



Mr. Kenneth N Weinstein
Associate Administrator for Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

04V-468
(2 pages)

September 23, 2004

Dear Mr. Weinstein:

Re.: Submission of Part 573 report for 2004 model year Mazda3 vehicles

Pursuant to Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, "Defect and Noncompliance Reports," Mazda North American Operations (MNAO), on behalf of Mazda Motor Corporation of Hiroshima, Japan (Mazda), submits the following information concerning a safety-related recall action that it is initiating.

Sec. 573.6 (c)(1):

Mazda Motor Corporation with Designated Agent:

David G. Robertson
Manager,
Environmental and Safety Engineering
Mazda North American Operations
1500 Enterprise Drive, Allen Park
Michigan 48101-2053

Sec. 573.6 (c)(2):

Some 2004 model year Mazda3 vehicles built between June 24, 2003 and March 22, 2004 with the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) range between JM1 BK**** 41 100088 and JM1 BK**** 41 169916.

Sec. 573.6 (c)(3):

Approximately 42 thousand vehicles

Sec. 573.6 (c)(4):

Unknown.

Sec. 573.6 (c)(5):

Due to a crack in the housing of the airbag crash zone sensor, water can get into the sensor and cause a short circuit. This will illuminate the airbag warning light. Until the problem is remedied, the airbag will not deploy as required in a frontal crash.

Sec. 573.6 (c)(6):

In January of 2004, based on some field reports and owner inquiries from Canada, Mazda learned of instances where the airbag warning light was illuminating. Further investigation determined that a possible cause of the warning light activation could have been a short circuit in the crash zone sensor. However, it took a fair amount of time to discover the cracks in the sensor housing that allowed water to intrude, causing the short circuit.

Eventually, Mazda determined that electric corrosion caused the cracks in the sensor housing, permitting water to enter. We believe that this is predominantly a problem that will occur in the winter as a result of exposure to road salt.

Sec. 573.6 (c)(7):

Not Applicable

Sec. 573.6 (c)(8):

Owners of record will be notified of the defect by first class mail in October 2004 and be instructed to bring their vehicle to Mazda dealer. Repair will be performed at no cost to the vehicle owner.

A copy of the reimbursement plan to be sent to owners and dealers as an attachment to the owner notification letter will be provided under separate cover when they become available. With respect to reimbursement, customers will be reimbursed based on the submission of a receipt indicating the amount paid by the customer to remedy this defect.

Sec. 573.6 (c)(9) & (10):

A copy of the notification letter to be sent to owners and dealers will be provided under separate cover when they become available.

Sec. 573.6 (c)(11):

Mazda has assigned recall number 2304J to this action.

Sincerely yours,
Mazda North American Operations



David G. Robertson
Manager,
Environmental & Safety Engineering