

September 8, 2011

Mr. Claude Harris  
 Acting Associate Administrator for Enforcement  
 NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION  
 Attn: Recall Management Division (NVS-215)  
 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
 Washington, DC 20590

11V-468  
 (4 Pages)

**Re: Recall Notification  
 2009-11 Model Year Honda Pilot  
 Seatbelt Stitching**

Dear Mr. Harris:

On August 31, 2011, Honda Motor Co., Ltd. (HMC) determined that a potential defect relating to motor vehicle safety exists in the driver and front passenger seatbelts of certain 2009-11 model year Honda Pilot vehicles, and is furnishing notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Reports.

573.6(c)(1)

**Name of manufacturer:** Honda Manufacturing of Alabama, LLC (HMA)

**Manufacturer's agent:** Jay Joseph  
 American Honda Motor Co., Inc. (AHM)  
 1919 Torrance Blvd.  
 Torrance, CA 90501-2746

573.6(c)(2)

**Identification of potentially affected vehicles:**

<u>Make/Model</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>VIN Range / Dates of Manufacture</u>
Honda Pilot	Certain 2009 model year	5FNYF389X9B000401 – 5FNYF38409B028597 April 22, 2008 – April 21, 2009
Honda Pilot	Certain 2009 model year	5FNYF48999B000167 – 5FNYF48699B056695 March 13, 2008 – April 21, 2009
Honda Pilot	Certain 2010 model year	5FNYF3H85AB001001 – 5FNYF3H54AB023531 April 22, 2009 – February 23, 2010
Honda Pilot	Certain 2010 model year	5FNYF4H97AB001001 – 5FNYF4H66AB041284 April 17, 2009 – February 22, 2010
Honda Pilot	Certain 2011 model year	5FNYF3H58BB001002 – 5FNYF3H50BB058679 February 24, 2010 – August 30, 2011
Honda Pilot	Certain 2011 model year	5FNYF4H54BB001004 – 5FNYF4H98BB107376 February 23, 2010 – August 29, 2011

**Description of the basis for the determination of the recall population:**

The recall population was determined based on manufacturing records. The VIN range reflects all possible vehicles that could potentially experience the problem.

573.6(c)(2)(iv)

**Identification of affected component:**

Component: Seatbelt Front Assembly, Outer  
Country of Origin: Mexico  
Manufacturer: Autoliv Safety Technology  
Contact Name: Mike Anderson, Vice President, General Counsel, Autoliv ASP Inc.  
Address: 1320 Pacific Drive  
Auburn Hills, Michigan 48326-1569  
Telephone No.: (248) 475-0442  
Cell No.: (248) 760-9832

573.6(c)(3)

**Total number of potentially affected vehicles:** 310,773

573.6(c)(4)

**Percentage of affected vehicles that contain the defect:** less than 0.01%

573.6(c)(5)

**Defect description:**

The attachment of the driver and front passenger seatbelt webbing to the outboard seatbelt anchor webbing may not have been properly completed due to operator error in the sewing stage of the seatbelt assembly process. The stitching that secures the end of the lap section of the seatbelt to the outboard anchor plate webbing may be incomplete or missing if the thread on the sewing machine's top spool broke or was not timely replenished. If the stitching is incomplete or not present, the seatbelt may detach from the anchor webbing, increasing the risk of injury in a crash.

573.6(c)(6)

**Chronology:**

April 2008	Full model change for the 2009 model year Pilot vehicles includes a seatbelt anchor cover that slides over the ends of the lap belt section of the seatbelt and the outboard anchor plate webbings that are stitched together.
February 2, 2010	Supplier experiences issues with top spool thread breakage during seatbelt assembly process and begins using new thread inventory.
April 8, 2010	Supplier installs top spool thread tension sensors to address broken top spool thread issues.
May 4, 2010	Occurrence date of the first claim of the driver's seatbelt detaching from the outboard lap belt anchor webbing.

May 13, 2010	HMC receives and investigates the first claim.
May 14, 2010	HMA and supplier research the first claim and determine the stitching that secures the seatbelt webbing to the outer lap belt anchor webbing is incomplete, and the seatbelt was assembled on November 8, 2009. Tests and video evidence indicate this is a one piece problem caused by an inexperienced sewing machine operator's failure to detect that the top spool had run out of thread.
May 17, 2010	Supplier implements two countermeasures: (a) installation of a sleeve sewing station fixture that pulls on the belt during the assembly process in order to increase the visibility of improper sewing patterns; and (b) implementation of separated operations in which the sequential anchor sewing and cover setting processes previously performed by a single operator are separated into two non-sequential processes performed by two different operators, thereby requiring independent confirmation of completed stitching.
June 22, 2011	Occurrence date of the second claim of a front seatbelt detaching from the outboard lap belt anchor webbing.
July 12, 2011	HMC receives the parts from the second claim.
July 20, 2011	HMA and supplier determine that the cause of second claim is a broken top spool thread and the seatbelt was assembled on September 14, 2009, prior to the supplier's implementation of top spool thread sensors and the May 2010 countermeasures.
August 18, 2011	Supplier determines range of potentially affected VINs.
August 31, 2011	HMC evaluates the two claims received and the potential for similar claims in the United States and other markets. HMC completes its investigation, determines that a safety-related defect exists and decides to conduct a safety recall.

573.6(c)(8)(i)

**Program for remedying the defect:**

The owners of affected vehicles will be contacted by mail and asked to take their vehicle to a Honda automobile dealer. The dealer will inspect the driver and front passenger seatbelts, and if necessary, replace the seatbelts, free of charge.

573.6(c)(8)(ii)

<b>The estimated date to e-mail preliminary notification to dealers:</b>	September 8, 2011
<b>The estimated date to provide service bulletin to dealers:</b>	September 8, 2011
<b>The estimated date to begin sending notifications to owners:</b>	October 3, 2011
<b>The estimated date of completion of the notification:</b>	November 30, 2011

573.6(c)(9)

**Representative copies of all notices, bulletins and other communications:**

A copy of the dealer service bulletin, final customer notification letter, and other dealer communication will be submitted to your office as soon as possible.

573.6(c)(10)

**Proposed owner notification letter submission:**

A draft of the owner notification letter will be submitted to your office as soon as possible.

573.6(c)(11)

**Manufacturer's campaign number:**

R95

Sincerely,

AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO., INC.



Jay Joseph  
Senior Manager  
Product Regulatory Office

JWJ:dj