

CENTER FOR AUTO SAFETY

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

June 20, 2016

The Honorable Mark R. Rosekind, Administrator
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
(NHTSA)
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Dr. Rosekind:

Star Trek actor Anton Yelchin was killed June 18 when his 2015 Jeep Grand Cherokee pinned him against his mailbox in a rollaway incident. Yelchin's death is unfortunately the latest example of an auto company disregarding NHTSA in carrying out recalls. On July 26, 2015, NHTSA and Chrysler entered into a consent agreement to improve safety recalls given Chrysler dismal performance in dragging recalls out. Even though Attachment C of that agreement set out a number of programs and reports Chrysler was to implement or submit. There is no indication that anything has been done except to appoint an independent monitor who has a conflict of interest.

On April 22, 2016, Chrysler issued a recall of 811,586 2014-15 Grand Cherokees, as well as 2012-14 Chrysler 300s and Dodge Chargers, in order to add an additional part to enhance the Jeeps' monostable gear selector. Despite a clear defect that already had caused 41 injuries and over 700 property damage crashes, Chrysler issued a Part 577 interim notification letter to owners promising to develop a fix by the 4th quarter of 2016 – which would be 6-8 months later eve if everything went according to plan. While waiting for a recall remedy to be developed, the predictable happened. Anton Yelchin died. How many more people will be killed or injured waiting for a recall remedy of this fatal manufacturing flaw?

Even though NHTSA conducted two defect investigation, PE15-030 and EA16-003, into this defect, NHTSA has only released two pages of documents from Chrysler, both pages of an owner's manual. Based on the index to the investigations, CAS has discovered the following missing documents.

- 1) Chrysler's unredacted September 23, 2015 presentation
- 2) Additional information delivered by courier the next day
- 3) Chrysler's response to the October 6, 2015 NHTSA IR in PE15-030
- 4) All requests for confidentiality related to PE15-030.
- 5) Chrysler's response to the March 22, 2016 NHTSA IR in EA16-002.
- 6) Any other communications or meeting notes between Chrysler & NHTSA regarding PE15-030 & EA16-002.

It is hard to say which is worse – Chrysler flaunting the consent agreement or NHTSA withholding Chrysler documents that would expose Chrysler's callous disregard for human life. The least NHTSA should do is put all the investigatory records on the public record. A response indicating whether you will do that is requested.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Clarence M. Ditlow".

Clarence M. Ditlow