



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: DP09-005
Prompted By: Defect Petition
Date Opened: 11/06/2009
Principal Investigator: Lawrence Hershman
Subject: Crash Related Fuel Tank Fire/Leak

Manufacturer: Chrysler LLC
Products: Model Years 1993-2004 Jeep Grand Cherokee
Population: 3,037,000 (estimated)

Problem Description: Fuel tank presents fire hazard in crashes.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	12	0	0
Crashes/Fires:	12	0	0
Injury Incidents:	5	0	0
# Injuries:	9	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	1	0	0
# Fatalities:	1	0	0
Other:	0	0	0

Description of Other:

Action: A Defect Petition (DP) has been opened.

Engineer: Lawrence L. Hershman LH

Date: 11/06/2009

Div. Chief: D. Scott Yon

Date: 11/06/2009

Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 11/06/2009

Summary:

In a letter dated October 2, 2009, the Center for Auto Safety (CAS) petitioned NHTSA to open a Defect Investigation and recall Model Year 1993-2004 Jeep Grand Cherokees. CAS alleges that the subject vehicles have defective fuel tank storage systems that present fire hazards in crashes.

CAS alleges that the plastic fuel tank is subject to degradation and rupture. CAS alleges that the tank's placement behind the rear axle and below the rear bumper and the lack of adequate shielding makes it more vulnerable during crashes to impacts from other vehicles, vehicle components from the Grand Cherokee itself, or, in the case of rollover crashes, from other objects. CAS also alleges that the fuel filler neck tears off in crashes.

ODI has identified 12 Vehicle Owner Questionnaires (VOQs) for Model Year 1993-2004 Jeep Grand Cherokees reporting a vehicle crash that allegedly involved either a fuel tank leak and/or a fire potentially related to a fuel tank leak. Of the 12 VOQs, 10 involved fires and two involved fuel leaks without fire.

ODI has opened a Defect Petition to assess whether there is evidence to support opening a Safety Defect Investigation concerning the alleged defects in the subject vehicles.