

GENERIC · POWERTRAIN

P0863

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P0863

TCM Communication Circuit

P0863 indicates that the transmission control module (TCM) has detected a fault in its internal communication circuit or in the data bus that links it to other controllers. The TCM monitors the integrity of its communication lines and sets this code when the signal is missing, intermittent, or corrupted, which can disable proper shift scheduling and torque converter clutch operation.

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

Symptoms you may notice

- Illuminated check engine light or transmission warning lamp, often with no other symptoms
- Harsh or delayed shifting, or the transmission stuck in a single gear (limp mode)
- No upshift or downshift response when using manual gear selection
- Speedometer or tachometer behaving erratically if the TCM shares data with the instrument cluster
- Intermittent loss of power or stalling when the communication fault occurs while driving

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Damaged, chafed, or corroded wiring in the TCM power or communication harness
- 2 Poor ground connection at the TCM or transmission case
- 3 Faulty TCM relay or blown fuse supplying power to the TCM
- 4 Internal TCM failure affecting its communication transceiver
- 5 CAN bus (controller area network) wiring fault or a failed terminating resistor
- 6 Loose or contaminated connector pins at the TCM or transmission pass-through
- 7 Low battery voltage or charging system fault causing the TCM to drop offline intermittently



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Scan all modules for communication codes and record freeze-frame data before clearing anything
- 2 Inspect battery voltage and charging system output, then load-test the battery
- 3 Check TCM fuses, relays, and grounds with a multimeter and verify power at the TCM connector
- 4 Perform a wiggle test on the TCM harness and connectors while watching live data for communication dropouts
- 5 Measure CAN bus resistance and voltage at the diagnostic link connector to rule out bus wiring faults
- 6 Inspect and clean TCM connector pins, looking for corrosion, pushed-back terminals, or water intrusion
- 7 If wiring and power are confirmed good, substitute a known-good TCM or perform module reprogramming per manufacturer procedure

What a TCM communication fault really means

- A P0863 is often set by a momentary voltage dip during cranking, so check the battery and grounds before condemning the TCM.
The code can be stored by a fault in the CAN bus itself rather than the TCM, so other modules may also show communication codes that point to the real culprit.
- Water intrusion into the transmission connector or TCM housing is a common hidden cause that visual inspection of the harness alone will miss.
- Aftermarket accessories wired into the data bus or power circuits can corrupt TCM communication and set this code intermittently.
- Replacing the TCM without checking for a chafed harness often leads to the same code returning within days.

Can I keep driving with P0863?

You can usually drive the vehicle to a shop if it remains in limp mode, but avoid highway speeds and heavy loads because the transmission may not shift properly. If the vehicle stalls or loses power steering assist, stop driving and arrange a tow.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with live data and bidirectional module communication
- Digital multimeter with min/max recording
- Battery load tester
- Wiring diagram for the TCM power and CAN bus circuits
- Terminal pick and electrical contact cleaner



Reading P0863

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

Often seen with

P0600 Serial Communication Link Malfunction · **P0700** Transmission Control System Malfunction · **P0864** TCM Communication Circuit Range/Performance · **U0100** Lost Communication With ECM/PCM A · **U0101** Lost Communication with TCM

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [Master the Four-Stroke Engine Cycle](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/p0863/>

