



RECEIVED

2009 JUN 23 AM 10:31

June 23, 2009

OFFICE OF DEFECTS

Mr. Daniel C. Smith
Associate Administrator for Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Recall Management Division (NVS-215)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE – Room W45-306
Washington, D.C. 20590

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 2008 model year Saturn VUE vehicles.

573.6(c)(1): Saturn Brand 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 a defect, which relates to motor vehicle safety, exists in certain 2008 model year Saturn VUE vehicles, with body-color outside door handles. On some of these vehicles, the outside door handles may stick or bind. If this were to occur, the door may not latch when closed. Driving with an unlatched door could result in an unbelted occupant falling out of the vehicle.

573.6(c)(6): On March 10, 2009, Product Investigations received a preliminary evaluation (PE), PE09-016, from the NHTSA inquiring about exterior door handles sticking in the unlatched position. GM responded to the PE on April 29, 2009 stating that General Motors is continuing its investigation of the alleged defect.

Initial investigation found that some painted handles that contracted in length during the painting process may stick and that chrome handles were not subject to the condition because they did not go through the painting process. Further warranty investigation found that short handles combined with dimensionally out of specification housings produced in Mexico and built into vehicles after October 1, 2007 create the potential for sticking or binding handles. All warranty and GM report verbatims with claims of the door coming open while the vehicle is moving, were associated with the vehicle's front door handle assemblies.

GM continued the investigation with a "read-across" of other models built in North America that used the same designs. Detailed warranty analysis continued during early May using the same analysis methodology developed for the PE response.

In late May it was found that the potential for a handle sticking was dependent on part temperature. This discovery contributed to understanding the affected population.

The issue was presented to the Field Performance Evaluation Review Committee and on June 17, 2009, the Executive Field Action Decision Committee decided to conduct a safety recall.

573.6(c)(8): Retailers are to replace the outside door handles with chrome door handles.

Pursuant to 577.11(e), GM does not plan to provide notice about reimbursement to owners because all involved vehicles are covered under the new vehicle warranty.

Product Investigations

Mail Code: 480-210-G11 • 30001 Van Dyke Road • Warren, MI 48090-9020
N090066 573 Letter.docx

Letter to Mr. Daniel C. Smith
N090066 573 Letter
June 23, 2009
Page 2

573.6(c)(9): The dealer bulletin and owner letter will be provided when available. GM anticipates having parts to support sending the dealer bulletin August 11, 2009 and owner letters August 18, 2009.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Kent', written over a white background.

Gay P. Kent
Director
Product Investigations

N090066
Attachment

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>
Saturn	R	2008	44,451	10/2007	07/2008	VUE	*

GM Total: 44,451

* All involved vehicles will be corrected as necessary.

N090066