

Chrysler Group Retiree Message Regarding Consumer Reports Reliability Survey

Consumer Reports recently released their 2010 reliability survey results. As a reminder, the survey is sent to Consumer Reports subscribers in April of every year. The survey asks how many repairs were made in the last 12 months and for what reason. For each model, the most recent three model-year's results are averaged together and that number is compared to the total average for all vehicles. From that comparison, a predicted 2011 reliability score is calculated by model and by brand.

The good news is that Ram 1500 is again "recommended" by Consumer Reports and the all-new Jeep® Grand Cherokee's road test scores should put it in qualifying range for a recommendation. However, as a new vehicle, the Grand Cherokee lacks reliability data that is necessary for recommendation. Consumer Reports requires vehicles to have at least average reliability, along with good road-test scores and safety ratings, to be recommended.

As reported by Consumer Reports, the overall reliability results for Chrysler Group were unsatisfactory. We still have a lot of data that we need to acquire from Consumer Reports, but the primary issue is a lack of survey responses from our recent model years. For the 2010 model year, 16 out of 23 eligible models had insufficient sample size for the survey. Additionally for 2009 model year, 10 of the models had insufficient sample size. The result of this is that the 2008 model year data is over represented in the three-year average and our improvements in the last two years are not recognized. From our internal data (reflecting a 100 percent sample size), we know that our reliability has improved by more than 50 percent in two and a half years.

It will take additional time to change perceptions about our company and products, but that process is well underway. Our new 2011MY vehicles launching this year will be rated as "New" rather than carrying the history of the past models. Consumer Reports has stated that our new products "show promise," and are "tremendously improved," although they won't report detailed assessments until they purchase and test the new and updated 2011MY vehicles.

Doug Betts

Sr. Vice President, Quality