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By delia.lopez at 11:09 am, Sep 23, 2010



September 20, 2010

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

10V-426  
(3 Pages)

RE: Defect Information Report

Dear Mr. Smith:

Pursuant to Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Hyundai America Technical Center is submitting information concerning a recall that is being voluntarily initiated. Specific information as required by Section 573.6 is as follows:

573.6(c)(1)

Manufacturer – Hyundai Motor Company  
Manufacturing Plant – Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama  
Distributor – Hyundai Motor America

573.6(c)(2)

Hyundai will initiate a recall of model year 2011 Hyundai Sonata vehicles produced beginning December 11, 2009 through September 10, 2010.

573.6(c)(3)

The recall will include approximately 139,500 model year 2011 Hyundai Sonata vehicles produced beginning December 11, 2009 through September 10, 2010.

573.6(c)(4)

Hyundai believes a small number of vehicles in the recall population may be found with a condition requiring corrective action.

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573.6(c)(5)

The steering column is connected to the steering gear assembly through an intermediate shaft. Universal joints connect the upper end of the intermediate shaft to the steering column and the lower end of the intermediate shaft to the steering gear pinion shaft. Hyundai has found eight instances from the initial production period for this new vehicle of improperly assembled or loose steering column intermediate shaft universal joint connections. Corrective actions have been implemented to ensure proper assembly of the steering column intermediate shaft.

573.6(c)(6)

Hyundai received three unrelated field reports with regard to the steering column intermediate shaft universal joint connections shortly after production began. With regard to one vehicle, Hyundai determined that the universal joint may have been damaged when the steering column assembly was dropped by a worker at the supplier before installation in the vehicle. With regard to the second vehicle, Hyundai determined that the universal joint and upper steering column splines were misaligned and the universal joint bolt had been cross-threaded during the sub-assembly process at the supplier before installation in the vehicle, which prevented the application of full clamping pressure to the misaligned splined attachment. Finally, with regard to the third vehicle, the lower steering column universal joint connection was misassembled to the splined end of the steering gear pinion shaft. These three conditions are unrelated and each occurred early in the beginning of production of this new vehicle. In addition, Hyundai received five additional warranty claims relating to intermediate shaft universal joints. Hyundai and its suppliers have implemented corrective actions to ensure proper assembly and torque of the steering column intermediate shaft. Each field report and warranty claim was received prior to implementation of the corrective actions. No further reports have been received since implementation of the corrective actions.

573.6(c)(8)

All of these conditions occurred at very low mileages and on early production of the all-new 2011 model year Sonata vehicles. Hyundai is not aware of any occurrences after April, 2010 production. However, in order to resolve PE10-035 and to reassure our customers who have purchased 2011 model year Sonatas, Hyundai is submitting this Part 573 Defect Notification and will conduct a recall. Hyundai Motor America will notify all owners of the Hyundai vehicles described in 573.6(c)(2) above to return their vehicles to their Hyundai dealers, who will inspect the steering column intermediate shaft universal joint connections for proper assembly and torque. If any deficiencies are found during the inspection, they will be corrected. This service will be provided at no cost to vehicle owners.

Additionally, Hyundai has recently updated the power steering software installed during production. Hyundai will take this opportunity to install this software update while vehicles are at dealers to have the steering column intermediate shaft universal joint connections recall inspection completed. This software update will ensure that steering wheel vibration or shaking will not occur as a result of a motor driven power steering malfunction. Like other motor driven power steering systems, manual steering is still operative even if a malfunction of the motor driven power steering were to occur

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and the EPS (Electric Power Steering) warning lamp would be illuminated in the instrument cluster. This software update will also be provided at no cost to vehicle owners.

Hyundai anticipates that owners will begin to be notified by mail during October 2010, after NHTSA has approved the owner notification letter. Owner notification letters will be sent in six weekly mailings.

Inspecting the steering column intermediate shaft universal joint connections of all vehicles affected by this recall would have been covered for 5 years or 60,000 miles under Hyundai's new vehicle limited warranty. As owners of these vehicles would not have incurred expenses for the warranted repair as a result of this condition, Hyundai believes that it is not necessary, and should not be required, to provide notification regarding reimbursement under section 577.11.

573.6(c)(10)

The Technical Service Bulletin containing the service procedure for inspecting the steering column intermediate shaft universal joint connections and updating the power steering software will be provided to NHTSA when available. Other relevant communications will also be forwarded when they are available.

573.6(c)(11)

A draft of the owner notification letter is attached.

573.6(c)(12)

Hyundai has assigned "Campaign 097" as the designation for this campaign.

Sincerely,



Robert Babcock  
Senior Manager, Regulation and Certification Department

Attachment