

Observations from Ford of Venezuela PN96 Assessment Evaluation
September 1996

Environment Conditions:

- Venezuela is a Country of Diversity.
 - . North coast - Semi-arid desert complete with sand dunes.
 - . Central - Andes mountain terrain with altitudes/switchbacks.
 - . West coast - Sea level, high temp/humidity.
 - . South - Amazon jungle (rain forest).
- Virtually no traffic rules.
 - . No speed limits (not enforced), drive as "fast as you can".
 - . Traffic lights/signs considered like Christmas trees: interesting, pretty to look at but not taken too seriously.
- No visible "middle class", either abject poverty (a.k.a. Tijuana) or "well to do".

Vehicles:

- Median vehicle age is older, generally poorer condition than US.
- Bread & Butter transport is done with F350/450 flatbed trucks, pickups generally observed empty.

Evaluation Trip:

- 5 vehicles: PN96 4.2L 4x4 Manual, PN96 4.2L 4x4 Auto, '96 F150 5.0L 4x4 Man, '96 F150 5.0L 4x2 Auto, '96 Chevrolet 5.7L Man.
- 10 evaluators in teams of two, rotating between vehicles every 45 min. for 4 days.
- Drove 350 - 500 miles/day (10-12 hrs).
- Had to amend trip route due to Guerrilla activity along Colombian border.
- Overall PN96's were functionally superior to '96 F150/Chevy even though we were comparing V6's to V8's.

(See Vehicle Observations next page)

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Vehicle #1 (Automatic 4.2L/3.55)

- Automatic transmission exhibits borderline shift business on grades; need to investigate the availability of a 3.73 or 4.10 axle ratio upgrade to increase 2nd gear operation above the threshold of IMRAC opening (2400rpm). Curb performance is marginal & GVW is projected unacceptable for portions of VEN market & most of Colombia. Also investigate possibility of enabling 4-2 kickdown point at a higher vehicle speed (team observations based on increased shift business).
- Steering col shake intermediate shaft looseness is beginning to appear at low mileage. Recommend installing either latest level fix or high temp grease.
- Lateral support of base vinyl seat is marginal (curvy mtn roads).
- Steering, Brakes, Handling all rated 8 or better with no issues noted.

Vehicle #2 (Manual 4.2L/3.55)

- Manual trans allows wider selection of 2nd-3rd operation on grades, with operation above the 2400 rpm threshold. Performance feel is judged acceptable at this time. Must confirm at ALVW condition for confirmation. Both Auto & Man will need to pass the 30% grade & Max GVW gradeability test. No recommendation to numerically increase axle at this time.
- Steering, Brakes, handling are all at 8 or better levels.
- No other concerns noted.

General Observations:

- Windshield Washer performance is marginal at speeds above 100 kph. Insect buildup is normal in Amazon environment, requiring frequent cleaning of windshield deposits. Seasonal requirements sometimes demand cleaning of windshield/front of car with a broom.
- Long exhaust is required in Columbia, to be aft of axle and directed away from pedestrians (45 deg rearward directed).
- Standard maintenance parts such as air cleaner elements, oil filters, etc. will need to be shipped to Venezuela Test Engineering to facilitate the proveout testing. Lockset (tailgate). Speedo Gears for LT245 (PN96 reading low by 20 kph).