

⚠️ FACEL-VEGA V8 STEERING SAFETY NOTICE

PITMAN ARM FAILURE

On November 3, 2006, an FV4 owner was pulling out of a parking lot at low speed when he completely lost his steering. Luckily, he stopped the car, got the car towed to a shop, no damage or injury. The car has the original Facel power steering system. The primary Pitman arm broke near the joint:



FV4 Pitman arm, broken while driving



Close-up of FV4 Pitman arm break near joint

Rust in the fracture shows that the Pitman arm was cracked on both the top and bottom before it failed. These cracks appear to be the result of vertical up and down forces on the Pitman arm.

Here are confirmed Pitman arm failures, none of which are known to have been in a previous accident:

- Approx. 1975 - USA, driving an HK500, Pitman arm failure.
- Approx. 1977 - UK, driving an HK500, Pitman arm failure.
- 2006 - USA, driving an FV4, Pitman arm failure

Remedy: If your Facel has the original power steering, this item needs to be removed and magnafluxed by a specialist. If there are any cracks, replace the item. Hans Ruhe of Holland has offered to make a new heavy duty FV/HK500/Excellence Pitman arm if there is sufficient interest. Contact him for details.

The following are other steering safety issues that V8 vehicle owners need to address:

STEERING ARM FAILURE

- Approx. 1985 - USA, driving an HK500, steering arm failure. Upon inspection, both his steering arms had failed previously and had been welded!
- There have been several other cases of steering arm failure reported.

Remedy: If you have a V8 Facel, replace the original steering arms with heavy duty steering arms made with modern materials and forging techniques. These heavy duty arms are available from Hans Ruhe of Holland and Jurgen Kromer of Germany.



Steering arms - original left; new H.D. right



Steering arms - original left; new, strong H.D. right

CENTER ROD FAILURE

- Approx. 1983 – Holland, driving an HK500, center rod failure.
- There is another reported case of center rod failure.

In each case of failure, the support brace had either not been added or had been removed and not replaced during servicing. Facel issued Service Bulletin #11 to install a support brace on the center rod. See the service bulletin for details. (Note: This does not apply to Facel II/HK2 models)

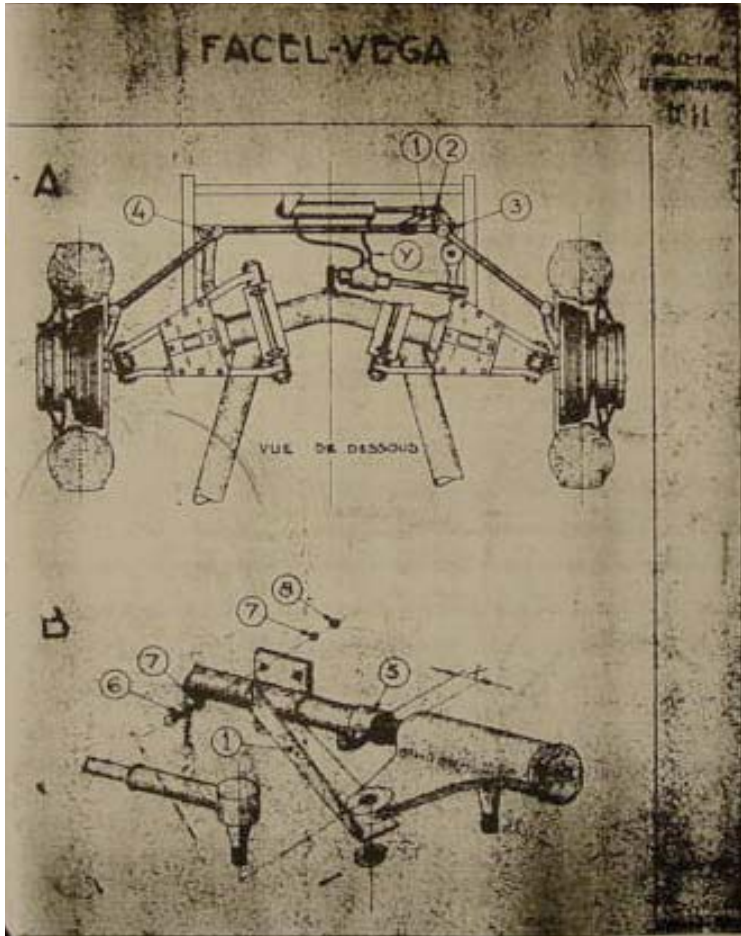
Remedy: If your V8 Facel has the original power steering as shown in Service Bulletin #11 and does not have this support brace, replace the center rod with a new rod and install the support brace. The center rod and support brace may be available from Hans Ruhe of Holland or Jurgen Kromer of Germany.



Center rod support brace, attached with 4 bolts



Close-up of support brace



Facel-Vega Service Bulletin #11: Installation of necessary center rod support brace

STEERING SAFETY RECOMENDATIONS

- **Annual Safety Inspection** - Use the services of an experienced and knowledgeable automotive professional to perform an annual safety inspection, and perform any steering safety service remedies.
- **Magnaflux Critical Parts** - Any original or used steering parts, such as the Pitman arm, the idler arm, and the steering arms, should be magnafluxed by a specialist to ensure they are sound.
- **Grease and Inspect** – This safety procedure was implemented by Intercontinental Motors of the UK when the cars were new: Critical steering components, such as the Pitman arm, idler arm, and steering arms are striped of paint. (Cracks can be hidden under paint.) Instead, the components are coated with grease to protect from corrosion. When the car is serviced, the grease is wiped off, the components carefully checked for cracks, then the grease is reapplied.

STEERING CONVERSIONS

In addition to the above service remedies, the following conversions can help address the safety issues:

1. Convert to manual steering. (This eliminates the compound Pitman arm and the complicated add-on power steering.)
2. Convert to Chrysler power steering. (Several vehicles have had this done with good results.)
3. Convert to rack-and-pinion steering. (This is being investigated to see if it will be a viable option.)

Use the services of an experienced and knowledgeable automotive professional to perform any conversion service.