

DAIMLERCHRYSLER

DaimlerChrysler Manufacturing International LLC

SENT VIA Fax and FedEx

December 16, 2004

04V-600
(3 pages)

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

Re: Part 573 Defect Information Report

Dear Mr. Weinstein:

This letter is submitted by DaimlerChrysler Manufacturing International LLC (DCMI) on behalf of our parent company, DaimlerChrysler AG (DCAG) pursuant to 49 C.F.R. Part 573. Specifically, this report advises you of a defect in certain model year 2002 through 2005 Sprinter vehicles.

573.6(c)(1): Manufacturer's Name

DaimlerChrysler AG, Stuttgart, Germany

Designated Agent: Wolf-Dieter Kleimeier
DaimlerChrysler Manufacturing International LLC
8936 NorthPointe Executive Drive
Huntersville, NC 28078

Tel: 704-655-1050

Fax: 704-655-1055

573.6(c)(2): Identification of Vehicles

Make	Model/Type	Model Year	Inclusive Dates of Manufacture
Sprinter	2500 and 3500	2002 through 2005	October 2001 through December 2005

The affected vehicle population was identified through an analysis of the production records at the production plant in Duesseldorf, Germany. These "subject vehicles" are those Sprinter models equipped with a tire valve TR 600, produced by Alligator Ventilfabrik GmbH. The TR 600 valve is used only on Sprinter vehicles with 16 inch' tires.

DaimlerChrysler Manufacturing International LLC
8936 NorthPointe Executive Drive
Suite 200
Huntersville, NC 28078
Phone (704) 655-1000
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573.6(c)(2)(iv): Manufacturer of the Component Containing the Defect

The component containing the defect is the valve TR600 produced by Alligator Ventilfabrik GmbH with the Mercedes-Benz Part no.: A 000 400 27 13, the "subject component".

Contact address in Germany: Alligator Ventilfabrik GmbH
Alleenstrasse
89537 Giengen, Germany

573.6(c)(3): Total Number of Vehicles Potentially Containing the Defect

Approximately 23,000 vehicles are potentially affected. These "subject vehicles" include all MY 2002 through MY 2005 Sprinter vehicles produced between October 2001 and December 2004, which had the subject component installed. The subject vehicles are marketed under the Freightliner and Dodge brands.

573.6(c)(4): Percentage of Vehicles Estimated to Actually Contain the Defect

All affected parts contain the subject rubber compound noted in (c)(5). However, because the defective condition is caused by a combination of both the materials used and transient variations in the valve stem production process, the percentage of valve stems actually affected is unknown.

573.6(c)(5): Description of Defect

DCAG has determined that the subject component, due to the chemical specification of the chosen rubber components together with a production process of the supplier that is not sufficiently stable for the materials used, can develop cracks within the rubber part or between the metal part and the rubber part of the valve stem. This cracking occurs only under abnormally hot conditions. Such cracking may lead to a loss of air pressure at the valve stem and may pose a risk to motor vehicle safety.

573.6(c)(6): Chronology of Principal Events

DCAG, after learning of customer complaints about alleged tire valve failures, examined 10 allegedly defective valves from the US market. 3 of 10 valves showed the described defects and leaked. The tests showed that the leaks found will regularly deflate the tire during 80 seconds, in which the driver will notice an unusual vehicle driving behaviour. The remaining 7 showed no defect and had no leak. Based on this information, the company determined in December, 2004 to conduct this action.

573.6(c)(8): Remedy Program

DaimlerChrysler Corporation (DCC) will conduct a voluntary recall campaign for all Sprinter vehicles in the USA. The recall will be conducted in order to replace the current valves with a TR600 valve from a US-supplier. The new supplier uses

a different material for the TR600 valve. There will be no charge to owners of the subject vehicles.

Owners who incurred costs to obtain a remedy for the problem addressed by the recall prior to the recall will be reimbursed.

DCC will provide the dates when the action will begin, as well as when it will complete sending notifications to owners and dealers as soon as it is determined.

573.6(c)(9): Copies of Communications with Dealers or Purchasers

A copy will be provided by DCC when available.

573.6(c)(10): Copies of Proposed Owner Notification Letter

A copy will be provided by DCC when available.

573.6(c)(11): Manufacturer's Campaign Identification Number

DCC will provide the Recall Campaign Number when available.

If you or your staff have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 704-655-1050 or Richard Shyu of my staff at 704-655-1052.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wolf-Dieter Kleimeier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Wolf-Dieter Kleimeier, Executive Vice President and COO
Engineering and Compliance

Cc: Jeffrey L. Quandt, Div. Chief, Office of Defect Investigations