

49 CFR Part 573 – DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT
23C18 – CERTAIN 2019-2023 FORD BRONCO SUPER DUTY and RANGER VEHICLES –
INCORRECT PAYLOAD

Chronology of Defect / Noncompliance Determination

January – February 2023

On January 10, 2023, Ford's Critical Concern Review Group (CCRG) opened an investigation regarding weight data provided on vehicle certification and TREAD labels for certain Ranger vehicles. During an annual vehicle audit in June 2022, Ford engineers in Australia reviewed the payload capacities for certain configurations of the North American Ranger. Dealer installed or modification center ("mod-center") installed options (e.g. Auxiliary Lights, Pickup Box Extender, Splash Guards, Toolbox, Bedliners, etc.) were not included in the payload calculation. The CCRG analyzed Ranger production records for MY '22-'23 Ranger vehicles and then included production records going back to the start of production to identify the vehicles equipped with these options. The options weight values were then recalculated for each potentially affected vehicle. The updated mass properties values were then compared to the payload capacities printed on each unit's TREAD label to determine the potential change for each affected vehicle. This study found that payload values may be overstated by 1 – 156 pounds on certain units, depending on the option content.

On February 13, 2023, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) notified Ford that the 2023 model year Bronco they were evaluating for compliance to FMVSS 110 had a weight loading issue. In response, Ford's Automotive Safety Office (ASO) opened an investigation to determine the cause of the weight discrepancy. This investigation discovered that NHTSA's Bronco weighed eleven (11) pounds heavier than Ford's internal system estimated, and, as such, the GVWR was slightly understated.

March – April 2023

Ford's CCRG engaged with NHTSA to understand why the MY 2023 Bronco NHTSA tested weighed heavier than expected. On March 27, 2023, a team from Ford went to NHTSA's test facility to evaluate the vehicle in question. The Ford teams confirmed that the test facilities' weight results were valid as no build deviations or unexpected vehicle optional content were identified on the MY 2023 Bronco NHTSA tested.

To better understand current production vehicle-to-vehicle variability, Ford's engineering teams weighed additional Bronco vehicles at the plant and collected historic weight audit data from all Ford plants that produce FMVSS certified vehicles. This weight audit data showed that due to production vehicle-to-vehicle variability, some vehicles may exceed their estimated curb weight.

The CCRG investigation assessed potential risk for various cross vehicle attributes (e.g. Crash Safety, Vehicle Dynamics, Brakes, etc.) should a vehicle be loaded to the payload capacity indicated on its TREAD label. Based on the analysis, the impacted vehicles can safely carry the additional weight and the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) was slightly understated. This includes the impacted Bronco and Super Duty vehicles that are the subjects of this recall. During this period, Ford also conducted a VIN-specific cross vehicle attributes assessment into the impact of the missing accessory weights for the Ranger vehicles and determined that on certain Ranger configurations the GVWR was slightly understated.

May 2023

On May 11, 2023, Ford's ASO met with NHTSA and communicated that the vehicles Ford assessed are capable of an increased GVWR and that the GVWR currently on the vehicle certification labels is slightly understated. However, for certain Bronco vehicles, a GVWR increase above 6,000 pounds would change the vehicles' emissions categories for certification. Similarly, for certain U.S. Super Duty vehicles, a GVWR increase above 10,000 pounds could result in the vehicle being classified as a Commercial Truck. Certain Ranger vehicles are capable of carrying the extra accessory weight without concern; however, the remaining vehicles will require a restatement of the payload as represented on the TREAD label.

As of May 18, 2023, Ford is not aware of any warranty or field reports of related to this condition.

On **May 19, 2023**, Ford's Field Review Committee reviewed the concern and approved a field action.

Ford is not aware of any reports of accident or injury related to this condition.