

Bulletin BPI 06-12

Subject: A LOW SPONGY BRAKE PEDAL

Vehicle Involved: ALL

Condition: Low and spongy brake pedal and extended stopping distance

Repair Procedure: Diagnostic Isolation Test

ISOLATION TEST: To diagnose a brake pedal that is described as feeling low and/or spongy when depressed must take place systematically. Begin by gently pinching all the hydraulic brake hoses simultaneously with hose clamps. The engine is running providing vacuum to the booster allowing maximum pressurization of the hydraulic system. If the brake can be applied and described as high and hard feeling the master cylinder and ABS valve body are testing good, this is an indication of the problem being involved in the calipers or wheel cylinders. The final procedure requires a pedal application and the release of one hose clamp at each of the 3 or 4 individual brake hoses. When the pedal drops and feels spongy, is an indication of where the problem is in the system. It may be air, a damaged seal surface, or out of adjustment component. Repair and replacement take place as required. Remember, whatever repair takes place on one end of an axle must take place on the other end.

Verify that the rear drums or rear disc brakes are adjusted to the manufactures mechanical specifications. Secondly, the integrity of the hydraulic system must be checked and tested for leaks. Lastly, air within the sealed hydraulic system may be creating a spongy brake pedal because the air can be compressed, allowing for extended pedal travel.