

DAIMLERCHRYSLER

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

August 1, 2006

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

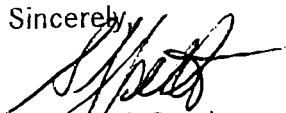
06 V-288
(3 Pages)

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 2002-2006 model year Jeep Liberty vehicles. After an extensive investigation, DCC has determined that the constant tension front lower ball joints may experience contamination. If the vehicle is operated for an extended period with this condition, the ball joint may eventually experience wear and looseness. In extreme cases, when the driver continues to operate the vehicle with this condition, the contamination can lead to corrosion, accelerated wear and possibly separation from the steering knuckle causing a loss of vehicle steering control.

DCC will conduct a voluntary safety recall to replace the front lower ball joints.

Sincerely,



Stephan J. Speth

Enclosure: Defect Information Report for DaimlerChrysler Corporation Recall F23

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

DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT FOR DAIMLERCHRYSLER CORPORATION RECALL F23

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- and compression of the upper bearing were among the additional issues identified.
- During the course of the ongoing analysis, corrective actions to address these potential durability issues were implemented into vehicle production.
 - In January of 2006 NHTSA opened a Preliminary Evaluation (PE 06-004) to investigate alleged front lower ball joint separation in 2004 model year KJ vehicles as well as those vehicles that had the C36 recall remedy performed.
 - DCC responded to the Agency on March 28, 2006 stating a number of product improvements had been implemented and that vehicle testing and analysis was still ongoing. The results of detailed review of the separations identified that most occurred at low speed, almost always involved a slow-moving turning event and none of the separations were confirmed to involve wheel detachment.
 - NHTSA upgraded the investigation to an Engineering Analysis (EA 06-008) on May 31, 2006, and broadened the scope to include 2002-2006 model year KJ vehicles.
 - Subsequent to the PE response, component and vehicle testing confirmed the implemented corrective actions are robust for vehicle life.
 - This data was presented to the Vehicle Regulations Committee on July 25, 2006 who decided to conduct a voluntary safety recall to replace the front lower ball joints on KJ vehicles built between the 2002 model year launch and March 15, 2006.

Statement of measures to be taken to correct defect:

DaimlerChrysler Corporation will replace the front lower ball joints on the affected vehicle population. Due to the fact that most separations occurred at low speed, almost always involved a slow-moving turning event and none of the separations were confirmed to involve wheel detachment, DCC has concluded that the three day dealer notification rule does not apply. DCC expects to implement national notification to both dealers and owners in September of 2006.

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.

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Submission date: August 1, 2006

Identifying classification of vehicles potentially affected:

Make	Model	Model Year	Inclusive Dates of Manufacture	Vehicle Volume (estimated)
Jeep	Liberty	2002-2006	01/02/2001 - 03/15/2006	826,687

Estimated percentage containing defect: Unknown

Description of defect:

The constant tension front lower ball joints may experience contamination. If the vehicle is operated for an extended period with this condition, the ball joint may eventually experience wear and looseness. In extreme cases, when the driver continues to operate the vehicle with this condition, the contamination can lead to corrosion, accelerated wear and possibly separation from the steering knuckle causing a loss of vehicle steering control.

The name, address and telephone number of the supplier who manufactured the subject components:

TRW Automotive
12025 Tech Center Drive
Livonia, MI 48150
(734) 855-2600

The following chronology of principal events occurred between January of 2005 and July of 2006 and led to the determination of a defect:

- In December of 2003 DaimlerChrysler Corporation (DCC) launched voluntary safety recall C36 to inspect and/or replace the front lower ball joints on 2002 and some 2003 model year Jeep Liberty (KJ) vehicles.
- In January of 2005 an engineering analysis was initiated to investigate KJ front lower ball joint warranty input.
- Engineering implemented retention and analysis of warranty return parts.
- Analysis of C36 field return parts identified additional durability issues. Boot seal damage during handling, corrosion through the roll crimp and between the seal and housing undercut