

Beware: Fake Replacement Parts

We recently reported about Toyota in Australia closing in on fake replacement parts including filters and brake pads.

Scott Mitchell of Baxters also told us about an issue they found where a trucking company thought they were buying Genuine Delco starters when in fact these were cheap knock-offs.

“A major fleet in Darwin had a failure of a recently replaced starter. They gave me a buzz to share their displeasure and organise a replacement. The first thing we did was get a new starter on the truck. The second thing we did was arrange to get the failed starter back for a complete failure analysis.”

The starter arrived back at Baxters’ head office. It looked the same as an OE unit and was sporting the OE packaging but internally key components had

been substituted with cheap copies.

“The customer had even paid very nearly the same price as the OEM unit. Last I heard, he was on his way round to see the supplier who duded him and discuss compensation!”

“Leaving aside the potential safety issues, consider the costs and inconvenience of a truck parked up on the side of the road due to component failure. Our fleet customers tell us the minimum cost of an on-highway breakdown is \$2500 and the average around \$5000 per incident.”

“Aside from the part number it was the non-genuine earth studs that alerted our technicians. After disassembling the unit we discovered that it had been fitted with a non-genuine brush plate assembly. This is the same non-genuine brush plate that is

fitted to some of the Chinese copy 39MT’s we see floating around the market. We also see that the rear bearing is not the latest Gen 4 bearing fitted to our units. I have also included photos of the genuine brush plate and Gen 4 bearing for reference.”

Aside from being made of questionable materials there are two main issues:

1. The bearing has been spinning in the bearing journal and eroded the aluminium housing.
2. The armature has been rubbing against the brush plate causing drag on the starter during cranking and contributing to the starter burning up.

Scott added that Delco and Cummins are aware of these fakes.

