



Nissan North America, Inc.

One Nissan Way
Franklin, TN 37067

Mailing Address:
PO Box 685001
Franklin, TN 37068

March 4, 2021

Mr. Jeff Giuseppe
Associate Administrator for Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Attn: Recall Management Division (NVS-215)
Room W48-302
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Giuseppe:

We are transmitting the enclosed Defect Information Report in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573. A voluntary recall campaign will be initiated and your office provided with the notices.

Very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Derek Latta".

Derek Latta
Manager,
Technical Compliance

Encl.

DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT

1. Manufacturer:

Nissan North America, Inc., Canton Plant

2. Units Potentially Involved:

Certain Model Year 2020-2021 Nissan Altima vehicles manufactured from June 8, 2020 to January 25, 2021 at the Canton, MS plant.

This issue is unique to the above manufacturing range based on torque setting changes specific to Canton produced Altima models manufactured during a specified period. Other models do not use this process and are therefore unaffected by the issue described in Section 5 below.

The name, description and part number of the recalled components are below:

<u>Part Name</u>	<u>Part Description</u>	<u>Part Number(s)</u>
NUT	Nut	89-12442-1A
WASHER	Washer	13-11 01251

3. Total Number of Vehicles Potentially Involved:

Approximately 2,407 MY 2020-2021 Nissan Altima vehicles

4. Percentage of Vehicles Estimated to Actually Contain the Defect:

Unknown¹

5. Description of the Defect:

Due to a back-up process manufacturing error, the tie rod ball joint fastener was not tightened to proper specification. If this condition occurs, the customer may experience steering wheel vibration due to the loose tie rod ball joint fastener. If the fastener comes off completely and the ball joint separates from the steering knuckle, sudden partial steering loss can occur, which may increase the risk of a crash.

¹ The estimated percentage of vehicles involved with defect is unknown. However, 1% is used on NHTSA's safety portal because it will not allow non-numeric values.

6. Chronology of Principle Events:

December 11, 2020, Nissan became aware of a dealer report involving loss of steering while driving, in which the vehicle was towed to a Nissan dealer. Inspection of the subject vehicle revealed that the tie rod ball joint fastener became loose, fell off, and the tie rod ball joint separated from steering knuckle. Nissan immediately began to investigate the issue.

The investigation revealed that a back-up process was utilized in production for the incident vehicle and a limited number of Altima vehicles. This back-up process resulted in inconsistent torque control capability. As a result, the rod ball joint fastener on the incident vehicle was not torqued to proper specification.

In late January 2021, Nissan confirmed that 2,526 Altima vehicles underwent the back-up process during production. Nissan conducted a yard audit on affected vehicles at the Canton plant and repaired forty-eight (48) vehicles with loose tie rod ball joint fasteners.

On February 12, 2021, Nissan launched a quality hold and Dealer Action to inspect all units in dealer inventory.

February 25, 2021 - Nissan made a decision to recall all potentially affected vehicles to inspect, and if necessary, remedy the issue.

As of the date of determination, Nissan is aware of four (4) field reports attributed to this condition. Nissan confirmed that all four (4) incident vehicles underwent the back-up process during production. In all cases, the tie rod ball joint fastener and washer were missing. In three (3) of the cases, the tie rod detached from the steering knuckle. No accidents or injuries were reported.

7. Description of Corrective Action:

Owners of all potentially affected vehicles will be notified beginning on March 31, 2021 to take their vehicle to a Nissan dealer where they will re-tighten the left and right hand tie rod ball joint fasteners to specification. If the fastener is missing, the dealer will install a new fastener and washer and tighten to specification. Dealers will be notified on March 5, 2021.

Nissan will not include a statement in the Part 577 owner notification concerning reimbursement for the cost of obtaining a pre-notification remedy for the subject vehicles because they are still under warranty.

8. Copy of Notices:

Copies of all notices will be provided to NHTSA as they become available.