



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

ODI RESUME

Investigation: RQ04-007
Prompted By: Complaints, IE04049, PE03009
Date Opened: 08/02/2004
Principal Investigator: Scott Yon
Subject: Fracture of the steel wheel rim

Manufacturer: Ford Motor Company
Products: MY 2003 Ford Crown Victoria Police and Taxi
Population: 90,000 (Estimated)

Problem Description: The rim cracks at the circumferential weld allowing the potential for catastrophic failure and loss of vehicle control.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

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

*Description Of Other:

Action: Open a recall query.

Engineer: D. Scott Yon *D. Scott Yon* 8/3/04
Div. Chief: Jeffrey L. Quandt
Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

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Summary: The steel wheels manufactured on subject vehicles built between 8/18/2001 and 9/22/2002 were recalled for rim failures (fractures) under recall 03V279000 (Ford 03S05). Ford announced the recall in August of 2003. See investigation PE03-009 for further details of this action.

The Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) has identified 9 vehicle owner questionnaires (VOQs) that allege the steel wheel rim fractured on wheels replaced under recall 03V279000, or on wheels that were out of scope for the recall. Eight of the reports are from the Pennsylvania State Police. These reports involve 10 wheels on 7 vehicles; 8 wheels had been previously replaced under recall 03V279000 and two wheels fractured on a vehicle that was out of scope. One of these reports alleges a crash (with minor injuries) occurred when a wheel previously replaced under the recall failed during a high speed pursuit and resulted in a loss of control. Another report alleges the operator heard a loud 'popping' noise while driving at slow speed and upon exit found one tire nearly deflated; a subsequent inspection revealed the rim was cracked about half way around the wheel. One report from a police agency in New Jersey alleges the failure of a recall replacement wheel. The ODI numbers for the 9 VOQs are listed below.

ODI is opening this recall query to determine if the scope of the recall action was properly identified and to determine if the remedy for the action was adequate.

VOQ numbers: 10082922, 10082746, 10082449, 10082262, 10080703, 10080701, 10080521, 10080512, 10062199

10/23/04