response as a denial of our request, and we will pursue all avenues of appeal to vindicate our rights. We appreciate your very prompt attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. A. Graham', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert A. Graham
Staff Attorney

May 16, 1996

MS. Kathleen D. DeMeter, Director
Office of Defects Investigation, Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh St. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

In response to your conversation with Mr. Dale Dawkins on May 15, 1996 regarding Mr. Ralph Hoar's request for liftgate latch replacement information, I am forwarding the attached zone communication of November 7, 1995. Point number three should positively answer how Chrysler will respond to customers demanding the stronger latches before the specified remote release replacement latch for their vehicle is produced and distributed to our dealers.

If you have further questions, I may be contacted at (810) 576-7303.

Sincerely,



W. R. Edwards, Manager
Vehicle Safety &
Emissions Compliance



Dale E Dawkins
Director
Vehicle Compliance & Safety Affairs

June 12, 1996

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

Dear Ms. DeMeter,

Following is information related to questions regarding our minivan liftgate latch field action raised in our discussion with you last week.

Phase VI owner notification mailings are well under way, and those notifications should be complete by the end of this month. Incidentally, regarding the 1991 model minivan assigned to ODI, our customer name and address file identified the owner as DOT/NHTSA, with no further identifier. In any event, that vehicle can be returned to any convenient dealer at any time for latch replacement. There is no need to wait for receipt of the owner notification document.

Further, enclosed is a copy of the expanded Minivan Latch Coordinator incentive program to provide added incentive to the Phase VI effort. We will continue to do whatever is necessary to optimize the replacement latch effort.

Sincerely,



From the desk of: *S.L. Rhoads*

July 30, 1996

CIMS: 421-00-00
PH: 810-952-1001
FAX: 952-1040

To: Ms. Kathleen C. DeMeter
Director, Office of Defects Investigation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh St. S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Kathy:

I've enclosed for your information copies of the July newsletter for the dealership liftgate latch coordinators on the "Accent on Action" incentive program.

I've also enclosed some "Show me your minivan latch" buttons, which were requested by our field personnel for dealership service advisors. The intent of the buttons is to encourage minivan customers to inquire about their liftgate latch when they visit a dealership for service work. Over 10,000 dealership employees should be wearing these buttons.

If you have any questions regarding our field actions to optimize latch replacements, please call me.

Sincerely,

cc: Dale Dawkins