

Bridgestone/Firestone Statement Regarding Venezuela

August 28, 2000

The safety of our customer always come first. Therefore, we have been cooperating with the authorities in Venezuela to determine the facts surrounding any incidents involving our tires manufactured in Venezuela. The attached letter (translated from the Spanish) delivered this afternoon to the Venezuelan consumer protection agency, INDECU, is intended to clarify issues related to this matter.

We have been made aware of a situation involving an unintentional mistake in the markings on Wilderness AT tires in sizes P255 70R 16 and P235 75R 15 manufactured in Venezuela, which has been corrected. Our documentation shows that these mismarked tires were indeed the tires Ford requested, per their specification. The inadvertent marking errors had no bearing on tire quality, performance or safety of the product delivered to Ford. We have fully addressed the mismarking situation.

It is also important to note that the tires in Venezuela are manufactured with different components and to different specifications than the comparably sized U.S. manufactured tires. In addition, this mismarking situation is totally unrelated to the U.S. recall of certain P235 75R 15 tires. None of the mismarked tires were manufactured in the U.S., and none were exported to the U.S.

We are confident that a full review of this matter will demonstrate that we took appropriate action to address the situation. Our main concern is and has always been our customers' safety and satisfaction.

We have no plans at this time to conduct a voluntary recall in Venezuela, however, we will do everything that we can to satisfy our customers. We continue our review of our Venezuelan produced tires and will act swiftly if the information and data indicates the need to do so. Of course, we intend to cooperate fully with INDECU as the process moves forward.

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(TRANSLATION FROM SPANISH)

August 28, 2000

Dear Sirs:

In furtherance of our letter of August 21st to you, we have been doing a complete analysis of all molds at our Venezuela factory. We confirm that the Venezuela-produced P255/70R 16 Wilderness AT (white wall) and the Venezuela-produced P235/75R 15 Wilderness AT (white and black wall) did have some inadvertent mismarkings. Production molds for these particular tires have already been corrected. Our documentation shows that these mismarked tires were indeed the tires Ford requested, but our markings were incorrect. In January of 1999, Ford of Venezuela requested that BFVZ submit proposed designs for a tire with a nylon cap ply, which was approved for use by Ford in June 1999 and went into production at BFVZ that same month. Please see the attached document.

In addition, during the course of our analysis we have also found some other molds at our Valencia facility with mismarkings and by today (Monday, August 28, 2000) we will have done a 100% verification of all molds in production. We will check all other non-production molds by Friday, September 1, 2000. Any molds found with mismarkings will be immediately corrected, or kept out of production.

As of today (Monday, August 28, 2000), no mismarked tires are being shipped to any of our customers or dealers. We have also requested our dealers to return to us all of their inventories of Venezuela-produced P255/70R 16 Wilderness AT (white wall) and Venezuela-produced P235/75R 15 Wilderness AT (white and black wall) inventory. This program began this past Thursday, August 24, 2000.

We will continue our full investigation of the mismarking problem and we expect to conclude this investigation by the end of this week as mentioned above. We will notify you promptly once we have the results.

Our goal continues to be to cooperate fully with your investigation.

Sincerely,

Bridgestone/Firestone Venezolana

(hand delivered August 28, 2000)