



946WND0088

RECEIVED

99 APR -9 PM 2: 00

April 5, 1999

Ms. Kathleen DeMeter, Esq.
Director, Office of Defects Investigation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

OFFICE
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

99V-066,001 (91)

Re: NSA-13phk
PE99-008

Dear Ms. DeMeter:

Mitsubishi Motor Manufacturing of America, Inc. (MMMA) submits this letter pursuant to 49 C.F.R. Part 573.5 - Defect and Noncompliance Information Report. Some of the information provided below was furnished by Mitsubishi Motors Corporation (MMC). Producing this information should not be construed as an admission that NHTSA, or any other governmental agency or court, has any jurisdiction over MMC, or that MMMA in any way controls or has the ability to control MMC or their documents. Any jurisdictional or related objections in any future proceeding, investigation or court action are hereby reserved. Accordingly, the following is the information required by 49 C.F.R. Part 573.5.

1. The manufacturer's name:

Mitsubishi Motor Manufacturing of America, Inc.

(The distributors assuming responsibility for completion of the following recall action are Mitsubishi Motor Sales of America, Inc. and DaimlerChrysler Corporation).

2. Vehicles potentially containing the defect:

<u>Make</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>Model Year</u>	<u>Manufacturing Dates</u>
Mitsubishi	Galant	1994~1996	3/18/93 to 6/30/96
Mitsubishi	Eclipse	1995 ~ 1996	1/21/94 to 6/30/96
Mitsubishi	Eclipse Spyder	1996	12/13/95 to 6/30/96
Eagle	Talon	1995 ~ 1996	1/24/94 to 6/30/96
Dodge	Avenger	1995 ~ 1996	6/16/94 to 6/30/96
Chrysler	Sebring	1995 ~ 1996	6/16/94 to 6/30/96

3. Total number of vehicles:

99V-066.001 (12)

1994 Model Year	59,965
1995 Model Year	231,453
1996 Model Year	172,582
Total	<u>464,000</u>

4. The percentage of vehicles estimated to contain the defect:

MMMA does not know how many of the potentially affected vehicles actually contain the defect; however, it is believed that the number is small. Owners of all potentially affected vehicles will be notified and subject vehicles included in this campaign.

5. Description of the defect:

The rubber boot on the lower lateral arm ball joint may get damaged and allow intrusion of dirt and water causing extraordinary wear on the ball joint.
In the worst case, the ball joint will separate.

6. Chronological summary of events leading to this determination:

Starting in July of 1996, a protective plastic cap was installed on the lower lateral arm ball joint to protect its rubber boot from damage during transportation from Japan, and during handling on the assembly line at MMMA. At that time, MMMA believed that the Final Inspection process would easily have identified cut rubber ball joint boots because of grease leakage in vehicles manufactured before July 1996.

In January 1999, the NHTSA issued PE99-008 to DaimlerChrysler Corporation. MMC's investigation in response to PE99-008 concluded that the complaints of ball joint wear and separation were attributable to moisture and contamination entering the ball joint through cuts in the vehicles' rubber boots that were not detected during the final inspection process.

7. Test results or data used to determine noncompliance:

Not Applicable.

98V-066.001 (3)

8. Description of proposed remedy:

All owners of affected vehicles will be notified and asked to bring their vehicles to dealers. The dealer will inspect the lower lateral arm ball joint boots and, if cut or damaged boots are found, the lower lateral arm will be replaced.

9. Notices and bulletins:

MMSA will provide the NHTSA with a draft owner notification under separate cover.

Sincerely,



Mr. Jerome Berwanger
Vice President
Quality Control Department
Mitsubishi Motor Manufacturing of America, Inc.