



05U-061

February 16, 2005

Mr. Ronald Medford
Senior Associate Administrator, Vehicle Safety
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W., Room 5321
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Medford:

The following information is submitted pursuant to the requirements of 49 CFR 573.6 as it applies to a determination by General Motors of a safety defect involving certain 2005 model year Saturn Relay; Chevrolet Uplander; and Pontiac Montana vans.

573.6(c)(1): Saturn, Chevrolet, and Pontiac Divisions of General Motors Corporation.

573.6(c)(2)(3)(4): This information is shown on the attached sheet.

573.6(c)(5): General Motors has decided that a defect, which relates to motor vehicle safety, exists in certain 2005 model year Saturn Relay, Chevrolet Uplander, and Pontiac Montana vans. The outboard release handle on the impact-side second-row bucket seat may be actuated and the rear latches may unlatch early during the crash sequence of a side impact New Car Assessment Program (NCAP) test. If the rear latches of the seat are released early in a severe side impact, the front outboard latch may disengage and increase the potential for injury to the occupant of the seat.

573.6(c)(6): On January 12, 2005, GM completed a 35 mph side NCAP-like test on a 2005 model year Chevrolet Uplander van.

Analysis of video taken during the side NCAP-like test showed that the second-row bucket seat rear latches on the impact-side became disengaged early in the crash sequence. The video showed that the outboard-seat release lever at the base of the seat was rotated counterclockwise approximately 30 to 45 degrees by the vehicle structural deformation of the sill plate. The forces produced by the impact then displaced the seat laterally into its post-impact position.

On February 8, 2005, GM completed a side NCAP-like test on a 2005 model year Saturn Relay vehicle with second-row bucket seats without seat latch release levers. The seat rear latches did not disengage during the test.

The issue was presented to the GMNA Senior Management Committee (SMC) and on February 9, 2005, the Field Action Decision Committee decided to conduct a safety recall.

573.6(c)(8): Dealers are to replace the seat latch release lever with a revised design that is not susceptible to actuation in a side NCAP test.

Pursuant to 577.11(e), General Motors does not plan to notify owners about reimbursement because all involved vehicles are within the new vehicle warranty coverage.

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573.6(c)(9): GM will submit a draft copy of the dealer bulletin and owner letter, and scheduled mailing dates when available.

Sincerely,

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

Gay P. Kent
Director
Product Investigations

05015
Attachments

573.6(c)(2),(3),(4)

**VEHICLES POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY MAKE, MODEL, AND MODEL YEAR
PLUS INCLUSIVE DATES OF MANUFACTURE**

<u>MAKE</u>	<u>MODEL SERIES</u>	<u>MODEL YEAR</u>	<u>NUMBER INVOLVED</u>	<u>INCLUSIVE MANUFACTURING DATES</u> <u>(FROM) (TO)</u>		<u>DESCRIPTIVE INFO. TO PROPERLY IDENT. VEH.</u>	<u>EST. NO. W/CONDITION</u>
Saturn	U Van	2005	4,229	06/2004	01/2005	Relay	All
Chevrolet	U Van	2005	10,925	06/2004	01/2005	Uplander	"
Pontiac	U Van	2005	3,696	06/2004	01/2005	Montana	"
		GM Total:	18,850				

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