



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

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 04-055

Date Opened: 08/03/2004

Date Closed: 11/12/2004

Principal Investigator: *Bob Young*

Subject: Rear wheel lockup

Manufacturer: American Suzuki Motor Corp.

Products: MY1994-1999 DR350SE Suzuki dual-purpose motorcycles

Population: 11990

Problem Description: Displaced crankshaft counter-balancer indexing pin allegedly causes sudden and catastrophic engine failure with possible rear wheel lock-up.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	1	3	3
Crashes/Fires:	1	0	1
Injury Incidents:	1	0	1
# Injuries:	1	0	1
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	0	0

*Description of Other: Suzuki also had the ODI report

Action: No current defect trend identified. Close this preliminary evaluation.

Engineer: *Bob Young*

Date: 11/12/2004

Div. Chief: *Richard Boyd*

Date: 11/12/2004

Office Dir.: *Kathleen C. DeMeter*

Date: 11/12/2004

Summary: A business specializing in servicing DR350's alleged that the counter-balancer gear-indexing pin is not properly retained and may become displaced. The displaced pin may then cause catastrophic engine failure with possible rear-wheel lockup.

After opening this PE, ODI gathered information from American Suzuki motor Corporation, and discussed this issue with Suzuki dealers, independent motorcycle repair shops, and subject motorcycle owners. We focused on the dual-purpose variants of the DR350 model lineup as these are the only street-legal versions that, consequently, are within our jurisdiction. The lone crash, occurring in 1997, involved a MY 1997 DR350SE dual-purpose motorcycle, with one minor injury. The crash allegedly occurred with the engine's counter-balancer became miss-timed and collided with the engine's connecting rod, resulting in rear wheel lock-up. However, based on the fact that there are three alleged failures involving vehicles that are at least 5 years old, no defect trend has been identified at this time. Further use of agency resources does not appear warranted. The closing of this investigation does not constitute a finding by NHTSA that a safety-related defect does not exist. The agency will take further action if warranted.