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CHRYSLER

March 1, 2011

11V-145
(4 Pages)

Mr. Claude Harris
Associate Administrator for Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Recall Management Division (NVS-215)
Room: W48-302
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Harris:

Attached is Chrysler Group LLC's ("Chrysler Group") Defect Information Report, complying with the requirements of 49 CFR Part 573, Defect and Noncompliance Reports, which contains details of a potential safety related defect in some 2010 – 2011 MY Jeep Wrangler vehicles.

Chrysler Group will conduct a voluntary safety recall to retorque all nineteen fasteners to the maximum residual torque values.

Sincerely,

David D. Dillon

Enclosure: Defect Information Report for Chrysler Recall L09

cc: Frank Boris, NHTSA

**DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT FOR CHRYSLER GROUP LLC**


**Submission Date:** February 25, 2011

**573.6(c)(1): Manufacturer's Name, Brand Name**

Chrysler Group LLC, Jeep

**573.6(c)(2): Identification of Affected Vehicles**

| Make(s) | Model(s) | Model Year(s) | Inclusive Dates of Manufacture |
|---|---|---|---|
| Jeep | Wrangler | 2010-2011 | July 12, 2010 – Sept. 10, 2010 |

**573.6(c)(2)(iv): Component manufacturer name, address, telephone number, and country of origin:**

Dana Corporation
1000 Business Blvd.
Dry Ridge, KY 41035
(859) 824-2500
USA

**573.6(c)(3): Potentially Affected Vehicle Population**

20,459 (estimated)

**573.6(c)(4): Percentage of Affected Vehicles**

Unknown

**573.6(c)(5): Description of Defect or Noncompliance**

Some vehicles may experience a degradation of fastener torque for various front and rear axle attachments to the chassis module. This could result in noise, or ultimately, degradation in steering and handling characteristics which could lead to loss of directional control of the vehicle.

**573.6(c)(6): Chronology of Principal Events Leading to Determination of a Safety Defect**

- Jeep Wrangler (JK) front and rear axles are manufactured by Dana Corporation and are painted for both appearance and corrosion protection.
- The Dana axles assembled by Mobis into a rolling chassis and shipped to

Toledo South Assembly Plant (TSAP) for the remainder of vehicle assembly.

- On August 30, 2010, TSAP discovered variability in the steering wheel centering process. It was determined that the condition was caused by the track bar residual torque being below the minimum target value. A subsequent torque audit determined many of the chassis to axle fasteners at 19 different locations were below the minimum residual torque targets.
- On September 9, 2010, Toledo South held the yard for all vehicles until a root cause analysis was performed and on September 10, 2010, Mobis began a 100% re-torque operation to ensure the residual torque values were at the maximum target for all 19 affected fastener joints.
- A Dana investigation revealed that on July 12, 2010, Dana had changed the paint application process for the JK axles from an automated water-based paint to a manually applied solvent-based paint. Dana determined the root cause of the torque decay to be variation in paint thickness due to the new manual application, which was exacerbated by runs and drips.
- Dana also determined that the process used to paint the initial fastener torque test parts for torque retention testing conducted to validate the July 12 paint change, did not adequately represent the axle production paint process.
- Dana worked with Chrysler Fastener Engineering to develop and test a new paint process that allowed for better fastener residual torque retention. On November 5, 2010, Dana implemented this improved paint process, which included masking of the fastener interfaces.
- In early February, a cross-functional team of Chrysler Fastener, Chassis and Vehicle Dynamics engineers reviewed results of a torque measurement study from approximately 60 JK field vehicle axles and concluded that an approximate 2 month population of vehicles had excessive torque variation and that could lead to steering and handling difficulties.
- By mid-February, an analysis of the field survey of the 19 affected joints was completed and confirmed the Mobis re-torque operation that began on September 10, 2010 and ended in mid January 2011 was successful; the residual torque values were within the acceptable range.
- Chrysler Group LLC has received 65 warranty claims alleging the presence of a clunk or rattle in the front or rear suspension but is not aware of any accidents or injuries related to this issue.
- This information was presented to the Vehicle Regulations Committee on February 22, 2011, who decided to conduct a safety recall.

**573.6(c)(7): Information Used in Determination of a Noncompliance**

N/A

**573.6(c)(8): Description of Remedy**

Chrysler will conduct a voluntary safety recall on all affected vehicles to retorque all nineteen fasteners to the maximum residual torque values.

Chrysler has a longstanding policy and practice of reimbursing owners who have incurred the cost of repairing a problem that subsequently becomes the subject of a field action. To ensure consistency, Chrysler, as part of the owner letter, will request that customers send the original receipt and/or other adequate proof of payment to the company for confirmation of the expense.

**573.6(c)(10): Dealer and Owner Communications**

Chrysler plans to begin notification of dealers and owners in March 2011. Chrysler will provide the dealer and owner letters when available.

**573.6(c)(11): Manufacturer's Campaign Number**

Chrysler has assigned recall number L09 to this action.