

Chronology of Defect / Noncompliance Determination

Provide the chronology of events leading up to the defect decision or test data for the noncompliance:

March 15, 2012: SUBARU CORPORATION (Subaru) received the first technical report of a vehicle experiencing an ABS/VDC warning lamp due to a brake lamp switch failure from the U.S market. Subaru requested part collection to begin a supplier investigation.

August 7, 2012: From the investigation of the collected brake lamp switch, oxidized silicon was confirmed on the contact surface. Furthermore, the investigation found there to be no products containing silicone used in the manufacturing process of any related parts. Therefore, it is estimated that a consumer product containing silicone was used in the field and accumulated as a silicon dioxide layer on the contact surface, resulting in a loss of conductivity. Since this appeared to be an atypical incident, caused by external factors, Subaru determined that no action was necessary and continued to monitor the field data for changes.

August 2012 – November 2015: Subaru received nine technical reports from the U.S. market. Due to the minimal number of additional reports, Subaru continued to monitor the field data for changes.

November 2015-February 2016: Subaru determined that a brake lamp switch with a higher resistance to silicone may be beneficial and began design and validation.

February 25, 2016: A countermeasure brake lamp switch, which contained fluorine grease on the slide rod of the switch to prevent intrusion of silicone gas, was incorporated on the production line.

March 2016 – December 2017: Subaru received ten technical reports from the U.S. market; four related to the original part and six related to the new part containing fluorine grease.

January 2018-January 2019: Subaru determined that a brake lamp switch with a different mechanical design could be beneficial. Subaru specified and validated a brake lamp switch based on an oblique-facing contact design.

February 22, 2019: Based on technical reports submitted from the local market, Subaru decided to conduct a voluntary recall in Japan. Vehicles sold in the U.S. market are substantially similar, with no technical design difference between markets. As a result, Subaru decided to conduct a voluntary safety recall for the U.S. market.