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## Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p451642)**

by **motoGS** on June 2nd, 2009, 1:45 am

Has anyone considered issuing a class action lawsuit against BMW for this? That may be the best way to get them to issue a recall, since the representing law firm will send notices to all current owners of affected motorbikes.

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p455752)**

by **WayneC** on July 14th, 2009, 1:03 am

As of 15/6/09 UK VOSA Safety Authority has announced an investigation into the fork issues on the early F650GS

They have promised a full investigation

Will post further information as it becomes available

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p455754)**

by **Dan Neelands** on July 14th, 2009, 1:13 am

Thanks Wayne.

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p455767)**

by **Glockowner** on July 14th, 2009, 3:24 am

Thanks for the info, something to definitely look out for.

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## **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p455811)**

by **Haynes** on July 14th, 2009, 11:25 am

Perhaps it's about time that someone designed a bolt-on item that acts as a secondary support on the RH fork if the original webbing fails. It wouldn't have to be large but something that would stop the collapse and somehow alert the rider to the break.

Maybe there's a small cottage industry for someone.

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## **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p455824)**

by **jasonsawyer** on July 14th, 2009, 12:46 pm

*WayneC wrote:*An enterprising US F650GS owner Ralph Wolfe has managed to force the NHTSA to open a formal investigation into the fork failures and BMW has now been asked to "please explain"

The documents associated with the investigation including the information request to BMW are available at their web site

[http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/probl ... search.cfm](http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/probl...search.cfm)  
(<http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/defect/defectsearch.cfm>)

Enter case No PE09026, this will give you a list of documents associated with the investigation. At this stage there are 2 documents, the formal investigation opening and the request to BMW

It is in every owner's best interest if anyone has any information about any failure in any circumstance to on pass the information to the US

Finally we may get the true story of how and why a percentage of the F650 forks are failing

Here's a direct link: [http://nhthqnwws111.odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/a ... ocType=INV](http://nhthqnwws111.odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/a...ocType=INV)  
(<http://nhthqnwws111.odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/acms/documentList.do?docId=PE09026&docType=I>)

BMW's respose to that inquiry was due on July 3rd. I wonder if they've missed the deadline or if the DOT just doesn't generally publish the initial response. Either way - I did about 600 miles in the White Mountains of New Hampshire this weekend (including some light off-roading,) and I'm still alive. Hope my luck holds out.

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## **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p456056)**

by **Rwolf01** on July 16th, 2009, 4:04 pm

Just to clarify, I didn't "force" the NHTSA to do anything... I just informed them that BMW's customer service was hiding behind their judgement by telling concerned bike owners "well, there's no recall so there must not be a problem". I then asked NHTSA to either share with me the results of their investigation, or document the process by which a decision to not investigate was made. Next thing I knew, an investigation had been started...

**If anyone knows of additional failures, \*PLEASE\* report them to NHTSA. (even if they occurred outside the US or to a non-US registered bike) It's very easy and can be done online. Just visit**

**<http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/index.cfm>**

**(<http://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/index.cfm>) and click on "File a Complaint".**

You'll need the model year, make, model and VIN number of the bike that had the failure. If you can upload supporting documents like insurance claims, medical or repair bills, or pictures of the damage that's great, but even an honest "yeah, it happened to me too" is very helpful.

The more complaints they have, the more resources they will dedicate to the investigation.

- Ralph

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p457380)**

by **jasonsawyer** on July 30th, 2009, 12:09 pm

BMW's response has been posted, but it doesn't seem to tell us anything. (Looks like a manual that describes how to do salt-spray testing and a spreadsheet that lists fork part sales.) Does anyone speak lawyer?

[http://nhthqnwws111.odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/a ... blic=false](http://nhthqnwws111.odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/a...blic=false)

<http://nhthqnwws111.odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/acms/documentList.do?docId=PE09026&docType=I>

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p457387)**

by **WayneC** on July 30th, 2009, 1:28 pm

The covering letter from BMW shows BMW was given an extra couple of weeks to respond, which considering the volume of information requested seems quite fair.

They indicate they are submitting answers to questions 8 to 12 & 14 only which are the answers to questions relating to engineering data on original forks & modified forks along with their assessment of the failures. BMW is claiming confidentiality over the information provided & hence has sent it to the Office of Chief Counsel with a request for confidentiality rather than NHTSA with only the number of fork legs sold being considered "non confidential" information.

It is up to the Office of Chief Counsel to rule on the BMW request for confidentiality on the information. Until this occurs NHTSA will not receive the information

The questions left unanswered ie Questions 1 to 8 are the questions relating to the no of machines manufactured, the no of failures reported, the no of claims made against them including legal claims, any service documents issued to dealers & the results of any testing they have conducted

There is no indication of when BMW will provide the information relating to questions 1 to 8 to the NHTSA.

At this stage the only question which should be asked of NHTSA is what deadline has been agreed for the submission of information on questions 1 to 8

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p457466)**

by **grandevox** on July 31st, 2009, 11:08 am

It's the confidential information that would tell all....

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p457476)**

by **Dan Neelands** on July 31st, 2009, 12:21 pm

I hope the NHTSA follows this thread and understands that at a bare minimum some of would like to make a life-safety decision of whether to replace our forks or not. This is about safety first and liability second. When I'm going down the road at 65mph I don't care a whit who should be shelling out. I care if my equipment holds together.

Dan

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p457500)**

by **jasonsawyer** on August 1st, 2009, 12:07 am

*grandevox wrote:*It's the confidential information that would tell all....

It seems to me that it's questions 1 - 8 (a.k.a. the one that BMW hasn't answered ) that are the key peices of info that we need.

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p457503)**

by **bigb** on August 1st, 2009, 12:21 am

I think this site has set a NOOB record that will only be surpassed by this thread alone. Uncanny, but true??

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p457626)**

by **haakon** on August 2nd, 2009, 9:42 am

"We", the F650 GS owners **may** have 2 serious "issues" with our bikes...The front fork and the electrical shortcut...and maybe a fire....

"bigb" I hope we can still be "friends" after this...????

-----

The lower part of the front forks on SOME of the older bikes HAVE failed.

(its a mystery that no one has been seriously injured-pure luck!!)

Some of the bikes up to 2007 or 08 have had the short circuit failures.

(on the shortcut issue there IS a recall...but very few owners have been told to check the wiring!!

You think or are sure the front fork issue is just a matter of "abuse" by the owner? This bike is sold to the public as a offroad/road bike.

You, as a owner is NEVER warned it is only a "pussy" offroad bike....not meant for a few jumps and some real fun.

Bottom line:

WHY did "they" modify the forks from 2003 and on?????

I do not hope so....but **almost** hope YOU too would have the front wheel snap off THAT would be the only way to make you shut up on this issue!

Still friends?? I hope?

*bigb wrote:*I think this site has set a NOOB record that will only be surpassed by this thread alone. Uncanny, but true??

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### **Re: Catastrophic F650GS Fork Failure (#p457668)**

by **bigb** on August 3rd, 2009, 12:11 am

Haakon, you're the Greatest, Sincerely

Yeah BMW misses a few here and there. But"

- Parts are continuously combined to keep inventory carrying costs down with Geometric Tolerance parts families - by shape (improvements are usually coincidental, and only if cost effective),
- The MAIN complaints are seemingly from a single source who blindly leads the pack over foreign potholes at 45mph (something the boldest of bold professional daredevils would not do sober).

For a KNOWN problem as you put it, there is no other incidents. Believe me Haakon, AL tubes can crack normally w/ 600 lbs force dynamically struck to a standstill at 45mph. Thus the upside down forks? Now we are going to sue the whole freackin industry based on this one episode of "Jackass"? I don't doubt what you say. But a concerned NOOB routinely every week until someone dies does not prove anything.

Motorcycles are risky business. Chances are well over a million times greater a lady talking in her cell phone in a minivan will run you over than a fork leg breaking WITHOUT warning cracks first. Off road riders ymmv, so inspect often. Forks breaking in offroad OR competition has been a normal occurrence for the last 50 years. LOOKOUT!!

FYI, BMW has the safest motorcycle track record, ever. This is one area beyond dispute despite scare tactics. But if you want to support expensing BMW's legal team, you have that right. I do resent repeated scare tactics however. Tell us how you did in court, and don't try to constantly validate arguments 'on a forum(!)' based on unsound premises. That won't fly in court, and hopefully it won't fly here as well.

But if you want to, as one of the many NOOBS said on this page, start a class action lawsuit with one proposed claim then good luck. That means all the true believers would commit perjury based on this thread and Haakon's reinforcement based on a wiring glitch. That suit sounds like it could walk on water

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