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DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

DaimlerChrysler Corporation

Susan M. Cischke

Vice President Vehicle Certification,
Compliance and Safety Affairs

July 26, 1999

Mr. Kenneth N. Weinstein
Associate Administrator, Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Weinstein:

Reference: NHTSA Identification Number 99V-066.003

Enclosed are representative copies of communications relating to the 1995 and 1996 model year vehicles involved in the referenced recall. DaimlerChrysler expects to begin owner notification during the week of August 2, 1999. The exact number of manufactured vehicles in the recall is 185,857.

The involved Vehicle Identification Number range is:

<u>Low</u>	<u>High</u>
SE001002	SE247793
TE239912	TE423635

(VIN last eight characters) - S = 1995 Model Year, T = 1996 Model Year; E = MMMA Assembly Plant, Bloomington Illinois; and last six digits = sequential number.

We caution that the above range represents only the lowest and highest VIN sequential numbers included in the recall. This range cannot be used to determine conclusively that a vehicle is involved in the recall because most vehicles with a VIN within the range are not affected by the recall.

This completes DaimlerChrysler's package of information for this recall as required by the Defects Report Regulation.

Sincerely,



for S.M. Cischke

Enclosure: Recall #827

cc: K. C. DeMeter

DaimlerChrysler Corporation
800 Chrysler Drive CIMS 482-00-91
Auburn Hills MI USA 48326-2757
Phone 248.576.7301
Fax 248.576.7321
e-mail: smc16@daimlerchrysler.com

DAIMLERCHRYSLER

July 1999

Dealer Service Instructions for:

Safety Recall No. 827 **Lower Lateral Arm Ball Joint Boots**

Notes

1995-1996 (FJ) Dodge Avenger, Chrysler Sebring Coupe and Eagle Talon

NOTE: This recall applies only to the above vehicles built through June 29, 1996 (MDH 0629XX).

IMPORTANT: Some of the involved vehicles may be in dealer used vehicle inventory. Dealers should complete this recall service on these vehicles before retail delivery. Dealers should also perform this recall on vehicles in for service as determined by using the DIAL VIP System.

Subject

The front suspension ball joint boots on about 165,000 of the above vehicles may be cut or damaged, allowing dirt or water to enter the ball joint. This results in premature ball joint wear and can cause the ball joint to separate. Ball joint separation could result in a loss of steering control and cause an accident without prior warning.

Repair

The left and right lower lateral arm ball joint boots must be inspected for cuts or damage. If a ball joint boot is cut or damaged, the lower lateral arm assembly must be replaced.

Alternate Transportation

If inspection determines that lower lateral arm replacement is required and the vehicle must be held overnight, dealers should attempt to minimize customer inconvenience by placing the owner in a loaner vehicle.

Parts Information

<u>Part Number</u>	<u>Description</u>
MR325005	Lower Lateral Arm Package – Left
MR296296	Lower Lateral Arm Package – Right

Each package contains one lower lateral arm assembly and one ball joint retaining nut.

A small number of right and left lower lateral arm packages will be distributed to high volume dealers of involved vehicles. Additional packages may be ordered as required. **Very few vehicles are expected to require lower lateral arm replacement.**

Service Procedure**A. Inspect Lower Lateral Arm Ball Joint Boots:**

1. Raise vehicle on an appropriate hoist.

NOTE: The front tires must be allowed to hang from the suspension.

2. Inspect the LEFT ball joint rubber boot on the lower lateral arm. Using a light, look for cracks, cuts and/or other damage by pushing the boot with your fingers (Figure 1). The boot is damaged if there is evidence of grease leakage. If necessary, use a clean cloth or cotton swab as an aid to determine if grease is present.

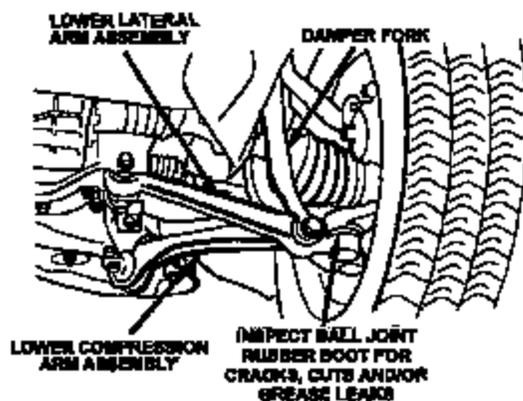


Figure 1

NOTE: It is not necessary to remove the front tire/wheel assemblies.

Service Procedure (Continued)

3. Inspect the RIGHT ball joint rubber boot on the lower lateral arm. Using a light, look for cracks, cuts and/or other damage by pushing the boot with your fingers (Figure 1). The boot is damaged if there is evidence of grease leakage. If necessary, use a clean cloth or cotton swab as an aid to determine if grease is present.
4. If either rubber boot is damaged, proceed to Section “B” – Lower Lateral Arm Replacement. If no damage is found at either rubber boot, no further action is required.
5. Lower the vehicle from the hoist and return the vehicle to the owner.

B. Lower Lateral Arm Replacement:

NOTE: Only vehicles with damaged ball joint boots, as determined by the inspection in Section “A,” require lower lateral arm replacement.

1. Remove wheel/tire assembly.
2. Loosen, but do not remove, the ball joint retaining nut.
3. Using special tool MB991113, separate the ball joint from steering knuckle (Figure 2).

CAUTION: Be sure to tie the cord of the special tool to the damper fork.

4. Remove and discard the ball joint retaining nut.

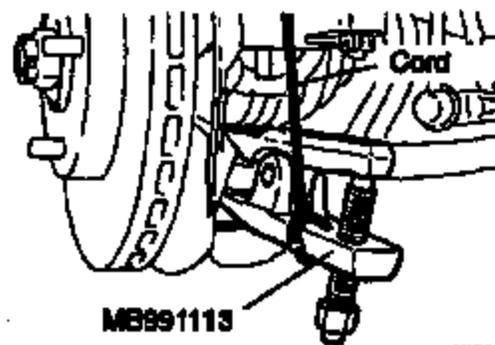


Figure 2

Service Procedure (Continued)

5. Loosen, but do not remove, the lower lateral arm-to-frame mounting nut and bolt (Figure 3).
6. Remove the damper fork mounting bolt and nut (Figure 3).
7. Remove the lower lateral arm-to-frame mounting nut (Figure 3). Pull the bolt rearward far enough to clear the lateral arm bushing and remove the lower lateral arm from the vehicle.

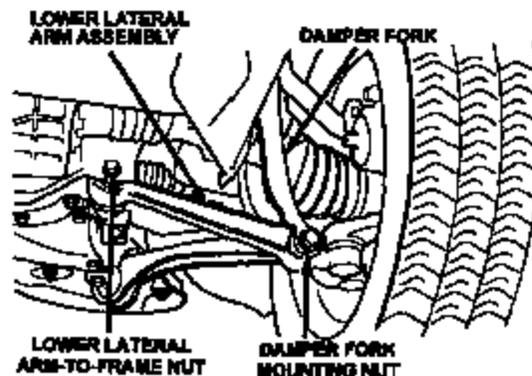


Figure 3

CAUTION: It is possible to inadvertently install the lower lateral arms on the wrong side of the vehicle. Verify that the correct arm is being installed on the correct side of the vehicle by comparing the new arm to the old arm.

8. Apply a light coat of multi-purpose grease to the top of the ball joint boot lip, around the ball joint stud. This helps to prevent ball joint boot wear after installation.

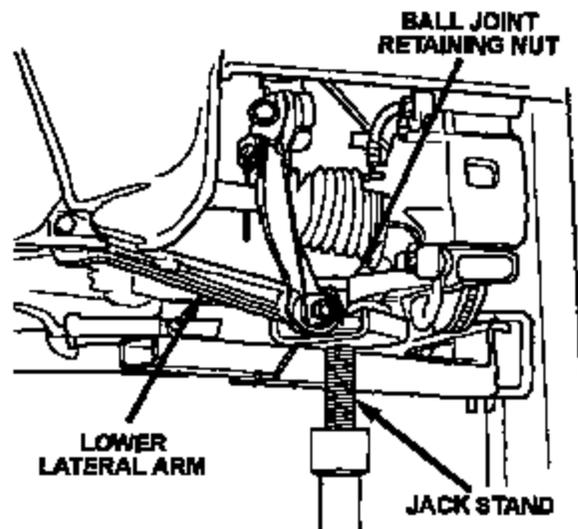
CAUTION: Do Not apply grease to the ball joint threads. If any grease is inadvertently applied to the ball joint threads it must be cleaned off.

9. Place the new lower lateral arm into position and loosely install the lower lateral arm-to-frame mounting nut and bolt, but do not tighten (Figure 3).
10. Loosely install the damper fork mounting nut and bolt, but do not tighten (Figure 3).
11. Start the new ball joint retaining nut onto ball joint stud by hand.

Service Procedure (Continued)

12. Place a jack stand under the ball joint and apply sufficient pressure to the bottom of the ball joint to prevent the ball joint stud from spinning (Figure 4). Torque the ball joint retaining nut to 47 ft. lbs. (64 N·m).
13. Install tire/wheel assembly. Torque the wheel lug nuts to 94 ft. lbs. (128 N·m).

NOTE: If both lower lateral arms require replacement, repeat steps 1 through 12 to replace the other arm before continuing with step 13 of this procedure.

**Figure 4**

14. Lower the vehicle.
15. With full vehicle weight on the suspension, torque the left and/or right lateral arm-to-frame mounting nut and bolt to 78 ft. lbs. (106 N·m) (Figure 3).
16. Torque the left and/or right damper fork mounting nut and bolt to 64 ft. lbs. (88 N·m) (Figure 3).

CAUTION: Failure to have full vehicle weight on the suspension before tightening lower lateral arm and damper fork mounting fasteners may cause lower lateral arm rubber bushing failure.

17. Place the vehicle on a front-end alignment rack. Install the wheel alignment equipment onto the vehicle per alignment equipment manufacturer's instructions. Adjust the vehicle's front wheel total toe-in settings to 0.0 in. \pm 0.12 in. (0.0 mm \pm 3mm) on all models.

Completion Reporting and Reimbursement

Claims for vehicles that have been serviced must be submitted on the DIAL System. Claims submitted will be used by DaimlerChrysler to record recall service completions and provide dealer payments.

Use one of the following labor operation numbers and time allowances:

	<u>Labor Operation Number</u>	<u>Time Allowance</u>
Inspect right and left lower lateral arm ball joint boots.	02827181	0.2 hours
Inspect right and left lower lateral arm ball joint boots, replace <u>one</u> lower lateral arm (right or left) and set toe.	02827182	1.0 hours
Inspect right and left lower lateral arm ball joint boots, replace <u>both</u> lower lateral arms and set toe.	02827183	1.3 hours

Add the cost of the parts plus applicable dealer allowance to your claim.

Parts Return

Initially, a small number of lower lateral arms are required to be returned to the Warranty Material Return Center. When an adequate number of returned parts have been accumulated, Parts Return Documents will no longer be generated and parts are to be discarded.

NOTE: See the Warranty Administration Manual, Recall Claim Processing and Material Return Sections, for complete recall claim processing instructions.

Dealer Notification and Vehicle List

All dealers will receive a copy of this dealer recall notification letter by first class mail. Two additional copies will be sent through the DCMMS, and the MDS2 will be updated to include this recall in the near future. **Each dealer to whom involved vehicles were invoiced (or the current dealer at the same street address) will receive a list of their involved vehicles.** The vehicle list is arranged in Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) sequence. Owners known to DaimlerChrysler are also listed. The lists are for dealer reference in arranging for service of involved vehicles.

DIAL System Functions 53 and VIP

All involved vehicles will be entered to DIAL System Functions 53 and VIP at the time of recall implementation for dealer inquiry as needed.

Function 53 provides involved dealers with an updated VIN list of their incomplete vehicles. The customer name, address and phone number are listed if known. Completed vehicles are removed from Function 53 within several days of repair claim submission. To use this system, type "53" at the "ENTER FUNCTION" prompt, then type "ORD827".

Owner Notification and Service Scheduling

All involved vehicle owners known to DaimlerChrysler are being notified of the service requirement by first class mail. They are requested to schedule appointments for this service with their dealers. A copy of the owner notification letter is attached.

Enclosed with each owner notification is an Owner Notification Form. The involved vehicle and recall are identified on the form for owner or dealer reference as needed.

Vehicle Not Available

If a vehicle is not available for service, let us know by filling out the pre-addressed Owner Notification Form or describe the reason on a postcard and mail to:

DaimlerChrysler Corporation
CIMS 482-00-85
800 Chrysler Drive East
Auburn Hills, Michigan 48326-2757

Additional Information

If you have any questions or need assistance in completing this action, please contact your Zone Service Office.

Customer Services Field Operations
DaimlerChrysler Corporation