



May 26, 2009

Mr. Daniel Smith  
Associate Administrator for Enforcement  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

RECEIVED  
2009 MAY 27 P 2:47  
OFFICE OF DEFECTS  
INVESTIGATION

**VIA FEDERAL EXPRESS**

Re: Voluntary Safety Recall Campaign  
2001 – 2004 Kia Optima Subframe Repair/Replacement

Dear Mr. Smith:

The following information is submitted in accordance with Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

**573.6 (C)(1)**

Manufacturer:	Kia Motors Corp.
Importer:	Kia Motors America, Inc.
Agent Designated by Manufacturer:	Robert Babcock Hyundai-Kia America Technical Center, Inc

**573.6(C)(2)**

Identification of Vehicle, Make, Model Year and Manufacturing Date:	Certain 2001–2004 MY Kia Optima vehicles produced from 10/6/2000 to 11/19/2003 currently registered in one of the 21 Salt States listed below:
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Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and the District of Columbia

Hyundai-Kia America Technical Center Inc.  
6800 Geddes Road, Superior Township, MI 48198  
TEL: 734-337-9499 FAX: 734-483-5919  
[www.hatci.com](http://www.hatci.com)

**573.6(C)(3)**

Total Number of Vehicles

Approximately 36,538 MY 2001-2004 Kia Optima vehicles currently registered in one of the 21 Salt States identified in 573.6(C)(2) above.

**573.6(C)(4)**

Percentage of Vehicles Estimated to Actually Contain the Defect:

A low percentage of vehicles are expected to have this defect but it potentially exists in any of those vehicles identified in 573.6(C)(2) above

**573.6(C)(5)**

Description of the Defect:

Corrosion of the subframe may occur as a result of prolonged exposure to road salt and a lack of regular cleaning of the vehicle underbody as provided in the vehicle's Owner's Manual. Over time, such subframe corrosion near the connection to the lower control arm can lead to wheel misalignment and/or other noticeable stress in steering, or accelerated abnormal tire wear. It is possible that if allowed to progress over a long period of time without proper inspection, the subframe could separate.

**573.6(C)(6)**

Basis for Defect Determination:

KMC evaluated customer information on out of warranty Optima vehicles and decided in March 2009 to conduct a service campaign related to subframe corrosion issues. After discussing the service campaign with NHTSA in April 2009, Kia obtained new VOQ information and reevaluated the issue. KMC determined that it would conduct a safety recall on May 20, 2009.

There have been no reports of injuries as a result of this condition.

**573.6(C)(8)(i)**

Program to Remedy Defect:

All owners of vehicles identified in (C)(3) will be notified by first class mail and instructed to bring their vehicles to a Kia dealer to have the front subframe inspected for corrosion damage. Dealers will be instructed to measure the thickness of

the subframe at its connection point to the lower control arm. If specified levels of corrosion damage have occurred, the front subframe will be replaced with a new subframe that incorporates additional holes in the upper and lower panels. Front subframes that do not require replacement will have drainage holes added and will be treated with rust-proofing material to arrest the corrosion process. Customers will also be given maintenance instruction cards copied from the Owner's Manual advising them on how to properly remove road salt from their vehicle's underbody. Inspection, treatment, and replacement procedures will be conducted at no cost to owners.

**573.6(C)(8)(ii)**

Estimated Date for Notification of Defect to Owners and Dealers

The estimated date of notification to dealers and owners is sometime in June, 2009.

**573.6(C)(11)**

Notices

A draft of the owner notification letter is attached. The Technical Service Bulletin SC075 will be provided to NHTSA in the near future.

**573.6(C)(12)**

Manufacturer's Campaign Number If Different From Identification Number Assigned by NHTSA

SC075

Sincerely,

Robert Babcock  
Senior Manager,  
Regulation and Certification Department