

DAIMLERCHRYSLER

2005 JAN -5 P 4: 53

DEPT. OF
DEFENSE INVESTIGATION

DaimlerChrysler Corporation
Stephan J. Speth
Director
Vehicle Compliance & Safety Affairs

January 3, 2005

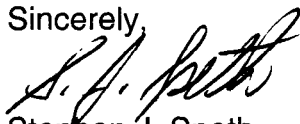
Mr. Kenneth N. Weinstein
Associate Administrator, Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

05V-002
(3 pages)

Dear Mr. Weinstein:

Attached is DaimlerChrysler Corporation's Defect Information Report, complying with the requirements of 49 CFR Part 573, Defect and Noncompliance Reports, which contains details of a potential safety related defect in some 2005 model year Dodge Dakota pick-up truck vehicles. The side airbag curtain may not have been properly installed. DaimlerChrysler Corporation will conduct a voluntary safety recall to tighten the side airbag curtain fasteners to the proper specification. In addition, the side airbag curtain module will be inspected for damage and replaced if necessary.

Sincerely,



Stephan J. Speth

Enclosures: Defect Information Report for DaimlerChrysler Corporation Recall D57

cc: K. C. DeMeter, NHTSA
Division of Occupational Safety & Health
California Department of Industrial Relations

DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT FOR DAIMLERCHRYSLER RECALL D57

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Submission date: January 3, 2005

Identifying classification of vehicles potentially affected:

Make	Model	Model Year	Inclusive Dates of Manufacture	Vehicle Volume
Dodge	Dakota	2005	7/1/04- 11/23/04	1142 (estimated) w/ optional side curtain airbags only

Estimated percentage containing defect: 56%

Description of defect:

The side airbag curtain fasteners may not have been properly tightened. This may result in an improper side airbag curtain deployment in certain side crash conditions, which can increase the risk of injury to vehicle occupants.

The following chronology of principal events occurred between November and December, 2004 and led to the determination of a defect:

- On November 16, 2004, a 2005 model year Dodge Dakota in the process of being built at DaimlerChrysler Corporation's Warren Truck Assembly Plant (WTAP) was observed to have had passed the fastening and repair stations with loose attaching fasteners on the right side airbag curtain.
- WTAP stopped shipment and established a 100% clicker wrench inspection for all 12 side airbag curtain fasteners (6 per side). In addition, all vehicles that had passed the original operation station were held at the plant, de-trimmed, and verified for proper torque.
- Investigation revealed that the tooling at the side airbag curtain installation station for the 2005 model year Dodge Dakota was not consistently providing data to the torque monitoring and recording system.
- Revised tooling was installed at the side airbag curtain installation station at WTAP on November 21, 2004. This tooling was verified to be compatible and properly recording torque data to the torque monitoring and recording system.
- A survey of 41 2005 model year Dodge Dakota vehicles with side airbag curtains showed 23 vehicles with loose side airbag curtain fasteners. In addition, one of the vehicles surveyed had a sunvisor attachment screw that penetrated the side airbag

DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT FOR DAIMLERCHRYSLER RECALL D57

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- curtain due to improper positioning of the side airbag curtain module.
- The side airbag curtain is optional equipment on the 2005 model year Dodge Dakota. The vehicle is fully compliant with all applicable side impact requirements without the side airbag curtain.
- This data was presented on December 17, 2004 to the Vehicle Regulations Committee who decided to conduct a safety recall to repair affected vehicles.

Statement of measures to be taken to correct defect:

DaimlerChrysler Corporation will tighten the side airbag curtain fasteners to the proper specification. In addition, the side airbag curtain will be inspected for damage and replaced if necessary. DaimlerChrysler Corporation expects to initiate national notification to dealers and to owners in January, 2005.

DaimlerChrysler Corporation has a longstanding policy and practice of reimbursing owners who have incurred the cost of repairing a problem that subsequently becomes the subject of a field action. To ensure consistency, DaimlerChrysler Corporation, as part of the owner letter, will request that customers send original receipt and/or other adequate proof of payment to the company for confirmation of the expense.