



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 13-037
Date Opened: 11/15/2013
Investigator: Will Godfrey **Reviewer:** Scott Yon
Approver: Frank Borris
Subject: Fire - Propulsion Battery - Road Debris

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: Tesla Motors, Inc
Products: 2013 Tesla Model S
Population: 13,108 (Estimated)
Problem Description: Deformation/intrusion into the propulsion battery by roadway debris may result in a thermal reaction and fire.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	0	TBD	TBD
Crashes/Fires:	2	TBD	TBD
Injury Incidents:	0	TBD	TBD
Number of Injuries:	0	TBD	TBD
Fatality Incidents:	0	TBD	TBD
Number of Fatalities:	0	TBD	TBD

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: A Preliminary Evaluation (PE) has been opened

Summary:

The Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) is aware of two incidents occurring on US public highways in which the subject vehicles caught fire after an undercarriage strike with metallic roadway debris. The resulting impact damage to the propulsion battery tray (baseplate) initiated thermal runaway. In each incident, the vehicle's battery monitoring system provided escalating visible and audible warnings, allowing the driver to execute a controlled stop and exit the vehicle before the battery emitted smoke and fire.

Based on these incidents, NHTSA is opening this preliminary evaluation to examine the potential risks associated with undercarriage strikes on model year 2013 Tesla Model S vehicles.