



P0DB5

Hybrid/EV Battery Cell Balancing Circuit C Stuck On

P0DB5 means the battery management system has detected that the cell balancing circuit for battery section C is stuck in the active-on state, so it cannot switch that circuit off as commanded. The computer monitors the balancing transistor and its feedback line, and it sets this code when the circuit remains energized longer than expected or when the commanded off state does not match the sensed state.

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

Symptoms you may notice

- Illumination of the hybrid or electric vehicle warning light, often with a message to service the high-voltage battery system
- Reduced electric-only range or a switch to limp-home mode because the battery management system limits power to protect the pack
- A noticeable imbalance in state of charge between battery modules that persists after a full charge
- Possible battery cooling fan running longer or more often as the pack works harder to equalize cells
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light, especially if the stuck circuit is on a low-current balancing path

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 A failed cell balancing transistor or driver integrated circuit on the battery management controller board for section C
- 2 A shorted balancing resistor or a solder bridge on the balancing circuit board that keeps the path energized
- 3 Damage or chafing in the wiring harness between the battery management controller and the section C balancing circuit
- 4 A faulty cell monitoring harness connector or terminal that feeds back a false 'on' signal to the controller
- 5 A battery management controller internal fault that misreads the balancing feedback line
- 6 Moisture or contamination inside the battery pack that creates a conductive path across the balancing circuit



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Scan all modules and record freeze-frame data for P0DB5, then clear the code and verify whether it returns immediately or only after a drive cycle
- 2 Inspect the section C balancing circuit wiring and connectors for chafing, corrosion, or pushed terminals before condemning any component
- 3 Measure resistance across the balancing resistor and check the transistor for a short using the manufacturer's service information
- 4 Back-probe the balancing feedback line at the battery management controller and compare the commanded state with the sensed state
- 5 If the circuit board is accessible and serviceable, replace the failed balancing transistor or resistor; otherwise replace the battery management controller as a unit
- 6 After repair, perform a battery pack balancing routine or a full charge cycle and confirm the code does not reset
- 7 Verify the repair with a road test that includes a charge and discharge cycle, monitoring cell voltage spread and balancing status

What a stuck balancing circuit really means

- A stuck-on balancing circuit can slowly drain one battery section even when the vehicle is parked, so a parasitic draw complaint sometimes precedes this code.
- Technicians often replace the entire battery pack when only a small balancing resistor or transistor on the controller board has failed, which is an expensive misdiagnosis.
- The code can set intermittently from a poor connector pin fit that only loses contact at certain temperatures, so a wiggle test of the section C harness is essential.
- Some battery management systems log this code after a low-voltage event or a jump start corrupts the controller's learned balancing state, and a software reflash or relearn may resolve it without parts.
- A stuck balancing circuit on one section can cause the pack to overheat in that area during fast charging, so ignoring the warning can lead to a more serious thermal event.

Can I keep driving with P0DB5?

You can usually drive the vehicle short distances to a service location, but avoid fast charging and aggressive driving until the fault is repaired. If the warning light is accompanied by a reduced power message or a burning smell, stop driving and have the vehicle towed.



Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with hybrid/EV battery management capability
- Digital multimeter with min/max recording
- Manufacturer service information for balancing circuit pinouts and resistance values
- Insulated hand tools rated for high-voltage work
- Battery pack lifting or support equipment if controller removal requires pack access

Reading P0DB5

P	Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
0	Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
D	Hybrid propulsion.
B5	The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P0A9C Hybrid/EV Battery Temperature Sensor A Circuit Range/Perform · **P0AFA** Hybrid/EV Battery System Voltage Low · **P0DB4** Hybrid/EV Battery Cell Balancing Circuit C · **P0DB6** Hybrid/EV Battery Cell Balancing Circuit C Stuck Off · **P0DB7** Hybrid/EV Battery Cell Balancing Circuit C Range/Performance

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How Regenerative Braking Works in Electric Cars](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/p0db5/>

