

Chronology of Defect (too many characters for the recall portal comment box)

Chronology:

MBAG initially became aware of a potential issue related to the installation of a steering column cover through its production plant in the second half of August 2019. The plant identified a number of vehicles that had been produced without the steering column cover. MBAG initiated and conducted a review of all vehicles that remained at the plant and installed the steering column cover as necessary.

Beginning of October 2019 MBAG identified that vehicles without the cover installed had already left the plant. MBAG found that around the time the potential concern was initially discovered, the plant had begun to produce a new variant of steering column which did not require a cover while at the same time, the original variant, with the cover, was being phased out but continued to be produced. In this overlapping period and before the end of production of the old variant, the cover had been inadvertently deleted from the bill of materials.

Simultaneously, MBAG launched an investigation and conducted various analyses as to the effect of the steering column cover not being installed.

This portion of the analysis included a review of whether an object could in fact enter the steering column area as well as the path of entry, the size of objects, vehicle speed and other driving behavior.

During the analysis MBAG also closely considered the effect of unintended objects getting into the steering column with respect to the mechanical components' function inside. The analysis indicated that if small remains are present from production/assembly (e.g. small pieces cut-off from cable ties) or certain types of small vehicle components such as screws or nuts detached from the dashboard area due to vehicle vibration, there was a limited potential for them to make their way into the steering box. From there, the object would need to enter a small steering bolt hole. If all of these events occurred, there was a potential that the object could make contact with the steering spindle area and potentially impair the operation of the steering column. The analysis confirmed that it was not possible for the operator to introduce an object into the steering column if the cover was not attached.

On February 19, 2020, MBAG determined that a safety risk could not be ruled out and decided to initiate a recall campaign.

To date MBAG is not aware of any complaints concerning this matter from the field.