

Mitsubishi Motors suffers fresh lithium battery setback

March 29 2013



A customer looks at Mitsubishi Motors' new plug-in hybrid SUV in Tokyo on February 5, 2013. Mitsubishi Motors said Friday it had detected a new problem with lithium batteries used in its plug-in hybrid vehicle, the latest battery issue to affect the Japanese automaker in the past few days, media reports said.

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The [troubled batteries](#) are made by a joint venture formed by Mitsubishi Motors, Mitsubishi Corp. and GS Yuasa. The latter is also the manufacturer of problem [lithium batteries](#) that forced the worldwide grounding of Boeing's 787 next generation plane.

Officials at [Mitsubishi Motors](#) said a press conference late Friday that two of its plug-in hybrid Outlander cars had been unable to start due to an issue with battery voltage.

The company had earlier this week asked 4,000 owners of the Outlander model to avoid charging their vehicles following two separate incidents of overheating batteries.

It also said that no link could be established between its recent problems and those affecting the [Boeing 787](#), as the batteries were manufactured in different ways and in separate factories.

The automaker has not yet launched a recall of the affected cars but is urgently examining whether it will be necessary to do so, [public broadcaster](#) NHK reported.

Nearly 4,000 units of the Outlander have been sold since its launch in January, and another 4,000 have already been ordered.

But production and delivery of the plug-in hybrid model have been temporarily suspended pending an investigation into the cause of the problem.

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