

Chronology of Defect/Noncompliance Determination

By mid-2020 MBAG observed seven worldwide field reports, three of which were from the US that were received on November 29, 2017, April 23, 2018 and April 16, 2019 where customers had reportedly experienced issues with the performance of the transmission and some events where the vehicle lost motive power on their vehicle. The data did not suggest a larger trend and the possibility that the bonding performance of the parts was due to individual customers tuning their AMG vehicles in excess of factory specifications.

However, since there had already been a recall affecting the carbon fiber driveshaft in 2019 (NHTSA ID 19V457) MBAG requested a return of parts from the field to analyze if these cases were potentially caused by the same cause.

The returned parts from the field were analyzed thoroughly by a third-party facility including a mass spectrometry analysis, which indicated the presence of residue on the driveshaft and flanges. In particular, the presence of residue from potassic, fatty acids, quaternary ammonium compound and fatty alcohol polyglycoether was observed. The presence of these substances suggested that the parts had not been sufficiently cleaned at the supplier prior to installation in the vehicle. This was in contrast to the recall in 2019, where - due to a deviation in the process of the supplier - the driveshaft was wrapped in protective paper that left a silicone residue on the driveshaft surface.

In parallel, a detailed warranty analysis was conducted and further potentially affected parts were returned from the field for analysis. One of these cases was in the US, received in February 20, 2021. The parts were received and an analysis was performed.

In Spring 2021, as part of that effort, these parts were also found to contain the same types of residue on the driveshaft as those identified in the analysis started in 2020. Furthermore, the potentially affected vehicles in the field were identified.

On June 18, 2021, MBAG decided to conduct a recall to address the issue.