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By Recall Management Division at 12:49 pm, Apr 03, 2013

13V-121  
(4 pages)



**CHRYSLER**

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April 3, 2013

Ms. Nancy Lummen Lewis  
Associate Administrator for Enforcement  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
Recall Management Division (NVS-215)  
Room: W48-302  
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. Lewis:

Attached is Chrysler Group LLC's ("Chrysler") Defect Information Report, complying with the requirements of 49 CFR Part 573, Defect and Noncompliance Reports, which contains details of a potential safety related defect in vehicles.

Chrysler Group will conduct a voluntary safety recall to add a bracket to support the rear edge of the tunnel heat shield on all affected vehicles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kristin Kolodge".

Kristin Kolodge

Enclosure: Defect Information Report for Chrysler Group LLC. Recall N10

cc: Frank Borris, NHTSA

# DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT FOR CHRYSLER GROUP LLC

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**Submission Date:** April 3, 2013

**573.6(c)(1): Manufacturer's Name, Brand Name**

Chrysler Group LLC, Dodge and Jeep

**573.6(c)(2): Identification of Affected Vehicles**

Make(s)	Model(s)	Model Year(s)	Inclusive Dates of Manufacture
Dodge	Nitro	2007 - 2008	March 21, 2006 through March 1, 2008
Jeep	Liberty	2008	February 15, 2007 through March 1, 2008

**573.6(c)(2)(iv): Component manufacturer name, address, telephone number, and country of origin:**

Chrysler Group LLC  
1000 Chrysler Drive  
Auburn Hills, MI USA

**573.6(c)(3): Potentially Affected Vehicle Population**

61,409 (estimated)

**573.6(c)(4): Percentage of Affected Vehicles**

Unknown

**573.6(c)(5): Description of Defect or Noncompliance**

Some vehicles may experience a tunnel shield that drops down and rubs on the drive shaft, potentially causing the drive shaft to break. If the drive shaft breaks, there is a loss of motor power, and a chance the side airbags will deploy.

## DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT FOR CHRYSLER GROUP LLC

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### **573.6(c)(6): Chronology of Principal Events Leading to Determination of a Safety Defect**

- Field data on the 4X2 2007/2008 Dodge Nitro/Jeep Liberty shows the tunnel shield, which has aluminum foil on the underside, can drop down far enough to allow it to rub on the aluminum drive shaft.
- When the tunnel shield is in contact with the aluminum drive shaft, the drive shaft can wear, thus decreasing the wall thickness of the drive shaft. If the rub condition is allowed to continue, the drive shaft wall thickness will decrease to a point it will not be able to carry the required loads/torque and breaks.
- In some cases, when the drive shaft breaks, it can hit the tunnel with sufficient force to cause airbag deployment. Airbag deployment may occur due to the Occupant Restraint Control Module's location on the tunnel between the seats. The impact of the broken drive shaft striking the tunnel causes the Occupant Restraint Control Module to detect accelerations high enough to make the Occupant Restraint Control Module believe the event is a severe crash.
- Vehicles equipped with a 4X4 transfer case have not experienced this issue, since the transfer case is longer. The longer 4x4 transfer case prevents a dropped tunnel shield from resting directly on the drive shaft.
- Analysis of field data shows the issue could affect any 2007 Dodge Nitro and 2008 Dodge Nitro/Jeep Liberty vehicles built through the end of Feb 2008.
- The beginning of the suspect period lines up with the launch of the aluminum drive shaft (prior models had a steel drive shaft), and the end date lines up with a Change Notice that was implemented in December of 2008 (without obsoleting the prior parts) to resolve a customer complaint on noise.
- The noise was caused by water draining from the HVAC dripping onto hot components under the vehicle, making a hissing noise. Therefore, the trough in the tunnel shield for the HVAC drain water was made significantly bigger and water resistant material was used for part of the tunnel shield.
- As of Jan 10, 2013 there were approximately 31 CAIRS, 0 field complaints and 7 VOQ's complaining about the drive shaft breaking.
- Chrysler Group LLC is not aware of any accidents or injuries related to this issue.
- On March 26, 2013, Chrysler Group LLC decided to conduct a voluntary safety recall on all affected vehicles.

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### **573.6(c)(7): Information Used in Determination of a Noncompliance**

N/A

### **573.6(c)(8): Description of Remedy**

Chrysler Group will conduct a voluntary safety recall to add a bracket to support the rear edge of the tunnel heat shield on all affected vehicles.

Chrysler has a longstanding policy and practice of reimbursing owners who have incurred the cost of repairing a problem that subsequently becomes the subject of a field action. To ensure consistency, Chrysler, as part of the owner letter, will request that customers send the original receipt and/or other adequate proof of payment to the company for confirmation of the expense.

### **573.6(c)(10): Dealer and Owner Communications**

Chrysler plans to begin notification of dealers and owners in May, 2013. Chrysler will provide the dealer and owner letters when available.

### **573.6(c)(11): Manufacturer's Campaign Number**

Chrysler has assigned recall number N10 to this action.