Assignment NO-3

Date: / /
Page No.:

Submit a writeup on General Motors Ignition Switch Recall in Own words

The General Motors ignition switch recalls refers to February 6, 2014 when General Motors recalled about 800,000 of its small cars due to faulty ignition switches, which could shut off the engine while the vehicle was in motion and there by prevent the air bags from inflating. The company continued to recall more of its cars over the next several months, resulting in nearly 30 million cars recalled worldwide and paid compensation for 124 deaths. The fault had been known to GM for at least a decade prior to the recall being declared. As part of a Deferred Prosecution Agreement, GM agreed to forfeit $900 million to the United States.

* Initial and subsequent recalls

The first recall was announced on February 7, 2014, and involved about 800,000 Chevrolet Cobalts and Pontiac G5s. On March 31, GM announced it was going to recall over 1.5 million more cars of six different models, due to faulty power steering. Of these, over 1.3 million were in the United States and three of the models were also involved in the faulty ignition recall. The total number of cars recalled during 2014 as of 1 April was 6.26 million. On May 15, GM

Date:- / /
Page No.:-

recalled 2.7 million more cars, bringing the total number of recalled vehicles in 2014 to 12.8 million world wide, 11.1 million of which were in the United states.

On June 16, 2014, GM announced they were recalling 3.4 million more cars, all of which were produced from 2000 to 2004. They also announced that they intended to replace the cars' keys, because if they did not, the ignition switches could rotate, causing the car's engines to shut off, disabling power steering.

On June 30, 2014, GM announced they were going to recall 8.45 million additional cars, almost all of which were being recalled for defective ignition switches. This announcement brought the total number of recalled cars in North America to about 29 million. In November 2014 emails surfaced that showed GM ordered a half-million replacement ignition switches nearly two months before ordering a recall.

* Cause of ignition failure

General Motors did not meet ~~who~~ two specific requirements – torque required and vibration environment – for the ignition switch. The torque, or rotational power that prevents the ignition switch from changing modes, was required to be between

10 N·cm and 20N·cm. However, it was less than 90 N·cm, a force so little that made it prone to changes in modes which could potentially shut off the engine. The switch was required to withstand exposure to a vibration enviroment without damage or loss of function. Yet, it was discovered that during extreme moments of vibrations, or even with the presence of heavy objects on a keychain, the switch would change modes from Run to Accessory without the intent of the driver. The ignition switch was designed to remove power from the vehicle's airbags when in the off or Accessory mode. Therefore, this was a safety hazard: If the switch changed from Run to Accessory and the vehicle was involved in an accident, it would no longer have power to release the airbags and it would be difficult for the driver to steer and brake. General Motors was aware of this potential problem, and held meetings about it, as early as 2005.

* GM's statements on the safety of recalled cars
General Motors has stated that the recalled cars are safe to drive unless the driver has additional items attached to the key ring. However, some consumer advocacy groups have urged GM to declare the cars unsafe for driving no matter what, saying they still pose a danger. In fact, a lawsuit was filed in Texas on April 4, with the

plaintiffs aiming to force GM to declare its recalled cars unsafe to drive, but the judge, Nelva Gonzales Ramos, refrained from doing so that day, saying she needed more information.