

BRIDGESTONE/FIRESTONE, INC.

August 27, 1992

ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT SALES AND ENGINEERING

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Subject: ROLLING RESISTANCE - P235/75R15 ATX XL vs. SL

Dear Mr. Bacigalupi:

During our meeting of Aug. 7, 1992 on the improved rolling resistance program for the P235/75R15 XL tires, you inquired as to the potential gains available by incorporating some of the features of the new XL ATX tire into the Explorer SL ATX.

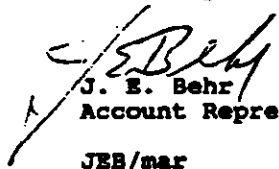
As you will recall, we are projecting the gains in the XL tire without changing the tread compound. The tread compound in both the XL and SL ATX tires also happens to be the same. I'll therefore address the three areas that we are modifying in the ATX XL tire, those being the belt package, subtread compound, and body ply gauge.

The vast majority of the gain we are projecting in the XL tire will come from the change to the belt package, and more specifically, the steelcord. However, the Explorer tire already utilizes a light weight belt package with steelcord similar to what we are adopting in the XL tire. We would anticipate little or no change in rolling resistance in the Explorer tire if we adopted the belt package used in the new XL tire.

As for the other two modifications, the body ply package that we are adopting in the XL tire is already identical to that used in the SL tire. With respect to the new subtread compound, this could potentially benefit the Explorer tire, but the gains would be minimal. We believe the new subtread compound provides a 1 to 2% improvement in rolling resistance over the existing compound which is currently in both the XL and SL tires. As part of the overall package for the new XL tires, it makes sense to include it. However, on its own, the new subtread does not have a great enough impact to warrant modifying and re-approving the Explorer tire.

In summary, the changes being planned for the XL tire are either already incorporated in the Explorer tire, or do not have a large enough impact to warrant a change at this time. However, especially as it relates to the subtread, these changes can be incorporated as part of future modification packages for our other tires, or included in new tires as they are being developed. Hopefully this addresses your question. If you would like to discuss it further, please contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,


J. E. Behr
Account Representative

JEB/mar
roro.jeb

~~cc: Mr. J. Kostrog~~