

Chronology for Ford Motor Company Recall 17S34

Chronology of Defect / Noncompliance Determination

February – April 2017: An issue concerning reports of inoperative instrument clusters, inoperative trailer lights and burning smell related to the trailer tow module in these vehicles was brought to Ford's Critical Concern Review Group (CCRG) for review. CCRG was also informed of one fire in a Transit fleet vehicle in Canada potentially related to contamination of the trailer tow module or wiring. Initial engineering analysis found several unique causes or contributors to these reports, including power washing the vehicle interior, and fertilizer and salt contamination in the module area.

CCRG requested a comprehensive data search and review for reports containing symptoms associated with trailer tow module ground circuit damage, such as intermittent instrument panel cluster function and rapid flashing of turn signals. CCRG also requested an inspection of the trailer tow module area in fleet vehicles, along with an evaluation of associated vehicle usage and maintenance patterns. Based on early evidence of water intrusion in this area and associated symptoms, Engineering evaluated options for adding a drain hole to the step well, and the addition of a fuse to protect the module ground circuit. Ford continued to monitor field data. The reports predominantly related to vehicles in cold climates. Inspection of the vehicle associated with the fire allegation was inconclusive, though symptoms were consistent with an electrical short in the trailer tow module wiring.

May – July 2017: Ford was informed of a second fire allegation in a Canadian fleet vehicle potentially related to this subject. A vehicle inspection found melted wiring, likely associated with water contamination and subsequent corrosion of the trailer tow module. Ford's CCRG reviewed the results of the fleet audit, which found evidence of water contamination and associated wiring corrosion in the module area. CCRG requested an updated data search and review of potentially related reports. This search identified other potential symptoms of trailer tow module corrosion and water intrusion, such as loss of heater and air conditioning controls, loss of multimedia (radio, screens, SYNC), and pretensioner deployment.

August – September 2017: Further analysis and vehicle inspections suggested that significant water intrusion into the trailer tow module area may not be limited to unique customer usage (i.e. power washing the interior). Ongoing analysis continued to find a variety of symptoms associated with this subject, including but not limited to melted wiring. The preponderance of reports continue to relate to vehicles in cold climates.

On October 16, 2017, Ford's Field Review Committee reviewed the concern and approved a field action.