



GENERAL MOTORS NORTH AMERICA
Structure & Safety Integration

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December 12, 2005

Mr. Daniel C. Smith
Associate Administrator for Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W., Room 5321, MC: NVS-200
Washington, D.C. 20590

05V-558
(3 pages)

Dear Mr. Smith:

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 2003-06 Chevrolet Express and GMC Savana full-size passenger, cargo and cutaway vans.

573.6(c)(1): Chevrolet and GMC brands 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 certain 2003-06 Chevrolet Express and GMC Savana full-size passenger, cargo and cutaway vans shipped from the Wentzville Assembly Center may have front and rear seat belt buckles that will not latch or will not unlatch. There are two conditions that render the buckle inoperative after customer usage. Specifically, (1) with a damaged ejector hood, the latch tongue cannot fully enter the buckle and will not latch, and (2) if the release bar moves permanently out of position the buckle will either be unable to engage the latch or the pushbutton will be unable to unlatch the buckle.

The issue was identified through an analysis of warranty rates. A Problem Resolution Tracking System (PRTS) item was initiated to document the no latch/no unlatch conditions. Both of the conditions were determined to have been caused by design issues with the buckle cover.

573.6(c)(6): On August 23, 2005, plans for design improvements to the buckle assembly were reviewed. Validation testing showed that an improved buckle cover design would address both conditions.

On September 20, 2005, a warranty parts return request program was initiated for inoperative buckles.

On October 4, 2005, a service feasibility study was conducted to evaluate replacing only the upper buckle cover with a revised design including added ribs to properly constrain the pushbutton and release bar, for field service repair.

An EWO was implemented on October 13, 2005 at Wentzville Assembly with the same design change.

The investigation continued to understand the nature and rate of reports in the field for the two noted conditions.

The issue was presented to the Field Performance Evaluation Review Committee (FPERC) and on December 5, 2005, the Executive Field Action Decision Committee (EFADC) decided to conduct a safety recall.

573.6(c)(8): Dealers are to inspect buckles and, if found to be inoperative, the entire buckle assembly will be replaced. For buckles found to be operative, dealers will replace only the upper buckle cover.

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Pursuant to 577.11(e), GM will provide reimbursement to owners for repairs completed on or before ten days after the owner mailing is completed, according to the plan submitted on January 14, 2005.

573.6(c)(9): GM will provide copies of the dealer bulletin and owner letter when available along with mail dates.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gay P. Kent", written in a cursive style.

Gay P. Kent
Director
Product Investigations

05113
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 (FROM) (TO)</u>		<u>DESCRIPTIVE INFO. TO PROPERLY IDENT. VEH.</u>	<u>EST. NO. W/CONDITION</u>
Chevrolet	G Van	2003	77,436	02/2002	06/2003	Express	*
Chevrolet	G Van	2004	99,124	03/2003	07/2004	Express	"
Chevrolet	G Van	2005	119,522	03/2004	06/2005	Express	"
Chevrolet	G Van	2006	28,372	04/2005	10/2005	Express	"
GMC	G Van	2003	23,959	02/2002	06/2003	Savana	"
GMC	G Van	2004	35,818	03/2003	07/2004	Savana	"
GMC	G Van	2005	33,973	03/2004	06/2005	Savana	"
GMC	G Van	2006	7,389	04/2005	10/2005	Savana	"

Estimated GM Total: 425,593

* All affected vehicles will be corrected.

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