



U.S. Department
of Transportation
National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

OFFICE OF DEFECTS INVESTIGATION RESUME

INVESTIGATION: SQ01-014

DATE OPENED: 11/27/01

SUBJECT: Post Rear End Collision Fires

PROMPTED BY: Technical Service Bulletin (Ford Article No. 01-21-14)

Police Reports

PRINCIPAL ENGINEER: F. Borris

MANUFACTURER: Ford Motor Company

MODEL(S): Ford Crown Victoria (including Police Interceptor), Mercury Grand Marquis,
Lincoln Town Car

MODEL YEAR(S): 1992-2001

VEHICLE POPULATION: TBD

Problem Description: The fuel tank can rupture following a high-energy rear collision resulting in severe fires. A vehicle occupant surviving the impact trauma could be killed as a result of fire intrusion into the passenger compartment.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	MANUFACTURER	TOTAL
REPORTS:	5	3	8
CRASHES:	7	3	10
# INJURIES:	14	1	15
# FATALS:	6	2	8
FIRES:	7	3	10
OTHER:*	7	NA	NA

* Description of Other: ODI identified 7 additional alleged fire reports following a rear end collision via news articles or state police correspondence. These reports include allegations of 9 injuries and 3 fatalities.

ACTION: A Service Query has been opened.

ENGINEER: [Signature]

DIV CHF: [Signature]

OFC DIR: [Signature]

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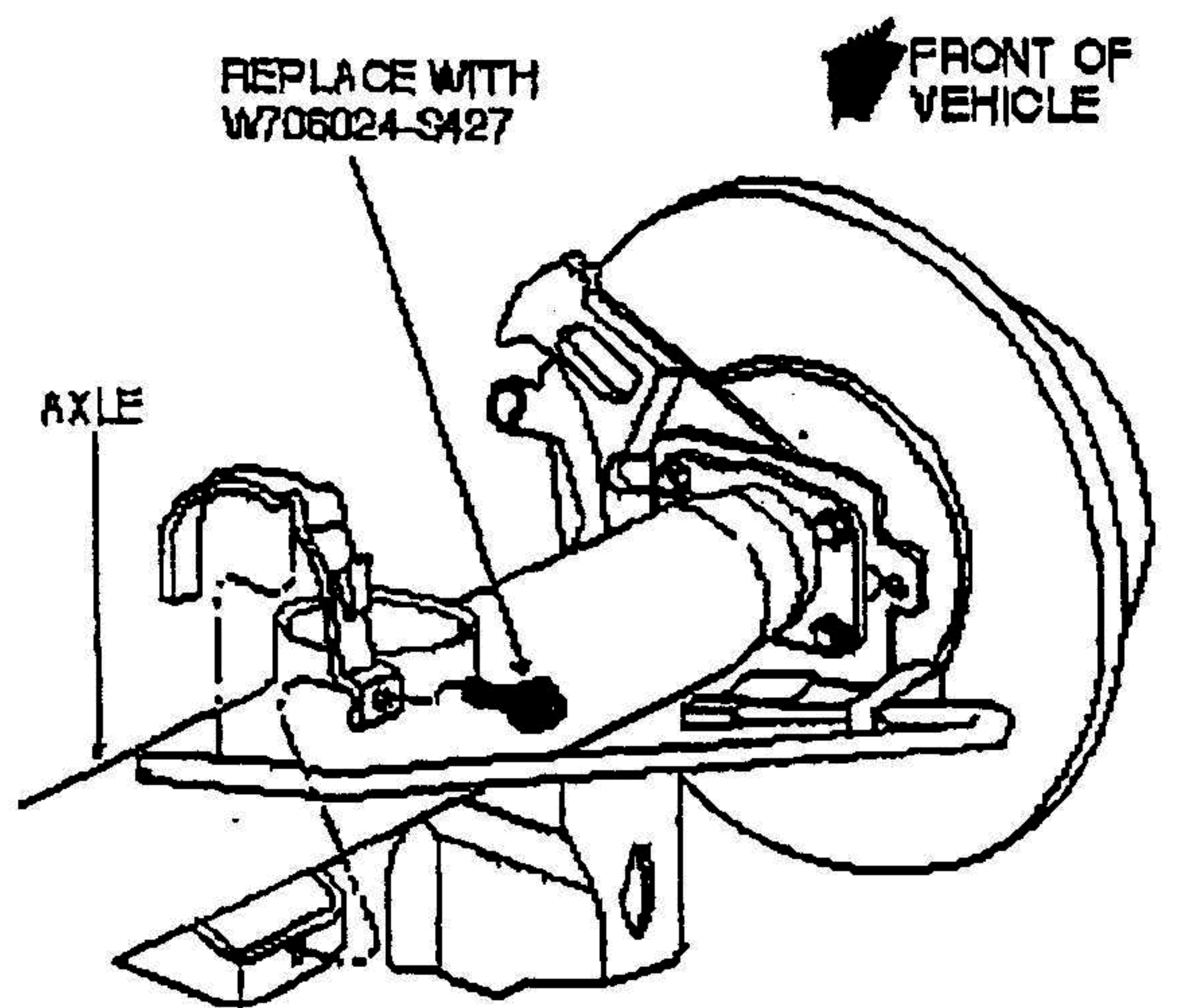
SUMMARY: On October 22, 2001, Ford published a technical service bulletin (Article No. 01-21-14) to advise its dealers of a service procedure to reduce the potential for fuel tank puncture following a rear collision in the subject vehicles. On 1992-1997 vehicles, dealers are instructed to replace the hex-headed Park Brake Cable to Axle attaching bolt with a round-headed fastener (see Figure 1). On 1992-2001 vehicles, dealers are instructed to grind off a tab that protrudes down from one flange of each of the rear stabilizer bar axle attachment "U" brackets (Figure 2). The bulletin recommends the service procedure be performed on vehicles exposed to "extremely high-speed rear impacts."

Prior to Ford's publication of its bulletin, the agency received 5 letters from law enforcement organizations (2), attorneys (2), and the City of Phoenix (1) alleging fatalities in Crown Victoria Police Interceptor vehicles as a result of post rear end collision fires. ODI also received 3 reports from Ford and is continuing to collect additional information regarding all the reports identified to confirm their accuracy.

Although the Ford bulletin encompasses civilian as well as police vehicles, police personnel are routinely exposed to high-energy rear impacts when making traffic stops adjacent to high-speed travel lanes (shoulder) or other actions requiring staging their vehicle adjacent to the path of highway traffic.

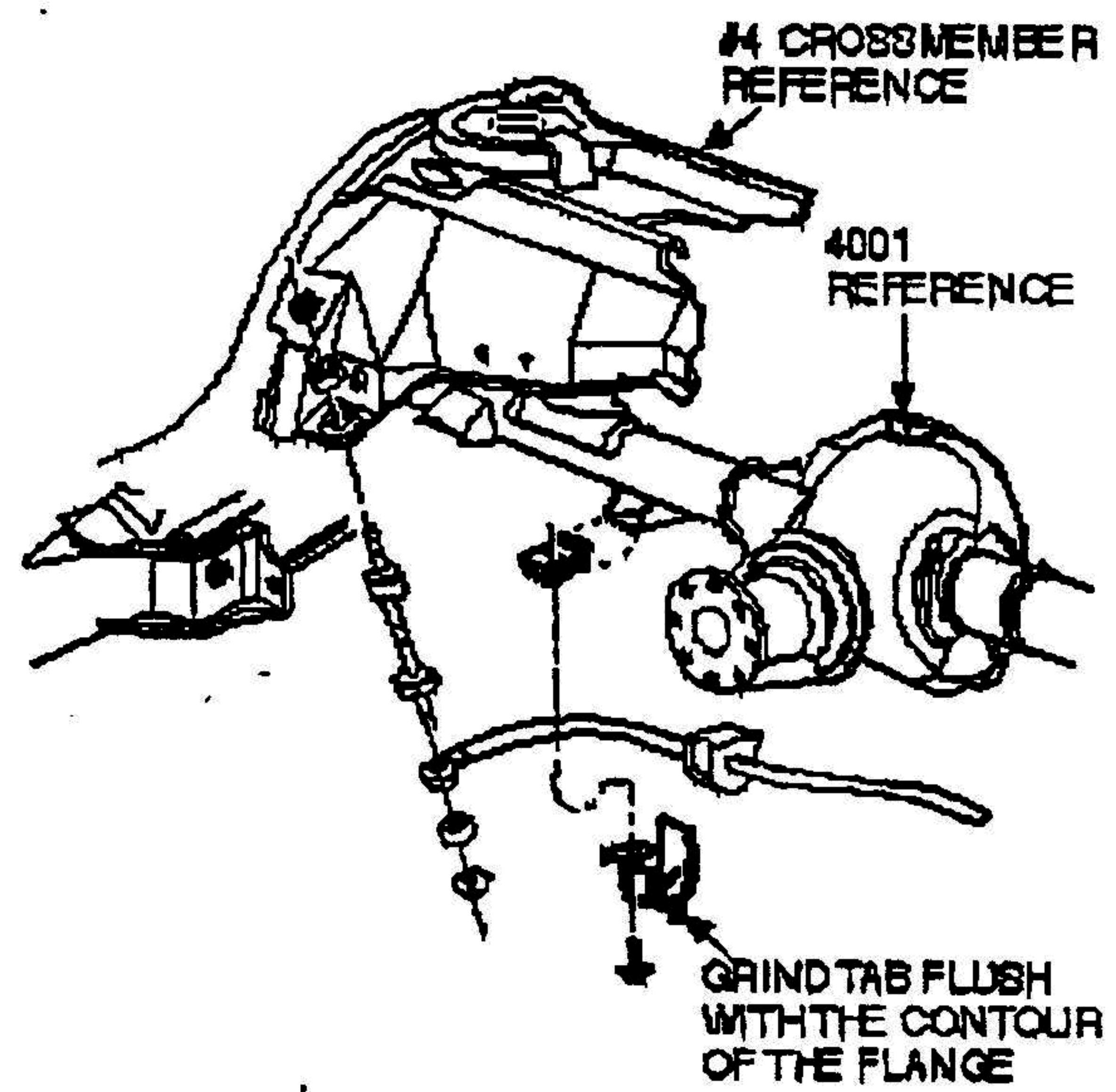
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Figure 1



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Figure 2



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