

SUBARU

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September 14, 1999
Ref. No. GA99-024C

Mr. Kenneth N. Weinstein
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance - NSA-01
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

99V-249 (01)

Re: Subaru Legacy Transverse Link Bracket Bolt Torque
Part 573, Defect Information Report

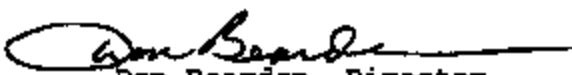
Dear Mr. Weinstein:

In accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 and 49 CFR Part 573, Subaru of America, Inc. ["Subaru"] hereby submits a Defect Information Report (DIR) concerning a safety recall of certain 2000 Subaru Legacy Sedan L model vehicles to address a possible insufficient bolt torque of a bolt that secures the left transverse link bracket to the vehicle body. Anti-rust coating (PVC) was applied to the vehicle body surface where the left transverse link bracket mounts to the body and may cause the tightening torque of the mounting bolt to decrease as the PVC material cures and shrinks.

Should you have any questions about this report, please contact me at (609) 488-8644.

Sincerely,

SUBARU OF AMERICA, INC.


Don Bearden, Director
Governmental Affairs

cc: K. DeMeter

DB:ds
Attachment

RECEIVED
99 SEP 17 AM 8:09
OFFICE
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT

99V-249 (02)

1. Vehicle Manufacturer Name:

Subaru-Isuzu Automotive, Inc. ["SIA"]
5500 State Road 38 East
Lafayette, Indiana 47903

Affiliated U.S. Sales Company:

Subaru of America, Inc. ["SOA"]
Subaru Plaza
P.O. Box 6000
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034-6000

2. Identification of Affected Vehicles:

Based on vehicle production records, we have determined the affected vehicle population as follows:

Make/Model: Subaru Legacy Sedan L Model

Model year: 2000

Production dates: July 12 through August 25, 1999.

VIN Range:

2000MY Sedan 4S3BE63**Y*200447 - 202314

Note 1. Although the involved vehicles are within the above VIN ranges, not all vehicles in these ranges were sold in the U.S.

Note 2. Various characters may occupy the VIN positions identified by "**

3. Total Number of Vehicles Potentially Affected:

133 vehicles are potentially affected. Only 13 vehicles have been retailed. 120 vehicles are being held in dealer inventory.

4. Percentage of Vehicles Estimated to Actually Contain Defect:

We believe that approximately 81% of the vehicles in the range will be affected.

5. Description of Problem:

During the manufacturing process at SIA, due to incorrect programming of the spray robot which applies the anti-rust coating (PVC), PVC was incorrectly applied to the transverse link mounting surface of the Sedan L model vehicle body. As the anti-rust coating cures over a period of time, the coating shrinks, causing a torque decrease of the bolt that secures the transverse link bracket to the vehicle body. Insufficient torque on the bracket bolts can result in loosening of the bracket and subsequent separation of the transverse link from the vehicle frame.

6. Chronology of Principal Events:

In late August 1999, low tightening torque of the left side transverse link bracket bolt was detected during a scheduled Quality Assurance check on a vehicle on the SIA assembly line. The cause of the loose bolt was identified to be the PVC applied to the surface of the vehicle body where the transverse link bracket mounts to the body due to the improper programming of the spray robot.

Spray robot programming was corrected and shipping of vehicles was halted. However, 133 vehicles had already been shipped to dealers. Dealers were notified to hold potentially affected undelivered vehicles. We continued our evaluation to determine what steps would be necessary to correct this condition. On September 9, 1999, we determined that a safety defect could exist and consequently filed this report.

7. Description of Corrective Repair Action:

We plan to notify the owners of the 13 retailed vehicles by telephone to return their vehicles to a Subaru dealer for inspection and, if necessary, removal of the PVC on the vehicle body under the mounting location of the left transverse link mounting bracket bolt and retorquing of the

mounting bolt to the required torque. We will follow up the telephone call with an owner notification letter.

Dealers will be notified to inspect their potentially affected in-stock vehicles and, if necessary, repair the vehicles as stated above prior to retail delivery.

9. Recall Schedule:

Owner notification by telephone is expected to begin within 10 days, as soon as the dealer repair procedures are completed and distributed.

Copies of the dealer repair procedures and owner letter will be submitted as soon as they are available.