

ATTENTION:  
 GENERAL MANAGER  PARTS MANAGER   
 CLAIMS PERSONNEL  SERVICE MANAGER


IMPORTANT - All Service Personnel Should Read and Initial



NUMBER WXH-65

**APPLICABILITY** 1997 & 1998 Legacy Models (As noted below)

**DATE** 4/27/98

**SUBJECT** AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION SHIFT LEVER

Subaru of America, Inc. has determined that some 1997 & 1998 Legacy vehicles manufactured from May 9, 1997 through August 28, 1997 may have a defective Automatic Shift Lever Assembly. Due to a supplier manufacturing error, insufficient welding within the shift lever assembly can cause several different types of failures including stuck ignition keys, broken shift levers/linkages and improper movement of shift levers.

Subaru of America, Inc. will notify all owners of the affected vehicles by first class mail and instruct them to contact their nearest servicing dealer for repairs.

**VEHICLES INVOLVED**

The affected vehicles are 1997 & 1998 Model Year Legacy Sedans and Wagons, and 1997 & 1998 Legacy Outback Wagons.

Vehicles with potentially defective switches are identified in Chart 1:

**CHART 1:**

MODEL	BODY STYLE	VIN RANGE
LEGACY	1997 SEDAN	4S3BD[**]5[*]V[*]216329-V[*]216935
	1997 STATION WAGON	4S3BK[**]5[*]V[*]325434-V[*]326143
	1997 OUTBACK	4S3BG[**]5[*]V[*]652024-V[*]655087
	1998 SEDAN	4S3BD[**]5[*]W[*]200001-W[*]204032
	1998 STATION WAGON	4S3BK[**]5[*]W[*]300001-W[*]306037
	1998 OUTBACK	4S3BG[**]5[*]W[*]600001-W[*]613357

- These vehicles have production dates of May 9, 1997 through August 28, 1997. ALL VEHICLES SHOULD BE CONFIRMED AS APPLICABLE USING THE VEHICLE COVERAGE INQUIRY IN THE DEALER COMMUNICATION SYSTEM (DCS).

**OWNER NOTIFICATION**

SOA will prepare and mail an Owner Notification Letter to the owners of the potentially affected vehicles. The owner notification is scheduled for May 25, 1998. A copy of the Owner Notification Letter and Owner Reply Card are included in this bulletin.

**DEALER PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITY**

Dealers are requested to promptly repair all affected vehicles in their inventory (new, used, demo) in accordance with the instructions in the Service Procedure Section of this bulletin. Vehicles taken

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into dealer inventory in the future should be corrected by following these service procedures. Dealers should contact owners of vehicles sold since the date of the computer address listing and provide them a copy of the owner notification letter and arrange to make the required repairs according to the service instructions enclosed. A copy of these supplemental owner notifications should be forwarded to SOA Government Affairs Department for our records.

**PARTS INFORMATION**

Replacement Shift Lever Assemblies will be allocated to each dealer. Initial supply of parts will be approximately 50% of vehicles on the affected VIN list. Additional quantities may be ordered from your facing warehouse. Please note that orders will be reviewed to insure quantities ordered are reasonable.

If it is necessary to keep the customer vehicle overnight, the cost for a rental vehicle will be covered for this repair by entering applicable rental charges (maximum \$25.00/day) in the rental field during the claim submission. Replaced Shift Lever Assemblies should be tagged and maintained for inspection by your DTM.

Parts Pricing

Description	Quantity	Dealer Cost	SRP List	Part #
Shift Lever Assembly	1	\$54.34	\$76.08	35110AC300

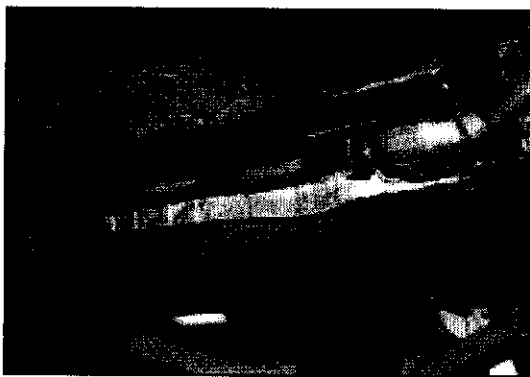


Figure 1



Figure 2

**SERVICE PROCEDURE**

**A/T SHIFT LEVER ASSEMBLY REPLACEMENT PROCEDURES**

**Note: The following procedures were developed with the vehicle's battery connected. This is to allow operation of the shift lock system for easier serviceability.**

**Removal:**

1. Place the shift lever in the neutral position. If the shift lever is damaged and will not go into the neutral position, place the lever closest to the neutral position as possible.
2. Lower the center exhaust system heat shield from the body of the vehicle to access the shift cable. Refer to figure 1.

**Note: Be careful not to damage the rear O<sub>2</sub> sensor wire harness.**

3. Remove the shift cable from the shifter assembly. Refer to figure 2.

**Note: Do not place shift lever in the park position for the continuation of this repair. The shift lever will not release from the park position with the shift cable disconnected. If the lever engages into this position, depress the shift lock override with a screwdriver to release it. Refer to figure 3.**



Figure 3

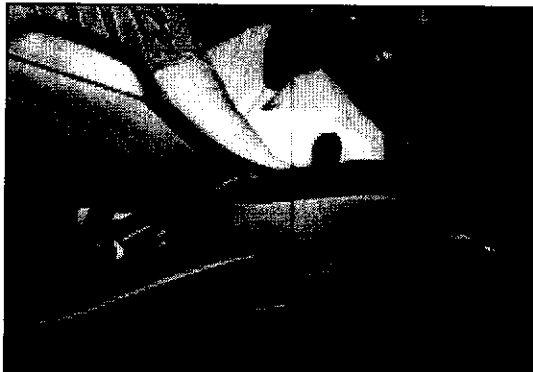


Figure 4

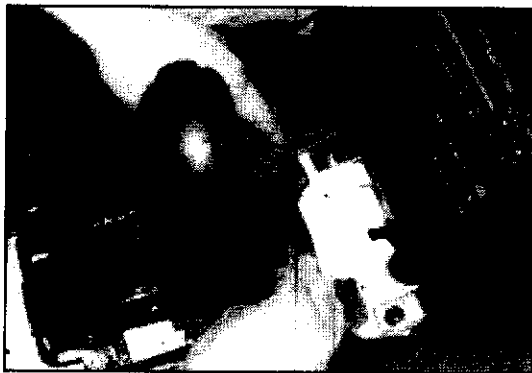


Figure 5



Figure 6

4. Remove the shift lever console plate, hand brake cover and the center console. Refer to figure 4.
5. Using a razor knife, slice the floor insulation on the **LEFT FRONT SIDE** of the shift lever assembly to access the mounting screws. Refer to figure 5.  
**Caution: To prevent damage to the shift lever wire harness, the floor insulation must be cut in this spot only.**
6. Disconnect the shift lever wire connectors. Refer to figure 6.
7. Remove the 6-shift lever mounting screws and remove the lever assembly. Refer to figure 7.  
**Note: Remove the lever assembly with the shift lever in the neutral position.**
8. Transferring the shift handle to the new shift lever assembly:
  - a. Remove the two shift handle mounting screws. Refer to figure 8.
  - b. Depress the shift handle button and remove the handle from the shift lever assembly. Refer to figure 9.  
**Note: Keep hold of the shift handle button or it will pop out from the handle.**
  - c. Apply Nigtight LYW # 2 grease or equivalent to the new shift lever rod. Refer to figure 10.
  - d. Apply Nigtight LYW # 2 grease or equivalent to the shift handle button, if necessary.
  - e. Reinstall the shift handle button into the handle. Refer to figure 11.
  - f. Depress the shift handle button and install the handle on the new shift lever assembly. Refer to figure 12.  
**Note: Pay close attention to the proper orientation of the shift handle assembly.**
  - g. Depress the shift handle button and confirm proper operation of the shift lever assembly.  
**Note: Do not allow the shift lever to engage into the park position. If the lever engages into this position, depress the shift lock override with a screwdriver to release it.**
  - h. Position the shift lever into the neutral position for reassembly.

**Installation:**

1. Reinstall in reverse order of removal.
2. Torque specifications:
  - a. Shift lever mounting screws:  
(5.9 +/- 1.5 N.m (0.6 +/- 0.15 kg-m, 4.3 +/- 1.1 ft-lb)
  - b. Shift cable bracket to shift lever mounting nuts:  
(18 +/- 5 N.m (1.8 +/- 0.5 kg-m, 13.0 +/- 3.6 ft-lb)
  - c. Shift cable adjusting nuts:  
(7.4 +/- 2.0 N.m (0.75 +/- 0.2 kg-m, 5.4 +/- 1.4 ft-lb)



Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9

3. Adjustment of the shift lever cable:
  - a. With the transmission, shift cable and shift lever in the neutral position, adjust the inner shift cable nut against the lever to obtain zero clearance. Install the rear nut on the cable and tighten to specification. Refer to figure 13.  
**Note: The shift lever assembly needs to be synchronized with the transmission linkage.**
4. Confirm the proper operation of the shift lever assembly.
  - a. The engine starts when the shift lever is in the park and neutral positions, but not in any other positions.
5. **Warning: The following steps are to be performed with the engine off and the ignition switch on.**
  - a. Check that the shift lever does not move from the "N" to "R" position without depressing shift lever button. Refer to figure 14.
  - b. Check that the shift lever does not move from the "R" to "P" position without depressing shift lever button. Refer to figure 14.
  - c. Check that the shift lever does not move from the "P" to "R" position without depressing shift lever button. Refer to figure 14.
  - d. Check that the shift lever does not move from the "3" to "2" position without depressing shift lever button. Refer to figure 14.
  - e. Check that the back up lights are illuminated when the shift lever is the "R" position and not illuminated in any other position.
6. Confirm the proper operation of the shift lock system.
  - a. Check that the ignition switch rotates from the "ACC" to the "LOCK" position when the shift lever is in park.
  - b. Check that the ignition key can be removed **ONLY** from the "LOCK" position.
  - c. Check that the shift lever moves from the "P" position to all other positions when the brake pedal is depressed and the ignition key is set to the "ON" or "START" position.  
**Note: If the above procedures can not be performed properly as stated, the shift cable needs to be readjusted.**



Figure 10



Figure 13



Figure 11

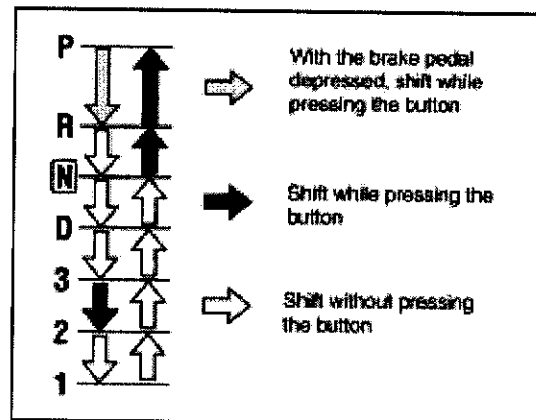


Figure 14



Figure 12

**CLAIMS REIMBURSEMENT AND ENTRY PROCEDURES**

Credit to perform this recall will be based on the submission of properly completed repair order information. Dealers may enter the applicable claim information through their Dealer Communications System (DCS).

All properly submitted claims will receive an automatic credit of **0.6** labor hours for replacement of the Automatic Shift Lever Assembly.

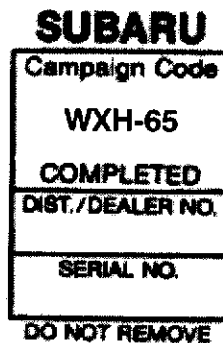
Parts will be reimbursed at suggested list price.

Listed below is claim entry information:

Dealer System	Transaction Code	Recall Code
ADP	RCL Recall Claim	WXI 66
R&R	21 Recall Claims	WXI 66
SDC / SNE	Claim Type MR	WXI 66

**SERVICE PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION LABEL**

Each vehicle corrected in accordance with the instructions outlined in this bulletin will require a "Recall Campaign" completion label. Each label provides a space to include the dealer code performing the service program. The information may be inserted with a typewriter or permanent ink pen and placed on the upper radiator cowl.



A quantity of 25 labels are being provided to each dealer with this bulletin. Additional quantities of these labels are available through your area/distributor service office.

**CAUTION**

**VEHICLE SERVICING PERFORMED BY UNTRAINED PERSONS COULD RESULT IN SERIOUS INJURY TO THOSE PERSONS OR TO OTHERS.**  
Subaru Service Bulletins are intended for use by professional technicians ONLY. They are written to inform those technicians of conditions that may occur in some vehicles, or to provide information that could assist in the proper servicing of the vehicle. Properly trained technicians have the equipment, tools, safety instructions, and know-how to do the job correctly and safely. If a condition is described, DO NOT assume that this Service Bulletin applies to your vehicle, or that your vehicle will have that condition.



**Subaru of America, Inc.**  
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Service Program WXH-65  
May 1998

Dear Subaru Owner:

This notice is sent to you in accordance with the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

Subaru of America, Inc. has determined that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in certain 1997 & 1998 Legacy sedans, station wagons and Outback models.

**SAFETY DEFECT**

Due to a supplier manufacturing error, insufficient welding within the shift lever assembly can cause several different types of failures including stuck ignition keys, broken shift levers/linkages and improper movement when your car is engaged in drive or in reverse increasing the risk of a vehicle crash.

**REPAIRS**

To prevent this from occurring, Subaru will replace all defective shift lever switches at no charge to you.

**WHAT YOU SHOULD DO?**

You should contact your Subaru dealer and schedule a service appointment to repair your vehicle.

If you are driving your vehicle and you notice one of the above conditions, you should take your vehicle to a Subaru dealer immediately

**HOW LONG WILL THE REPAIR TAKE?**

The actual time to perform this repair is approximately one hour, however it may be necessary for you to leave your vehicle for the full day of your scheduled appointment to allow the dealer some flexibility in scheduling other customers.

**CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS OR SOLD YOUR SUBARU?**

If you have moved or sold your vehicle, please complete the enclosed prepaid postcard and mail it to us.

NUMBER: WXH-65

Page 8

**IF YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION**

If the dealer fails or is unable to make the necessary repairs free of charge, you may contact the Subaru Recall Headquarters at 1-800-782-2783 or write to the address listed above.

You may also contact the Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590 or call the toll-free auto safety hotline at 1-800-424-9393 (Washington, D.C. area residents may call 202-366-0123).

We regret any inconvenience this matter may cause you. However, we have taken this action in the interest of your safety and your continued satisfaction with our products. We urge you to schedule an appointment as soon as possible to have this repair performed.

Sincerely,

SUBARU OF AMERICA, INC.

**Notice to Lessors**

Under Federal law the lessor of a vehicle who receives this letter must provide a copy of it to the vehicle lessee(s). The lessor must also keep a record of the lessee(s) to whom this letter is sent, the date sent, and the applicable vehicle identification number (VIN). (For the purposes of this section, a lessor means a person or entity that in the last twelve months prior to the date of this notification has been the owner, as referenced on the vehicle's title, of any five or more leased vehicles. A leased vehicle is a vehicle leased to another person for a term of at least four months.)