FCA US LLC Chronology
2013-17 MY Ram Steering Linkage
Submitted on January 25, 2019

- On April 11, 2018, the FCA US LLC ("FCA US") Vehicle Safety and Regulatory Compliance ("VSRC") organization opened an investigation as a result of NHTSA VOQ 11083519.
- Between April 26, 2018 and October 16, 2018, FCA US contacted dealers to retrieve parts from the field with an allegation of drag link separation.
- On April 27, 2018, FCA US VSRC met with Chassis Engineering to discuss possible failure modes of the drag link assembly.
- From May to July 2018, FCA US continued to review field narratives and provided additional returned field parts to engineering for analysis. FCA US VSRC and Chassis Engineering also test drove a 3500 chassis cab vehicle with loose drag link jam nuts. Noise from the drag link was inaudible inside the vehicle.
- On July 3, 2018, FCA US Materials Engineering provided a report on a drag link assembly from VIN HG624300. Material properties and thread dimensions were to specification. Damage was noted on threads on the outer end of the drag link and adjuster sleeve.
- Also on July 3, 2018, NHTSA reviewed its analysis of the part from VOQ 11083519, including video, with FCA US.
- From July through November 2018, FCA US and NHTSA discussed various types of testing (destructive and nondestructive). FCA US VSRC and FCA US Chassis Engineering reviewed drag link detachments, potential root cause, plant capability, development testing and durability.
- On July 27, 2018, a drag link part retention request for warranty replacements, and a field study to check jam nut torque were implemented.
- On October 31, 2018, NHTSA Vehicle Research and Test Center visited FCA US to review materials lab capability and parts returned to FCA US.
- On November 28, 2018, FCA US VSRC presented this item to its Vehicle Regulations Committee ("VRC"). Further information was requested.
- Between November 28, 2018 and January 2, 2019, FCA US VSRC worked with Customer Care to contact customers of alleged drag link separation, to understand what, if any, warning was available to operators prior to an alleged drag link separation.
- On December 17, 2018, NHTSA opened PE18-016, Steering loss due to linkage separation, for 2015-2016 MY Ram 2500 pickup trucks.
- On January 3, 2019, FCA US VSRC presented this item to its VRC. Further information was requested.
- Between January 3, 2019 and January 15, 2019, FCA US VSRC worked with FCA US Manufacturing and Assembly Quality to analyze assembly plant torque data and vehicle characteristics for vehicles with alleged drag link separation.
- As of January 16, 2019, FCA US identified approximately 34 CAIRs, 6 VOQs, 2 field reports, 102 paid warranty claim narratives and 138 other available vehicle service narratives related to this issue.
- As of January 16, 2019, 274 individual vehicles have reported alleged drag link separation.
- As of January 16, 2019, FCA US is aware of eight accidents and one report of injury potentially related to this issue.
- On January 17, 2019, FCA US determined, through its VRC, to conduct a voluntary safety recall of the affected vehicles.