

Safety Defect and Noncompliance Report Guide for Vehicles

PART 573 Defect and Noncompliance Report

Date: April 17, 2013

This report serves as Explorer Van Company, Inc.'s notification to the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that a defect related to motor vehicle safety exists in certain EXPLORER conversion packages. Explorer Van Company, Inc. decided that this defect existed in these vehicles on April 10, 2013.

I. Manufacturer, Designated Agent, and Other Chain of Distribution Information

Manufacturer's corporate name: Explorer Van Company, Inc.

Vehicle brand or trademark name owner(s) (where applicable): EXPLORER

Designated Agent (imported vehicles):

N/A

If this notification concerns a defective or noncompliant component that the above identified manufacturer did not manufacture, identify that component and provide the name, address, and phone number of the manufacturer of the component (if this manufacturer is unknown, provide this information as to the supplier of the component):

N/A

Name, address, email, and phone and fax numbers for the person(s) to whom inquiries about this report should be directed:

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215 E. Berry Street
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Manufacturer's assigned campaign number (where applicable): Explorer Recall No. 2013-1

II. Identification of the Recall Population and Its Size

Complete the tables below for each group of vehicles subject to this notification. Additional tables may be necessary where there are more than three groups subject to a notification

Chassis Make: General Motors / GMC
Chassis Model: Savana
Explorer Model: Explorer / Explorer Limited SE
Model Year(s): 2013
Inclusive dates of manufacture (month and year): 8/1/2012 – 4/9/2013
Body Style/Type (for non-passenger cars): T-610
Other information necessary to describe these vehicles (e.g., VIN range, GVWR or class for trucks, displacement for motorcycles, and number of passengers for buses):
Total number of these vehicles: 327

Chassis Make: General Motors / Chevrolet
Chassis Model: Express
Explorer Model: Explorer / Explorer Limited SE

Model Year(s): 2013
Inclusive dates of manufacture (month and year): 8/1/2012 – 4/9/2013
Body Style/Type (for non-passenger cars): T-610
Other information necessary to describe these vehicles (e.g., VIN range, GVWR or class for trucks, displacement for motorcycles, and number of passengers for buses):
Total number of these vehicles: 558

Provide the following information as to all the groups of vehicles:

Grand total number of vehicles: 885

The percentage of the recall population you estimate actually contain the defect or noncompliance: 85% of Models produced after 10/1/2012

0% of Models produced between 8/1/2012 and 9/30/2012

Identify and describe how the recall population was determined (e.g., on what basis the recalled models were selected and how the inclusive dates of manufacture were determined):

The defect resulted from an unauthorized change in manufacturing procedures implemented by a production employee. The employee in question was able to pinpoint the change in procedure as having occurred on or after October 1, 2012. Although the change date was supported by other production employees, the company has elected to extend the recall for all vehicles manufactured on or after August 1, 2012.

Describe how the recall population is different from any similar vehicles not subject to this notification:

N/A

III. Description of the Defect or Noncompliance and Chronology of Events

Describe the defect or noncompliance, including a summary and detailed description of the nature and physical location (if appropriate) of the defect or noncompliance. Graphic aids should be provided where necessary.

A wire harness runs below the front driver and passenger seats in the Explorer Vans. The wire harness provides power for the power recline, the 6-way power seat riser, the heated seats and the power lumbar adjustment. Although the harness itself runs in the middle of the seat, wires from the harness do run to the power recline motor near the edge of the seat. To prevent those wires from becoming lodged in the power seat riser mechanism, a plastic tie is ordinarily used to keep the wire in the appropriate place and safely away from the seat riser mechanism. The plastic tie was likely not installed on the vehicles subject to recall.

Describe the cause(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

The defect resulted from the failure of an employee to follow established manufacturing specifications and procedures.

Describe the safety consequence(s) of the defect or noncompliance condition.

The wire assembly providing power to the power recline may become lodged in the seat riser mechanism. Adjusting the height of the seat may cause the lodged wire to be severed or result in a short. While damage to the wire should result in a blown fuse, the potential exists for the melting of wires and/or insulation and the possibility of a fire.

Identify any warning(s) that may precede the defect or noncompliance condition.

If the wire providing power to the power seat risers is lodged in the track and is damaged, the seat may fail to recline. The damage to the wire may also result in a blown fuse which would result in the power seat riser, heated seats and power lumbar adjustment also becoming inoperable.

For defects, provide a dated, chronological summary of all the principle events that were the basis for the determination that the defect is related to motor vehicle safety, including a summary of all warranty claims, field or service reports, and other information such as numbers of crashes, injuries and fatalities.

The defect in question has manifested itself in only a single vehicle. Specifically, on or about April 10, 2013, a vehicle driven by the principal owner of the company was inspected at the Explorer factory after the power riser failed to operate and the owner noticed a smell in the vehicle. Upon

inspection, it was determined that the wires supplying the power for the power recline had been damaged in the seat riser mechanism and there had been some melting of the wires and/or insulation. Upon further inspection, the absence of any ties was noticed. Production personnel were questioned and an employee acknowledged his failure to comply with established specifications and manufacturing procedures.

For noncompliances, identify the test results and other information considered in determining the existence of the noncompliance, and provide the date of each test and observation indicative of that noncompliance.

See above

IV. The Remedy Program and Its Schedule

Describe the program for remedying the defect or noncompliance, including the plan for reimbursing those owners and purchasers who may have incurred costs to remedy the defect or noncompliance before receiving the manufacturer's notification concerning that defect or noncompliance. Also include, where applicable, details with dates concerning any production remedy that was conducted or will be conducted.

The defect is easily remedied by the installation of the ties that were supposed to be installed pursuant to the standard specifications and procedures. Purchasers of the vans in question will be asked to return their vans to the selling dealerships. The dealerships will be instructed to remove certain bolts so that the seats can be folded forward and the wiring inspected. If the wires are not damaged, the appropriate ties will be installed. If the wires are damaged, then the wires will be replaced and the ties installed.

The Company is not aware of any owner or purchaser who has encountered the defect. However, if an owner has encountered the issue and repaired the same, Explorer is prepared to reimburse the owner the reasonable costs for doing so.

As indicated above, the failure to install the ties was appropriately addressed immediately after discovery of the defect. Employees responsible for installation of the ties have been instructed to complete this necessary step and inspectors have been alerted to verify compliance.

Provide the estimated date(s) on which owner and purchaser notifications will be issued and the estimated date(s) for completion of those notifications.

The Company anticipates owner/purchaser notifications being issued beginning May 17, 2013. The notifications will be completed on or before June 17, 2013.

Provide the estimated date(s) on which dealer and distributor notifications will be issued and the estimated date(s) for completion of those notifications.

The Company anticipates dealer notifications being issued beginning May 2, 2013. The notifications will be completed approximately May 17, 2013.

Clearly describe the distinguishing characteristics of the remedy component/assembly versus the recalled component/assembly.

N/A

******* IMPORTANT REMINDERS *******

A DRAFT version of the letter that the manufacturer intends to mail to owners and purchasers notifying them of the defect and/or noncompliance must be submitted to NHTSA at least five Federal Government business days before those letters are issued. In addition, it is recommended that the draft version of the letter that the manufacturer intends to send to its dealers and distributors concerning the defect and/or noncompliance also be submitted for review. For prompt receipt and review, drafts may be submitted to the attention of the Recall Management Division (NVS-215) via facsimile on (202) 366-7882, or email to RMD.ODI@dot.gov.

A representative copy of all notices, bulletins, and other communications that relate directly to the defect or noncompliance and which are sent to more than one manufacturer, distributor, dealer, or purchaser, must be submitted to NHTSA no later than five days after they are initially sent. This requirement applies both to the final version of the notification letter that is sent to owners and purchasers, as well as the final version that is sent to dealers and distributors. It also includes any follow-up notifications issued concerning a recall. The representative copies of the letters sent to owners and purchasers, and dealers and distributors, must be submitted via certified mail. It is strongly recommended, however, that additional representative copies be submitted via facsimile on (202) 366-7882, or email to RMD.ODI@dot.gov, so that the submission can be more promptly reviewed. All submissions should be conspicuously labeled with the appropriate NHTSA-assigned recall number.