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

ODI RESUME

INVESTIGATION: RQ98-011
SUBJECT: Automatic Shoulder Belt Failure
PROMPTED BY: 96V-172
PRINCIPAL ENGINEER: Nha Nguyen

DATE OPENED: 7-31-98

MANUFACTURER: Ford
MODEL(S): Probe
MODEL YEAR(S): 1990 through 1992
VEHICLE POPULATION: 224,867

PROBLEM DESCRIPTION: The recall defect is the motorized shoulder belt track assembly which may wear sufficiently under certain conditions causing the buckle assembly to jam in place. The recall has a low completion rate and numerous consumer complaints indicating an inability to have the recall work done.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	MANUFACTURER	TOTAL
COMPLAINTS:	16	Unknown	16
CRASHES:	0	"	0
INJ CRASHES:	0	"	0
# INJURIES:	0	"	0
FAT CRASHES:	0	"	0
# FATALS:	0	"	0
OTHER:			

DESCRIPTION OF OTHER: None

ACTION: A Recall Query (RQ) has been opened.

ENGINEER: NN
7/30/98
DATE

DIV CHF: [Signature]
7/30/98
DATE

OFC DIR: [Signature]
7/31/98
DATE

SUMMARY: Ford conducted a safety recall, 98V-069, on October 28, 1996. The recall was for all 1990 through 1992 model year Probe[®] which were equipped with front seat motorized (passive) shoulder belts as standard equipment. The affected vehicles were built from August 14, 1989 through February 7, 1992. The motorized shoulder belt of the affected vehicles may malfunction due to wear of the track assemblies that guide the moveable shoulder belt anchorages along the sides of the roof above the doors. Eventually, the moveable anchorages could jam in positions along the rails and not lock in place at the "B" pillar. If this were to occur, the system may not provide the proper protection to the front occupants in the event of a crash. As of May 6, 1998, the completion rate was 33 percent after the sixth quarter.

The purpose of this recall query is to determine the cause of this recall's low completion rate. Since October 1997, ODI has received 16 owner reports alleging the recall was not honored by the dealers or the replacement parts were not available.