



ODI RESUME

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

Investigation: EA04-025
 Prompted By: PE04-039
 Date Opened: 08/26/2004 Date Closed: 12/22/2005
 Principal Investigator: Scott Yon
 Subject: False Park

Manufacturer: DaimlerChrysler Corporation
 Products: 2003-2005 Dodge Ram 2500/3500 Diesel With Auto. Transmission
 Population: 250,285

Problem Description: The vehicle may experience a reverse powered rollaway incident after an attempted shift into "Park" with the engine running and the park brake unsecured.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	81	209	250
Crashes/Fires:	69	165	205
Injury Incidents:	14	21	27
# Injuries:	14	21	27
Fatality Incidents:	2	2	2
# Fatalities:	2	2	2

Action: This Engineering Analysis has been closed, Recall 05V-462.

Engineer: D. Scott Yon *DJ* 12/22/05

Date: 12/22/2005

Div. Chief: Jeffrey L. Quandt

Date: 12/22/2005

Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 12/22/2005

Summary: The subject vehicles are heavy duty pickup trucks with diesel engines and automatic transmissions commonly used for commercial and work purposes. A column mounted shift lever is used for gear selection and an electronic PRNDL on the instrument panel provides gear position information to the driver. The subject vehicles are also equipped with a brake-transmission shift interlock that prevents the shift lever from being moved from the Park position (when the engine is on) unless the brake pedal is depressed and an ignition-shift interlock that prevents key removal unless the transmission is in the Park position.

Complainants generally report that the vehicle was being operated in a forward gear and brought to a stop through brake application on a flat level surface, at which time the operator moved the shift lever to engage the park position. The operator then opened the driver side door and, without verifying Park engagement (e.g., PRNDL gear indication), securing the park brake, or turning the engine off, exited the vehicle. Initially, no vehicle movement was apparent, however, a short time later, typically reported as 10 to 30 seconds, the vehicle moved rearward under engine power. The incident often ended in a vehicle crash, and sometimes involved serious injury. Two fatalities are alleged.

ODI's analysis of test vehicles and some incident vehicles found no evidence to indicate that a shift lever properly placed in Park could unintentionally (i.e., without driver input) disengage from that position. However, ODI did find that the shift lever could be inadvertently placed, and remain at rest, within an intermediate position between the Park and Reverse gear positions. When placed in such an intermediate position, the vehicle can experience a delayed pressurization of the Reverse hydraulic circuit that is sufficient to cause the vehicle to roll rearward under power. The delay period allows sufficient time for operators to exit the stationary vehicle without perceiving that the shifter is not in Park. The summary report discusses the technical analysis of this issue in greater detail and compares the frequency of these incidents in the subject vehicles to other peer vehicles that ODI examined.

As described in their October 4, 2005 letter to NHTSA, DaimlerChrysler Corporation (DCC) will conduct a Safety Recall (NHTSA Recall No. 05V-462, DCC No. E17) to install an Out-Of-Park alarm system in the subject vehicles. The alarm will provide audible and visual feedback to alert the driver, and others, if the driver attempts to exit the vehicle while the engine is running and the shift lever is not in the Park position. The timing of DCC's action has yet to be determined.