

# DAIMLERCHRYSLER

October 4, 2005

Mr. Daniel Smith  
Associate Administrator of Enforcement, Office of Vehicle Safety  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

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

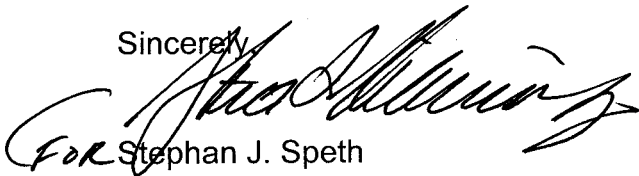
05V-461  
(3 pages)

Dear Mr. Smith:

Attached is DaimlerChrysler Corporation's (DCC'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 2006 model year Dodge Ram light duty four wheel drive vehicles. On a small number of vehicles, the transfer case control module contains an incorrect calibration, potentially resulting in inadvertent transfer case default to Neutral. There have been no reports of vehicle crash or injury associated with this condition.

DCC will conduct a voluntary safety recall to reprogram the transfer case control module on the affected vehicle population with new software that prevents this condition.

Sincerely,

  
FOR Stephan J. Speth

Enclosures: Defect Information Report for DaimlerChrysler Corporation Recall E18

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

# DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT FOR DAIMLERCHRYSLER RECALL E18

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**Submission date:** October 4, 2005

## Identifying classification of vehicles potentially affected:

Make	Model	Model Year	Inclusive Dates of Manufacture	Vehicle Volume (est)	Other
Dodge	Ram 1500 4x4	2006	02/09/2005-09/07/2005	136	With NP246 Transfer Case Only

**Estimated percentage containing defect:** 100%

## Description of defect:

The Totally Integrated Power Module (TIPM) may contain incorrect transfer case calibration set points, potentially resulting in inadvertent transfer case default to Neutral. If this occurs and the parking brake is not applied, the vehicle may roll away and cause an accident without warning.

## The following chronology of principal events occurred in August and September of 2005 and led to the determination of a defect:

- In August of 2005, a 2006 model year Dodge Ram 1500 four wheel drive vehicle experienced transfer case default to neutral during an Engineering evaluation.
- If the transfer case is unintentionally shifted into Neutral, it can result in the potential for vehicle roll away if not on level ground and the parking brake not set.
- For the 2006 model year, a new transfer case ("NP246") with unique calibration programming is utilized for the Dodge Ram 1500 four wheel drive vehicles.
- On August 15, 2005, vehicles built with the NP246 transfer case were held at the DaimlerChrysler Corporation ("DCC") St Louis North (Missouri) and Warren (Michigan) Truck Assembly Plants.
- Investigation in late August and early September of 2005 determined that transfer case calibration set points were incorrect. When the transfer case was shifted to 2WD mode, the range sleeve was placed in the transition zone between 2WD and Neutral, rather than completely in 2WD. Investigation showed that, under certain conditions, this could result in inadvertent transfer case default to Neutral.
- If the range sleeve is completely in the 2WD mode position, forces generated in the transfer case during normal operation will not push the range sleeve into the Neutral position.
- Corrected transfer case shift parameters were programmed through the TIPM and verified to eliminate the potential for this condition.

## **DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT FOR DAIMLERCHRYSLER RECALL E18**

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- All held vehicles at the assembly plants were reprogrammed in late September prior to being released.
- There are no reports of this issue occurring on any of the small number of 2006 model year vehicles in the field, and thus no known injuries or accidents associated with this issue.
- This data was presented on September 27, 2005 to the Vehicle Regulations Committee who decided to conduct a safety recall to repair the affected vehicles.

### **Statement of measures to be taken to correct defect:**

DCC will reprogram the TIPM on the affected vehicle population with new software that prevents the potential for this condition. Due to the limited scope of vehicles involved, the need for unique driving conditions to induce the condition and the lack of any field input to date, DCC has concluded that the three day dealer notification rule does not apply. DCC expects to notify dealers and owners beginning in early November of 2005.

DCC 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, DCC, 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.