



RECEIVED
By Delia Lopez at 2:44 pm, Nov 05, 2009

Mitsubishi Motors North America, Inc.

6400 Katella Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630
Telephone: 714-372-6000
www.mitsubishicars.com

November 2, 2009

**09V-435
(4 Pages)**

Kathleen DeMeter, Esq.
Director, Office of Defects Investigation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

RE: 2008 & 2009 Mitsubishi Lancer and Lancer Evolution Front Impact Sensor, Safety Recall SR-09-005.

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

Mitsubishi Motors North America, Inc. (MMNA) submits this letter pursuant to 49 C.F.R. Part 573.5-Defect and Noncompliance Information Report (DIR). This DIR contains details of a potential defect relating to motor vehicle safety in the front impact sensor on certain 2008 and 2009 Mitsubishi Lancer and Lancer Evolution vehicles.

The subject vehicles are distributed in the United States by MMNA. This campaign is also being launched in Canada however it does not apply to Mitsubishi Motors Sales Caribbean (MMSC) as the weather conditions that create the safety issue do not occur in that climate.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Tom Bennett, Director, Service
Mitsubishi Motors North America, Inc.
Telephone 714-372-5554
Email: tbennett@mmsa.com

1. Manufacturer's Name

Mitsubishi Motors Corporation

2. Vehicles Potentially Containing the Defect

Vehicles of the following model years and manufacturing periods and owner registered or currently residing in the affected regions listed below:

Make	Line	Model Year(s)	Manufacturing Period
Mitsubishi	Lancer	2008-2009	January 15, 2007 – May 27, 2009
	Lancer Evolution	2008-2009	December 12, 2007 – December 11, 2008

Affected Salt Belt Regions: Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Washington D.C.

3. Total Number of Vehicles

Vehicle Line	Number of Vehicles
Lancer	Approximately 29,353
Lancer Evolution	

4. Approximate Percentage of Vehicles Actually Containing the defect:

It is impossible to tell the percentage of vehicles that may experience the subject problem since it is caused by the snow water with the road salt which could enter into the front impact sensor when driving on the road covered by the road salt. However, all the vehicles identified in Nos. 2 and 3 above will be included in this campaign.

5. Defect Description

In severe corrosive environmental areas where heavy road salt is used in the winter, a long term exposure to a mixture of melted snow with salt thrown up by the other vehicles on the road may cause a water-salt mixture to adhere to the front impact sensors. This coating may cause an electrical corrosion between the two different kinds of materials of the sensor bushing and sensor bracket. Over time corrosion may cause the sensor case to crack which could allow water intrusion into the sensor and there is the possibility of a short-circuit of the sensor which would illuminate the airbag warning indicator. In the event of a vehicle collision of the type that would deploy the airbags this type of short-circuit may cause a delay in the deployment of the airbags.

6. Chronological Summary of Events Leading to Determination

In March 2009, Mitsubishi received a customer complaint from the field regarding airbag warning lamp illumination while driving. Investigation of the returned part showed that the front impact sensor had a corrosion causing the sensor to be cracked and rusted.

April 2009 to September 2009, Mitsubishi intensively conducted tests to determine the cause of this issue and determined that a mixture of melted snow with salt can enter between the sensor bushing (brass) and the sensor bracket (steel) causing an electrical corrosion and could over time crack the sensor housing. As the subject sensors are located in front of radiator and as a result the sensors are exposed to water containing road salt.

In parallel, Mitsubishi also conducted a state by state analysis of warranty claims and gathered sample parts from the field to ascertain the scope of the potentially affected population and occurrence rate. These inspections and analysis revealed that majority of the issues had occurred in the northern regions of the country where road salt is used and there is no trend of occurrence of this issue in the other states.

Based on these findings, Mitsubishi in Japan determined that a safety-related defect existed in some northern states where heavy road salt is used and advised MMNA on October 27, 2009 to conduct a safety recall.

7. Test Results or Data Used to Determine Non-compliance

N/A

8. Proposed Remedy Description

All owners of affected vehicles in salt belt regions as identified in No.2 above will be notified via first class mail and instructed to bring their vehicles to their local Mitsubishi Motors dealer. The front impact sensors will be replaced with new counter measure sensors. There will be no charge to the customer.

9. Notice(s) and Bulletin(s)

Our schedule for dealer and customer notification will depend on the availability of replacement parts. At this time, we anticipate the dealer notification will begin the week of November 16th.

The Dealer notification will include specific customer handling directions for all other states not included in the salt belt area. These instructions will inform the Dealer on how to address and resolve the repair of any vehicle they find with corrosion on the sensors involved in the recall at no cost to the customer.

The owner notification and technical bulletin drafts will be forwarded to your attention shortly. The timeline for completion of the customer notification is on November 27th.

10. Reimbursements

Owners seeking reimbursement for any expenses associated with this recall will be directed in the notification letter to contact Mitsubishi Customer Relations for instructions on how to apply for a refund.

11. Dealer Notification

Mitsubishi has determined that this incident does not constitute an immediate and substantial threat to motor vehicle safety. Therefore, the three-day dealer notice does not apply. Our schedule for dealer and customer notification will depend on replacement parts availability. At this time, however, we anticipate that dealer notification will begin during the week of November 16th.