Part 573 Safety Recall Report

15V-780

Manufacturer Name : Tesla Motors, Inc.
Submission Date : NOV 19,2015
NHTSA Recall No. : 15V-780
Manufacturer Recall No. : SB-15-20-002

Manufacturer Information :

Manufacturer Name : Tesla Motors, Inc.
Address : 3500 Deer Creek Road
Palo Alto CA 94304
Company phone : 650-413-4000

Population :

Number of potentially involved : 58,773
Estimated percentage with defect : 0

Vehicle Information :

Vehicle : 2012-2015 Tesla Model S
Vehicle Type : LIGHT VEHICLES
Body Style : 4-DOOR
Power Train : NR
Descriptive Information : 2012 to 2015 Tesla Model S Electric Vehicles
Production Dates : MAY 31, 2012 - NOV 12, 2015

VIN (Vehicle Identification Number) Range

Begin : NR End : NR ☐ Not sequential VINs

Description of Defect :

Description of the Defect : There is the potential that one or more vehicles may exhibit a condition where the driver or front passenger seat belt is improperly connected to the outboard lap pretensioner. The lower end of each front seat belt is connected to a lap pretensioner located outboard of the seat. This connection is secured by means of a bolt that fastens the steel anchor plate on the end of the seat belt to a steel anchor plate on the end of the pretensioner cable. Tesla is aware of one delivered vehicle in which the steel anchor plate on the end of the pretensioner cable was out of position, such that the bolt did not secure the seat belt anchor plate to the pretensioner anchor plate. This improper connection was discovered during the course of normal use, did not involve a crash, and did not result in any injury.

FMVSS 1 : NR

FMVSS 2 : NR

Description of the Safety Risk : If the seat belt anchor plate is not properly bolted to the pretensioner anchor plate, the seat belt may not be able to provide sufficient restraint force in the event of a crash. Tesla is not aware of any instances where this has occurred and has no evidence that any vehicles currently contain improperly connected

seat belts. Regardless, as a proactive and precautionary measure Tesla is initiating a campaign to inspect all vehicles to ensure that the front seat belts are properly connected.

Description of the Cause : Improper assembly.

Identification of Any Warning that can Occur : When the seat belt anchor plate is not properly bolted to the pretensioner anchor plate, the seat belt will separate from the pretensioner if the seat belt is pulled with sufficient force. This load (no more than approximately 65 pounds) can be achieved during normal operation of the seat belt, and once this occurs the loose end of the seat belt will be readily apparent to the user.

Supplier Identification :

Component Manufacturer

Name : NR

Address : NR
NR

Country : NR

Chronology :

In April 2015 Tesla discovered an undelivered vehicle still in Tesla control in which the driver seat belt exhibited the recall condition. The vehicle was remedied prior to delivery and there was never any risk to the customer. Tesla immediately launched an investigation and determined the cause of the condition, but found no indication that it existed on any other vehicles. At this point it was believed that if the condition had occurred in other vehicles, it similarly would have been readily detected when the seat belts were operated during the manufacturing process and prior to delivery.

On 11/2/15, Tesla was notified by a customer in Denmark that the front passenger seat belt had become disconnected during normal use. The vehicle was not involved in a crash and the condition did not result in any injury. Tesla launched a follow-up investigation, and testing conducted on 11/11/2015 revealed that in certain cases an improperly bolted connection could require up to 65 pounds of force to separate.

Beginning 11/12/2015 Tesla conducted visual inspections of over 3,000 vehicles spanning the entire range of Model S production. Every front seat belt in every vehicle inspected was found to be properly connected. A review of manufacturing torque data also showed no evidence of other vehicles having been built with improperly connected front seat belts.

Despite only observing a single delivered car with an improperly connected front seat belt, not finding this condition in any of the over 3,000 vehicles inspected, and not finding any evidence in manufacturing torque data of improperly connected front seat belts, on November 14, 2015 Tesla decided to initiate a recall campaign to inspect all vehicles to ensure that the front seat belts are properly connected. While Tesla has no reason to believe that this condition exists in the field, the Company believes this recall is warranted to ensure absolutely the safety of our customers.

Description of Remedy :

Description of Remedy Program : Tesla will inspect all front driver and passenger seat belts to ensure proper connection between the seat belt and the lap pretensioner. If the front belts are not properly connected, Tesla will reassemble to ensure the proper connection.

How Remedy Component Differs from Recalled Component : Not applicable – condition may exist due to misassembly, not defective components.

Identify How/When Recall Condition was Corrected in Production : On November 12, 2015, Tesla instituted new procedures that include inspection of all pretensioner assemblies before the seat belt is attached. This inspection ensures that the steel anchor plate is aligned properly during the assembly process. Tesla also implemented additional subsequent quality control checks. Finally, Tesla is testing design changes aimed at further ensuring proper assembly.

Recall Schedule :

Description of Recall Schedule : All Tesla stores and service centers worldwide will be notified on November 20, 2015. Customers will be sent a courtesy email alerting them to the recall on November 20, 2015. Owner notification letters will be mailed out pending NHTSA approval.

Planned Dealer Notification Date : NOV 20, 2015 - NOV 20, 2015

Planned Owner Notification Date : NOV 20, 2015 - NOV 27, 2015

* NR - Not Reported