TECH TIPS

Subaru Service and Technical Support Line Newsletter

SPECIAL EDITION

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We last published information to you regarding the Escalation Process in January 2015. We feel with the New Year upon us, it is an opportune time to revisit this process and bring it to your attention once again.

Escalation is a process for retailers and all of us within SOA to follow when there is a vehicle with a difficult to diagnose concern. This can include parts delays also. Retailers should know within a few hours to a couple of days, if they are struggling for resolution of a duplicated concern on a customer's vehicles and as such, should not hesitate to seek assistance through established channels.

Our number one priority is our customer and the resolution of whatever concerns(s) they are experiencing with our product(s). We also have regulatory reporting requirements which must be followed. We have the need for information across our ranks to make us more effective and to provide vital feedback to SBR for continuing product improvements and customer satisfaction. This gives us all a unified process to provide consistent resolution to field issues and support staff in our objective to continually satisfy our customers and improve product quality.

This process is not designed to cover every situation. We appreciate honest feedback to know what may need adjusting in this escalation process, so we can work together for the benefit of our customers and the Love Promise.

Below, is a reprint of the June 2006 TIPS article which has been slightly modified for today's use.

VEHICLE REPAIR ESCALATION PROCESS

(UPDATED REPRINT FROM JUNE 2006)

Before we get started, did you even know there was an Escalation Process? The Escalation Process is a procedure designed to help ensure the timely resolution of vehicle concerns/repairs that you may be having difficulty with. Before you throw your arms up in disbelief at another process, understand that it has been around for nearly 15 years and you probably already follow it to some extent.

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For this article, we will only cover the first 2 (the two most important) levels. The first 2 are the levels the Technician and Service Manager have the most control over. As you probably expected, each level has several steps. These steps are outlined below:

Level 1: "Contacting the Techline"

Step 1 - Confirm the customer's concern under the same or similar conditions as they describe it occurs. Are you sure the concern you are diagnosing is the same one the customer is thinking of? If needed, interview the customer to gather additional details. If you are not 100% certain, have the customer demonstrate. If they cannot demonstrate, do not attempt any repair and return the car to the customer. Submit a QMR indicating what the customer's concern was and what you did in attempting to duplicate it.

Step 2 - Is the customer's concern a defect or normal operation? Verify with another car. If it is not a defect, stop here. Do not attempt any repairs. Demonstrate to the customer if necessary and return the car to the customer. Submit a QMR at this point to make SOA and SBR aware of a customer concern with a vehicle characteristic. Submitting a QMR on a vehicle characteristic serves only as notification to SOA and SBR so that this area may be investigated. It does not guarantee any improvement action will occur.

Step 3 - If it is a defect, repair it and confirm the repair. If this is a new, unusual, or recurring concern that you are seeing, enter a QMR.

Step 4 - Follow standard repair procedures. If applicable, check all control modules for codes and freeze frame data (FFD). Save all codes and FFD electronically so they may be shared later if necessary (faxed FFD will not be accepted). Check for relevant service bulletins or TechTIPS. Complete the appropriate service manual step by step troubleshooting, either DTC based, diagnostics by phenomenon, or general troubleshooting. Collect relevant data with the Subaru Select Monitor (SSM) while duplicating the customer's concern (be sure to mark where it occurs). Finally diagnose the condition using technician know-how. In other words, diagnose the vehicle using your knowledge and understanding of vehicle system operations. As an overly simple example, if you are presented with a crank-no start condition you should check for the presence or lack-of fuel, air, and spark and then diagnose the related system and controls to determine why that element is missing. Record all results found, exact measurements and/or readings should be recorded. Review all your findings with your Service Manager or Shop Foreman to confirm the results and determine if there may be other internal avenues to pursue.

IMPORTANT: Retailer internal resources should be utilized before contacting Techline.

Step 5 - If you still have been unable to resolve the concern, now is the time to contact the Techline. When contacting the Techline make sure you have all diagnostic results (actual values, not "it was ok" or "it was in spec."), complete service history, and freeze frame data. It is highly recommended that you complete the appropriate Pre-Call Worksheet for the condition as found on Subarunet > Service Operations & Technical > Techline Pre-Call Worksheets or related questionnaire found on Subarunet > Service Operations & Technical > Forms/Downloads and fax it in before you call. These sheets have all recently been revised by SBR Engineers to provide needed information.

> **IMPORTANT:** If this vehicle has been in for this concern before or has been at your retailer for more than a few days, make sure to advise your Techline representative! At the same time notify your Service Manager to file an Urgent Request for Customer Assistance (URFCA) with SOA's Customer Advocacy Department (CAD).

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Step 6 - The car MUST actually be there at the retailer before you call for assistance. The Techline can't make hypothetical diagnosis on a vehicle that isn't there and/or on a vehicle the technician hasn't actually confirmed whether there is or isn't in fact a problem with it. Call only after attempting to duplicate and diagnose the customer's concern.

Level 2: "Techline Notified"

Step 1 - The Techline will help you to determine if the complaint is an actual defect or normal operation.

Step 2 - If it is a defect, is it a known issue? Whether it is a known issue or not, follow the recommendation of the Techline and follow up with results. It may be a known issue and Subaru is working on a fix or countermeasure. If this is the case, usually all we can do is wait for further information. If we are waiting, make sure you document the repair order with the Techline case number and have the service advisor explains the situation to the customer.

Step 3 - After following the recommendations of the Techline, if the car is fixed, contact the Techline and close the case. Techline cannot build a database of confirmed repairs if cases are not closed. It is the Technician's responsibility to call and close any case they open. If after following the recommendations of the Techline the car still is not repaired, contact the Techline for additional assistance. Be sure Techline knows how long the vehicle has been at your facility for this issue. This step will alert the appropriate personnel that there is a potential customer issue.

Step 4 - If you become stuck and with the assistance of Techline need further assistance, Techline will alert your local Field Service Engineer (FSE) to contact you concerning the vehicle. At this point, it is up to the FSE to continue to work with the retailer and Techline to repair the vehicle. This does not mean the Technician should stop and wait for the FSE to arrive. The Technician should continue to diagnose the vehicle.

Important notes:

It is the Technician's responsibility to follow-up at all steps and ensure that this process is being followed.

You need to continue to diagnose and repair the vehicle at all steps of the process unless directed otherwise. **DO NOT** tell the customer "We are waiting to hear from Subaru and until we do, there is nothing more we can do." Just because you are waiting to hear back from someone doesn't mean that you should stop working on the car and go on to other things. Instead reassure the customer "We have contacted Subaru Techline and we are working with them to reach a resolution as quickly as possible". Provide the customer with a date/ time convenient to them, when you will be in touch to provide an update on the progress of the diagnosis. Be sure to follow up with them at the agreed upon time.

If a Technician is awaiting a call back from Techline and it is not received within twenty-four (24) hours, then the Technician should call in for an update.

If the vehicle has been in more than once for this concern and the concern has been verified or has been down for any length of time with no end in sight, make sure to advise Techline how long this vehicle has been down based on the repair order date. Notify your Service Manager to submit an URFCA to CAD.

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SOA Service Escalation Process Chart