

SUBARU

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December 5, 2008
Ref. No.: GR08-048

08V-645
(4 Pages)

Mr. Daniel C. Smith
Associate Administrator for Enforcement, NVS-200
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Room W 45-306
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Part 573 Defect Information Report – 2008-2009 Subaru Tribeca VDC G-Sensor

Dear Mr. Smith,

In accordance with 49 CFR Part 573.6 Defect and Noncompliance Responsibility and Reports, Fuji Heavy Industries USA, Inc. on behalf of Subaru of America, Inc. (SOA) and Fuji Heavy Industries, Ltd., submits the enclosed notification and report concerning a defect in the VDC G-Sensor installation direction on certain 2008-2009 model year Subaru Tribeca vehicles sold in the United States. Our internal designation for this recall campaign will be: WVG-17.

If you have any questions on the enclosed report, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Fuji Heavy Industries USA, Inc.

Maurice Arcangeli
Safety Activities Manager
Government Relations

Enclosure

cc: Fuji Heavy Industries, Ltd. (Japan)
Subaru of America, Inc. (Cherry Hill, NJ)

RECEIVED
2008 DECEMBER 9 -- 10:00 AM
OFFICE OF RECALL
MANAGEMENT DIVISION

Defect Information Report (49 CFR Part 573.6)

573.6(c)(1) - Manufacturer's Name

Vehicle Fabricating Manufacturers:

Fuji Heavy Industries, Ltd. ["FHI"]
1-7-2 Nishi-Shinjuku
Shinjuku-ku
Tokyo 160-8316, Japan

Subaru of Indiana Automotive, Inc. ["SIA"]
5500 State Road 38 East
Lafayette, Indiana 47903

Designated U.S. Agency:

Fuji Heavy Industries USA, Inc.
2235 Rt. 70 West
Cherry Hill, NJ 08002

573.6(c)(2) - Identification of Vehicles Containing the Defect

The installation of this particular Subaru electronic stability control ("VDC") sensor is unique to the Subaru Tribeca model. Tribeca vehicles are only produced at SIA. Please also see 573.6(c)(5) information for additional description.

Based on vehicle production records, we have determined from SIA production dates that the recall affected passenger car population is as follows:

Make: Subaru
Model Year(s): 2008 - 2009
Model(s): Tribeca
Production Dates: February 18, 2008 through December 1, 2008.

VIN Ranges: 2008 Tribeca: 84418312- 84420236
(Last 8 Digits) 2009 Tribeca: 94400001 - 94406703

Note: Although the involved vehicles are within the above VIN ranges, not all vehicles in these ranges were sold in the U.S.

573.6(c)(3) - Total Number of U.S. Vehicles Potentially Containing the Defect

<u>Model</u>	<u>ModelYear</u>	<u>Number of Vehicles Potentially Involved</u>
Tribeca	2008	1766
Tribeca	2009	3364
	TOTAL	5130

573.6(c)(4) - Percentage of Vehicles Estimated to Actually Contain the Defect

While it is not possible to determine an exact percentage, our investigation results indicate that very few vehicles (i.e., a small percentage) may have been produced with the suspect VDC G-Sensor having been installed in the wrong direction.

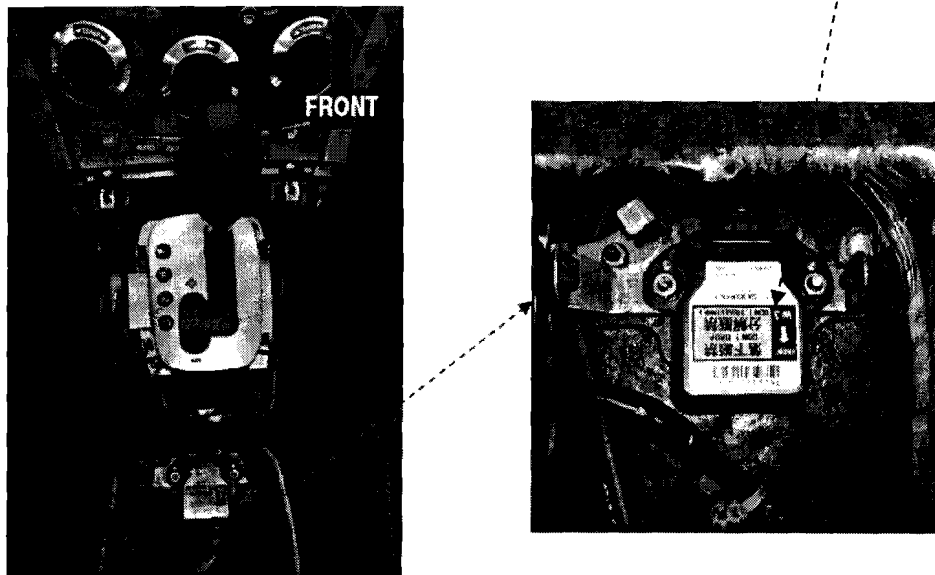
573.6(c)(5) - Description of the Defect

(1) A technical report that FHI received from Chile indicated the following:

While a customer was driving along a highway at approximately 100-120km/h and cornered to the left, one of the front wheels locked up and forced the vehicle to go to the right. As a result of an investigation at a dealer, it was found that the VDC G-Sensor had been installed backwards in the fore-aft direction.

There are no known reports of any crashes or injuries in the U.S. from this defect. However a report was received in the U.S. in September 2008 that upon moderate acceleration, the vehicle involved experienced a loss of power. Upon further investigation of this claim, it was found that the VDC G-Sensor was improperly installed.

Note : Directional arrow on top of sensor



(2) Production change giving rise to the problem:

The VDC system was changed in SIA production of '08MY Tribeca vehicles beginning February 18, 2008. Before this change, the VDC sensor was restricted structurally so that it could only be installed in the proper direction. However, afterwards the VDC sensor could be installed backwards.

(3) Cause of the Defect

- a) The standard installation procedure was not consistently observed, and
- b) The assembly line procedure to prevent the sensor from being installed in the opposite direction was discontinued when the system was changed.

- (4) Beginning with production on December 2, 2008 changes in the assembly line procedure have been implemented. The sensor and harness are now installed separately.

573.6(c)(6) - Chronology of Principal Events

December 1, 2008: FHI received a field technical report from the Subaru distributor in Chile involving an incident of wheel lock-up while cornering to the left and driving 100-120km/h on a highway. As a result of an investigation at a dealer, it was found that the VDC G-Sensor had been installed in the opposite longitudinal direction. SIA was contacted and the assembly process to install the sensor was closely monitored the same day.

December 2, 2008: The process of sensor installation and the process of VDC G-Sensor connector fitting was separated in SIA production to prevent improper installation from occurring.

December 3, 2008: FHI concluded its investigation and determined that this condition relates to motor vehicle safety. Therefore, FHI will conduct a recall campaign and has notified its U.S. subsidiaries.

December 4, 2008: Stop sale notice sent to SOA dealers.

573.6(c)(8) - Description of the Manufacturer's Remedy Program

(i)

The remedy plan calls for dealers to inspect each affected vehicle to see if there is improper installation of the VDC G-Sensor. If no abnormality is found, no additional work will be necessary. If the sensor was improperly installed, the original sensor will be reinstalled in the correct position.

All inspections and repairs will be at no charge to the owner. Dealers will be reimbursed for the labor by Subaru of America, Inc. upon submission of the usual recall claim. Subaru incorporates by reference its existing 573.13 reimbursement plan on file with NHTSA. However, Subaru does not expect that any owner has paid for this modification.

(ii)

Subaru of America, Inc. notified U.S. dealers on December 3, 2008 and included complete inspection and repair instructions. Owner notices are expected to be mailed on or before December 19, 2008.

573.6(c)(10) - Submission of Recall Communications

Fuji Heavy Industries USA, Inc. will provide copies of all notices, bulletins and other recall-related communications within 5 days after their distribution.

573.6(c)(11) - Manufacturer's Campaign Number

Our identification code for this recall campaign will be: WVG-17.

577.5(a) - Submission of Owner Notification Letter

A copy of the owner notification letter will be submitted to NHTSA's Recall Management Division at least 5 days prior to mailing.