
CENTER FOR AUTO SAFETY

1825 CONNECTICUT AVENUE NW SUITE 330 WASHINGTON DC 20009-5708
202-328-7700  www.autosafety.org

July 10, 2012

Alan Mulally, President & CEO
Ford Motor Company
The American Road
Dearborn MI 48121-1899

Dear Mr. Mulally:

The Center for Auto Safety (CAS) doesn't often write the CEO's of major auto companies but when we do, it's very serious - as is this letter concerning the Ford Escape's lethal cruise control cable defect. On November 24, 1999, we wrote former Ford Chairman William Clay Ford about "Ford Motor Company trying to cover up a defect and avoid responsibility for complying with the law. By avoiding recalls, Ford forces consumers to pay for repairing defects while riding at risk of failures on the highway which can lead to costly repairs, if not accidents, deaths and injuries." (For a copy of the letter, see <http://www.autosafety.org/FocusLetter.pdf>.)

When asked about our letter in a deposition, Mr. Ford responded: "My guess is I sent this to the operating management since this was an operating issue in terms of the head gasket issue. It wasn't something that I was familiar with nor in a position to fix as chairman. And I sent it, I presume, to Mr. Nasser or to Miss Petrauskus. On this particular letter, because it was from Mr. Ditlow, and I know that we've had a long history of going back and forth and in courts with him, I felt it was best handled by somebody who was much more knowledgeable than I was as Chairman." I request that you respond to this letter without kicking it downstairs. Customer lives are at stake.

Defective cruise control cables in 2002-04 Ford Escapes and a blotched recall in 2005 for the accelerator cable have made a bad situation worse by damaging the cruise control cable. (NHTSA Recall 04V-574, Ford Recall 04S25.) After the original notice to dealers in December 2004, Ford sent a second notice in October 2005 that the earlier repair procedures may have damaged the cruise control cable. The cat was already out of the bag because Ford had repaired 319,506 out of 406,863 Escapes with the faulty repair procedure before the second notice went out. The defective accelerator cable caused high idles but the damaged cruise control cable caused far worse open throttle accelerations by breaking the cruise cable protective guide which allowed the connector end of the cable to jam against the engine cover.

The second notice alone shows Ford's knowledge of the cruise control cable defect. But complaints to NHTSA made available to Ford nailed the defect in September 2005 as shown by ODI # 10137520:

"Defective cruise control cable will lock throttle in full open position when the gas pedal is fully depressed. Polymer sleeve on cruise actuator cable has broken at the throttle connector. This allows the connector to rotate to a vertical position and catch on the engine cover when the foot pedal is pressed to the floor."

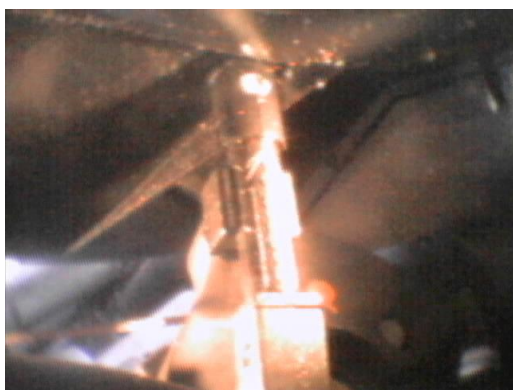
In 2007, a video illustrating the defect was given to Ford in product litigation. But no recall followed. (https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B08yVa_bKjAVV2RlaV9WdUhvSWM/edit?pli=1.)

Alan Mulally, President & CEO

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On January 27, 2012, 17-year old Saige Bloom was killed in a crash that once and for all exposed the deadly cruise control cable in Escapes just like the Saylor crash in San Diego that killed 4 people taped on 911 once and for all exposed Toyota sudden acceleration. In the Bloom crash, Ford had representatives from the Bowman & Brooks lawfirm on the scene to participate in an inspection of the untouched 2002 Escape that was in the same condition as when it crashed. The inspection of the Bloom vehicle was done lawyers with a Borescope to peer under the engine cover to examine the state of the throttle body cam and cruise control cable. As the pictures below show, the cruise control cable had the protective guide broken and its connector end jammed against a ridge in the engine cover just as the consumer reported to NHTSA in 2005, the expert illustrated in 2007 and as Ford knew could happen when it sent out the corrective bulletin to dealers in October 2005.



Borescope Pictures of Bloom Escape

Most recalls do not involve deaths. This one does. Ford itself has reported that claims have been filed against the company in 41 cases where a death or injury is alleged to have occurred from a defect in the vehicle speed control of a Ford Escape with 35 of the 41 claims involving a 2002-04 Escape. The 41 claims involve 42 injuries and 4 deaths with the 2002-04 Escape accounting for 35 injuries and all 4 deaths. (Attachment A.)

CAS has petitioned NHTSA to (1) address the ineffective recall remedy in Recall 04V-574 and (2) open a defect investigation into all Ford Escapes with the defective cruise control cables used in the recalled 2002-04 Escapes. As our letter to William Clay Ford indicates, it is the CEO who sets the moral and management leadership for the company which may otherwise place profits over safety. We ask that you exercise that moral leadership by recalling all Ford Escapes with the defective cruise control cable in the 2002-04 model years to avoid more deaths and injuries which would otherwise occur if Ford waits for NHTSA to grant CAS' petitions.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clarence M. Ditlow". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Clarence M. Ditlow
Executive Director

Attachment A

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2004, Q2
Report Created on: Jul-10-2012 10:33 AM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2004
VIN: 1FMCU94124K...
State/Foreign Country: KS
Incident Date: 05/03/2004
Sequence ID: 47

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Structure
- C. Engine & Engine Cooling
- D. Steering
- E. Other

+

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2004, Q3
Report Created on: Jul-10-2012 10:41 AM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMYU93143K...
State/Foreign Country: MI
Incident Date: 08/05/2004
Sequence ID: 36

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2004, Q4
Report Created on: Jul-10-2012 11:02 AM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2005
VIN: 1FMYU02Z75K...
State/Foreign Country: TX
Incident Date: 11/29/2004
Sequence ID: 35

Reported Components:

- A. Seats
- B. Tires Related
- C. Speed Control
- D. Visibility
- E. Steering

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2005, Q1
Report Created on: Jul-10-2012 12:27 PM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2004
VIN: 1FMYU92104K...
State/Foreign Country: PA
Incident Date: 02/02/2005
Sequence ID: 73

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Engine & Engine Cooling

Make: FORD

Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2004
VIN: 1FMYU93144K...
State/Foreign Country: CT
Incident Date: 02/07/2005
Sequence ID: 75

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Service Brake

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2004
VIN: 1FMYU02114K...
State/Foreign Country: LA
Incident Date: 01/27/2005
Sequence ID: 71

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Engine & Engine Cooling

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2004
VIN: 1FMYU93134K...
State/Foreign Country: WV
Incident Date: 01/25/2005
Sequence ID: 70

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Air Bags

C. Engine & Engine Cooling

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2004
VIN: 1FMCU94114K...
State/Foreign Country: PA
Incident Date: 01/06/2005
Sequence ID: 68

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
 - B. Parking Brake
-

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMYU93103K...
State/Foreign Country: CO
Incident Date: 03/14/2005
Sequence ID: 59

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
 - B. Electrical
-

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMCU94163K...
State/Foreign Country: CA
Incident Date: 02/23/2005
Sequence ID: 56

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
 - B. Engine & Engine Cooling
-

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMYU02173K...
State/Foreign Country: TN
Incident Date: 02/08/2005
Sequence ID: 54

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Engine & Engine Cooling

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMYU021X3K...
State/Foreign Country: CA
Incident Date: 01/26/2005
Sequence ID: 52

Reported Components:

- A. Rollover
- B. Speed Control
- C. Visibility
- D. Engine & Engine Cooling
- E. Service Brake

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2003

VIN: 1FMYU92183K...
State/Foreign Country: MI
Incident Date: 01/20/2005
Sequence ID: 50

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Air Bags

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMYU92153K...
State/Foreign Country: CA
Incident Date: 01/10/2005
Sequence ID: 47

Reported Components:

- A. Rollover
- B. Speed Control
- C. Engine & Engine Cooling

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMYU93123K...
State/Foreign Country: MN
Incident Date: 01/04/2005
Sequence ID: 45

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Engine & Engine Cooling

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0

Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMCU92143K...
State/Foreign Country: IL
Incident Date: 11/24/2004
Sequence ID: 61

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

Make: FORD
Deaths: 1
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMYU02183K...
State/Foreign Country: TN
Incident Date: 05/13/2004
Sequence ID: 60

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

B. Seat Belts

C. Air Bags

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMYU93123K...
State/Foreign Country: OH
Incident Date: 01/05/2004
Sequence ID: 64

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

Make: FORD

Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 3
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMYU021X3K...
State/Foreign Country: IN
Incident Date: 04/20/2003
Sequence ID: 66

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2005, Q2
Report Created on: Jul-10-2012 12:37 PM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMYU021X3K...
State/Foreign Country: WV
Incident Date: 05/06/2005
Sequence ID: 27

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2005, Q3
Report Created on: Jul-10-2012 12:39 PM

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Engine & Engine Cooling

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2004
VIN: 1FMCU02104K...
State/Foreign Country: CA
Incident Date: 08/24/2005
Sequence ID: 28

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

Make: FORD

Deaths: 1

Model: ESCAPE

Injuries: 1

Model Year: 2003

VIN: 1FMYU93153K...

State/Foreign Country: MO

Incident Date: 08/08/2005

Sequence ID: 26

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

B. Engine & Engine Cooling

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES

Reporting Period: 2005, Q4

Report Created on: Jul-10-2012 12:41 PM

Make: FORD

Deaths: 0

Model: ESCAPE

Injuries: 1

Model Year: 2002

VIN: 1FMYU01122K...

State/Foreign Country: FL

Incident Date: 12/30/2005

Sequence ID: 18

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

B. Air Bags

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES

Reporting Period: 2006, Q3

Report Created on: Jul-09-2012 06:08 PM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2004
VIN: 1FMYU02174K...
State/Foreign Country: MI
Incident Date: 08/03/2006
Sequence ID: 10

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2006, Q4
Report Created on: Jul-09-2012 06:06 PM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2007
VIN: 1FMYU92Z27K...
State/Foreign Country: NY
Incident Date: 11/27/2006
Sequence ID: 23

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2008, Q1
Report Created on: Jul-09-2012 05:38 PM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2003

VIN: 1FMCU041X3K...
State/Foreign Country: MO
Incident Date: 01/28/2008
Sequence ID: 24

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Air Bags

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2004
VIN: 1FMYU02194K...
State/Foreign Country: SC
Incident Date: 03/05/2008
Sequence ID: 27

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2008, Q4
Report Created on: Jul-09-2012 05:45 PM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 1
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 0
Model Year: 2004
VIN: 1FMCU93104K...
State/Foreign Country: PA
Incident Date: 07/19/2007
Sequence ID: 11

Reported Components:

- A. Rollover
- B. Speed Control

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES

Reporting Period: 2009, Q1

Report Created on: Jul-09-2012 05:46 PM

Make: FORD

Deaths: 0

Model: ESCAPE

Injuries: 1

Model Year: 2002

VIN: 1FMYU031X2K...

State/Foreign Country: TX

Incident Date: 02/24/2008

Sequence ID: 16

Reported Components:

A. Fire Related

B. Speed Control

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES

Reporting Period: 2009, Q2

Report Created on: Jul-09-2012 05:48 PM

Make: FORD

Deaths: 0

Model: ESCAPE

Injuries: 1

Model Year: 2008

VIN: 1FMCU02Z28K...

State/Foreign Country: AR

Incident Date: 04/28/2009

Sequence ID: 23

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

Make: FORD

Deaths: 0

Model: ESCAPE

Injuries: 1

Model Year: 2006

VIN: 1FMYU02Z26K...

State/Foreign Country: KS

Incident Date: 03/01/2009

Sequence ID: 22

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES

Reporting Period: 2009, Q4

Report Created on: Jul-09-2012 05:51 PM

Make: FORD

Deaths: 0

Model: ESCAPE

Injuries: 1

Model Year: 2003

VIN: 1FMCU94133K...

State/Foreign Country: CA

Incident Date:

Sequence ID: 11

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES

Reporting Period: 2010, Q1

Report Created on: Jul-09-2012 05:53 PM

Make: FORD

Deaths: 0

Model: ESCAPE

Injuries: 1

Model Year: 2004

VIN: 1FMYU02164K...

State/Foreign Country: MD

Incident Date: 10/18/2009

Sequence ID: 20

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

B. Service Brake

Make: FORD

Deaths: 0

Model: ESCAPE

Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2002
VIN: 1FMYU04182K...
State/Foreign Country: IL
Incident Date: 08/15/2009
Sequence ID: 17

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2010, Q2
Report Created on: Jul-09-2012 05:55 PM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2008
VIN: 1FMCU59H68K...
State/Foreign Country: CT
Incident Date: 04/15/2010
Sequence ID: 20

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Engine & Engine Cooling

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2006
VIN: 1FMYU93166K...
State/Foreign Country: WA
Incident Date: 04/16/2010
Sequence ID: 17

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Service Brake

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2010, Q3
Report Created on: Jul-09-2012 05:57 PM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 1
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 0
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMYU031X3K...
State/Foreign Country: SC
Incident Date: 06/19/2004
Sequence ID: 15

Reported Components:

A. Speed Control

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2010, Q4
Report Created on: Jul-09-2012 05:59 PM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2004
VIN: 1FMYU93174K...
State/Foreign Country: NV
Incident Date: 04/13/2009
Sequence ID: 11

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Service Brake

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2011, Q1
Report Created on: Jul-09-2012 06:00 PM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE

Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2004
VIN: 1FMCU92124D...
State/Foreign Country: PA
Incident Date: 11/07/2010
Sequence ID: 14

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control

Manufacturer Name: FORD MOTOR COMPANY
Reporting Category: LIGHT VEHICLES
Reporting Period: 2011, Q2
Report Created on: Jul-09-2012 06:01 PM

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 2
Model Year: 2003
VIN: 1FMYU03163K...
State/Foreign Country: NV
Incident Date: 02/26/2011
Sequence ID: 13

Reported Components:

- A. Rollover
- B. Speed Control

Make: FORD
Deaths: 0
Model: ESCAPE
Injuries: 1
Model Year: 2002
VIN: 1FMYU01192K...
State/Foreign Country: AL
Incident Date: 03/22/2011
Sequence ID: 11

Reported Components:

- A. Speed Control
- B. Air Bags