

GENERIC · POWERTRAIN

P0800

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P0800

Transfer Case Control System (MIL Request)

P0800 is a generic powertrain code that indicates the transfer case control module has requested the malfunction indicator lamp (MIL) to be illuminated due to a detected fault within the transfer case control system. The engine control module (ECM) or powertrain control module (PCM) sets this code when it receives a request from the transfer case control module over the controller area network (CAN) bus, signaling that the transfer case system has logged a fault that may affect emissions or driveability.

SYSTEM	CODE TYPE	SEVERITY	FIX DIFFICULTY	AREA
Powertrain	Generic (all makes)	Medium	Professional	Transmission

Symptoms you may notice

- Illumination of the malfunction indicator lamp (MIL) on the instrument cluster, often with no other noticeable symptoms.
- The transfer case may fail to engage or disengage between two-wheel drive and four-wheel drive modes.
- A grinding or whining noise from the transfer case area during acceleration or deceleration.
- The vehicle may feel sluggish or exhibit reduced power due to the transfer case being stuck in a low range.
- In some cases, the transmission may enter limp mode or exhibit harsh shifting as a protective measure.
- The four-wheel drive indicator light may flash or remain off when attempting to select a mode.

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 A faulty transfer case control module (TCCM) or its internal software requiring an update.
- 2 Wiring damage or corrosion in the circuits between the TCCM and the transfer case actuator motor.
- 3 A failing transfer case actuator motor or encoder ring that cannot properly engage the desired range.
- 4 Low or contaminated transfer case fluid causing mechanical binding and triggering the fault.
- 5 A malfunctioning transfer case position sensor that sends incorrect range information to the TCCM.
- 6 Communication errors on the CAN bus between the TCCM and the ECM/PCM, such as a shorted or open data line.
- 7 Internal mechanical failure within the transfer case, such as a worn shift fork or bearing.



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Connect a scan tool and retrieve all stored codes from every module, paying particular attention to transfer case and communication codes, then record freeze-frame data.
- 2 Inspect the transfer case fluid level and condition; top off or replace fluid if it is low or contaminated, and check for metal debris that indicates internal wear.
- 3 Visually inspect the wiring harness and connectors at the transfer case actuator and TCCM for chafing, corrosion, or loose pins, and perform voltage drop tests on the power and ground circuits.
- 4 Test the transfer case actuator motor and position sensor with a bidirectional scan tool to command range changes and observe whether the actuator responds correctly.
- 5 Check for technical service bulletins (TSBs) or software updates for the TCCM that address known false MIL requests, and reflash the module if applicable.
- 6 If the actuator or sensor is faulty, replace the component and perform a transfer case calibration or relearn procedure as required by the manufacturer.
- 7 Clear all codes and road test the vehicle in various drive modes to verify the repair and ensure the MIL does not return.

What the transfer case MIL request really means

- P0800 is often a secondary code that appears when the TCCM has its own stored codes; always scan the transfer case module directly rather than relying only on engine codes.
- A weak or failing battery can cause the TCCM to set a MIL request due to low voltage during cranking, so load-test the battery before condemning the transfer case.
- On many vehicles, the transfer case actuator motor is sealed and not serviceable separately, but the encoder ring inside can fail and cause intermittent range selection faults.
- The MIL request from the TCCM does not always indicate a mechanical failure; communication bus faults or a faulty ignition switch can trigger the same request.
- After replacing the TCCM or actuator, a calibration or relearn procedure is mandatory; skipping it will often cause the code to reset immediately.

Can I keep driving with P0800?

You can usually drive the vehicle short distances to a repair shop, but avoid using four-wheel drive modes and refrain from heavy acceleration or towing until the fault is diagnosed. If the transfer case is stuck in low range or makes grinding noises, stop driving and have the vehicle towed to prevent further damage.



Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with bidirectional control and module scanning capabilities
- Digital multimeter for circuit testing
- Transfer case fluid pump or suction gun
- Basic hand tools (socket set, wrenches, screwdrivers)
- Factory service information or equivalent diagnostic software

Reading P0800

P	Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
0	Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
8	Transmission.
00	The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P1870 Transmission Component Slipping · **P0801** Reverse Inhibit Control Circuit · **P0802** Transmission Control System MIL Request Circuit/Open · **P0803** 1-4 Upshift (Skip Shift) Solenoid Control Circuit · **P0804** 1-4 Upshift (Skip Shift) Lamp Control Circuit

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [Helicopter Simulator: Take Off, Hover and Land](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/p0800/>

