

FORD AND FIRESTONE/ BRIDGESTONE: RESPONSES TO TECHNOLOGICAL FAILURES

As early as 1996, personal injury lawyers were aware of accidents, injuries and fatal accidents caused by Firestone tire tread high-speed separation of tires. Lawyers and traffic safety researchers decided not to contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) because they lacked confidence in the agency and feared that the investigation might conclude that there were no defects, thereby jeopardizing existing personal injury litigation. Of the 271 deaths caused by these tires, 13 occurred after 1996.

But Firestone says *"This is a good product and Firestone proudly stands behind it."*

Then "Ford and Firestone had in fact signed a joint agreement, according to which they cooperated in defense against previous rollover suits, which generally pointed to "worn tires or driver error" as the source of accidents"

"Soon after initiation of the recall, disagreements between Ford and Firestone became public. "

Ford announced "This has been an extremely difficult and disappointing time in our relationship. We're going to evaluate it a day at a time."

"I want my first act as the new CEO of Bridgestone/Firestone to be an apology to those who have suffered personal losses or who have had problems involving our products."

At 2000, Kaizaki said, "we don't think our tires are that bad. Virtually all the tires we're recalling...are good."

Finally, according to Kaizaki, "the fault ultimately lay with Bridgestone for failing to sufficiently "Bridgestone-ise" its American subsidiary."

Global Engineering Ethics Principles Reviewed

1. ◦ BASIC ETHICAL PRINCIPLES FOR GLOBAL ENGINEERING
2. ◦ ORGANIZATIONAL ETHICAL PRINCIPLES
3. ◦ ETHICAL PRINCIPLES FOR EMPLOYEES
4. ◦ PRINCIPLES OF INVOLVEMENT FOR ENGINEERS
5. ◦ RIGHTS OF ENGINEERS AS EMPLOYEES

As the case of Ford and Firestone/Bridgestone, as the engineering and business environment becomes more international and cross-cultural, a broad but generally accepted principle is needed.