

GENERIC · POWERTRAIN

P0857

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P0857

Traction Control Input Signal Range/Performance

P0857 indicates that the powertrain control module (PCM) has detected an out-of-range or performance fault in the traction control input signal circuit, which is often shared with the four-wheel-drive (4WD) or all-wheel-drive (AWD) request circuit. The PCM expects a specific voltage or duty cycle from the traction control switch or module, but the signal it receives is either implausible, intermittent, or stuck within a narrow range.

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

Symptoms you may notice

- Traction control system (TCS) warning light illuminated on the dashboard, often accompanied by the anti-lock brake system (ABS) light.
- The traction control system may be disabled entirely, leaving the vehicle without electronic stability assistance.
- On vehicles with selectable 4WD or AWD, the driver may be unable to engage or disengage four-wheel drive, or the mode indicator may flash.
- A stored trouble code may be the only symptom, with no noticeable change in vehicle behavior.
- In some cases, the vehicle may enter limp mode or exhibit reduced engine power if the fault is interpreted as a critical safety issue.
- Intermittent activation of the traction control warning light during driving, especially over bumps or when turning.

Common causes, most likely first

- Faulty traction control switch or button, including internal contact wear or contamination.
- Damaged, chafed, or corroded wiring in the traction control input signal circuit, often near the switch or along the steering column.
- Poor electrical connection at the traction control switch harness or at the PCM connector.
- Failed traction control module or ABS control module, which may process and relay the input signal.
- Water intrusion or corrosion in the connector or switch assembly, particularly in vehicles with footwell or floor-mounted switches.
- Aftermarket accessories or improper wiring repairs that interfere with the signal circuit.
- Rarely, a faulty PCM that misinterprets a correct input signal.



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Verify the code with a scan tool and check for any related codes in the ABS, traction control, and 4WD systems before proceeding.
- 2 Inspect the traction control switch and its connector for physical damage, corrosion, or loose pins; clean or replace as needed.
- 3 Perform a wiggle test on the wiring harness while monitoring the switch signal on a scan tool to identify intermittent faults.
- 4 Measure resistance and voltage on the signal circuit according to the manufacturer's specifications, checking for opens, shorts, or excessive resistance.
- 5 Check the ground circuit for the switch or module to ensure it is clean and tight.
- 6 If the switch and wiring are good, test the traction control module or ABS module for proper operation and signal output.
- 7 Clear the code and perform a road test to confirm the repair, ensuring the traction control system functions correctly.

Traction Control Signal Traps You Should Not Miss

- A common oversight is replacing the traction control switch without checking the ground circuit, which can cause the same code if the ground is corroded or loose.
- The traction control input signal is often integrated with the 4WD/AWD request signal, so a fault in the 4WD switch or circuit can set P0857 even if the traction control button works.
- Intermittent faults often occur due to wire chafing at the steering column or near the pedals, which may not be visible without removing trim panels.
- Some vehicles use a momentary switch that sends a variable voltage signal; a scan tool that displays switch status in data stream is more reliable than a simple continuity test.
- Aftermarket electronic accessories, such as alarm systems or phone chargers, can introduce electrical noise that mimics a faulty signal, so always check for non-factory wiring.

Can I keep driving with P0857?

You can generally continue driving with P0857, but the traction control and stability systems may be disabled, reducing safety in slippery conditions. Avoid aggressive driving or towing until the fault is repaired, and be aware that 4WD/AWD engagement may be unavailable.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with live data capability
- Digital multimeter
- Wiring diagram for the specific vehicle
- Trim removal tools
- Test light



Reading P0857

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

Often seen with

C0035 Left Front Wheel Speed Sensor Circuit Range/Performance · **C0040** Left Rear Wheel Speed Sensor Circuit · **P0856** Traction Control Input Signal · **P0858** Traction Control Input Signal Low · **P0859** Traction Control Input Signal High

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How a Car Thermostat Works: Wax Pellet and Cooling Fan](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/p0857/>

