

**\* \* TECHNICAL INFORMATION NOTICE \* \***

**DATE:** October 10, 2012  
**TO:** Mitsubishi Motors US and Puerto Rico Dealer Principals, General Managers, Service Managers, and Parts Managers  
**RE:** NHTSA Press Release on Counterfeit Airbags  
**TIN NO.** TIN-12-52B-001

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**AFFECTED VEHICLES:** All Vehicles Equipped with Supplemental Restraint System (SRS) - Airbag

**PURPOSE**

In response to a press release by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) that was issued earlier today, your dealership may start receiving questions regarding counterfeit airbags. MMNA has instructed NHTSA to have concerned customers contact our Customer Relations Department at 1-888-648-7820 with any questions they may have regarding counterfeit airbags.

If a customer contacts you and is the original owner of the vehicle and is certain that the airbags have not been replaced, or if the airbags were replaced under warranty using original Mitsubishi parts, you can assure them the airbags provided with their vehicle from Mitsubishi are not counterfeit. They are carefully designed, tested and manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and are an important part of the safety system provided with the vehicle.

**IDENTIFYING COUNTERFEIT AIRBAGS**

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has stated that counterfeit airbags look nearly identical to the certified, original equipment parts. Accordingly, an inspection of the airbag is typically not sufficient to determine whether a part is or is not counterfeit.

Significant design and engineering goes in to Mitsubishi airbag components. The electrical connectors, the type of inflator used, the speed of inflation, the inflation pressure, the shape of the airbag, the volume of the airbag, and the material used for the airbag are just a few of the many important design, engineering and manufacturing specifications that go in to every Genuine Mitsubishi airbag. These items cannot be verified by a visual inspection.

Removal and inspection of airbag modules is possible, but is also time consuming and expensive. That inspection is typically not sufficient to determine conclusively whether a component is or is not a Genuine Mitsubishi part. If a customer wishes to proceed with such an inspection, please make sure they understand the limitations of such an inspection and that the removal and inspection will be at the owner's expense.

Finally, a review of the serial numbers on the airbags is also not sufficient to determine conclusively whether a component is or is not a Genuine Mitsubishi part. Mitsubishi Motors is able to confirm the serial number of an airbag module that came originally equipped on a vehicle. For replacement airbag modules, however, we are only able to identify whether or not a serial number is valid. This generally is not helpful in spotting counterfeit replacement airbags because the counterfeit airbags apparently use valid serial numbers taken from Genuine Mitsubishi parts. The only scenario where a

replacement airbag module is guaranteed to be authentic is if it was replaced by a certified Mitsubishi dealer using Genuine Mitsubishi replacement parts.

## **VEHICLES AT RISK**

The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has stated that only vehicles that have had their airbags replaced within the past three years are potentially at risk.

If the vehicle was previously involved in a crash that resulted in deployment of the airbags, please inform the customer that Mitsubishi Motors cannot determine if the replacement airbags installed in their vehicle by the repair facility were or were not Genuine Mitsubishi replacement parts. If they have any question or concern about their airbags and whether Genuine Mitsubishi replacement parts or counterfeit airbags were used, they should contact the repair facility that installed those airbags and/or the insurance company, if any, that covered those repairs.

If they are the subsequent owner of a vehicle that was previously involved in a crash requiring replacement of the airbags, and if they have some concern that those airbags may be counterfeit, they should contact the company from which they purchased that car. In the event of a private party sale, they should contact the prior owner and/or repair facility. If they purchased their replacement airbags online through an auction site or website, they should contact that seller to determine the origin of the part.