



by Mark Puccinelli members.atra.com



he Ford E4OD-4R100 has become the breadwinner transmission in a lot of shops. Although this workhorse has gone through a few changes over the years, the general diagnostic and repair processes have remained virtually the same.

An issue that's been showing up too often is when the transmission skips  $2^{nd}$  gear; it shifts 1-3-4. This may occur while the transmission is in service or show up after a major repair.

To diagnose this situation, you must first understand what's necessary for these units to shift into 2<sup>nd</sup> gear. There are three internal mechanical items needed:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> clutch
- One-way clutch

2<sup>nd</sup> clutch piston and seals

And there are four hydraulic circuit components that provide the control to shift these transmissions into  $2^{nd}$  gear:

- 1-2 shift valve and spring
- 1-2 clutch regulator valve
- 1-2 transition valve
- Shift solenoid 2

Now that you know what components are needed to shift into  $2^{nd}$  gear, the question now becomes, how can you pinpoint the reason this transmission lost  $2^{nd}$  gear?

One easy way is to take advantage of the similarities and differences between manual  $2^{nd}$  and a normal upshift into  $2^{nd}$  gear: The  $2^{nd}$  coast band is used for engine braking in manual  $2^{nd}$  only. The band application is controlled through the position of the manual valve, the movement of the 1-2 shift valve, and the position of the 1-2 transition valve.

So you can use manual 2<sup>nd</sup> to test the 1-2 shift valve movement and the position of the 1-2 transition valve.

#### **Testing the Valves**

IMPORTANT: Never perform this test on the road. The band doesn't have enough holding capacity for 1-2 shifts with engine load. The results will be misleading.

- Raise the vehicle's drive wheels off the ground.
- Start the engine.
- Shift the transmission into manual low.
- Slowly raise the throttle until the speedometer reads 12-18 MPH.



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• Hold the throttle steady and shift the transmission into manual 2.

The transmission should shift into 2<sup>nd</sup> gear. If it shifts into 2<sup>nd</sup>, the 1-2 shift valve is moving properly and the 1-2 transition valve is in the correct position. The transmission shifts into manual 2<sup>nd</sup> by applying the 2<sup>nd</sup> coast band; it doesn't rely on the 2<sup>nd</sup> clutch or one-way clutch. And because it's a manual 1-2 shift, it doesn't require any solenoid action.

If the transmission won't shift into 2<sup>nd</sup> manually or automatically, there are two basic areas to check:

• 1-2 shift valve and spring -either the valve is sticking or the spring's broken. It's very common for the 1-2 shift valve spring to break. To check it, remove the 1-2 valve completely (figure 1). Don't try to check it with a pick, because a broken spring may keep some tension against the valve and you may not realize it's broken.

• 1-2 transition valve — stuck in the shifted position, holding the spring compressed (figure 2). If the transmission has a manual



Figure 2



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1-2 shift, it proves that the 1-2 shift and transition valves are okay.

The areas to check first when you have a manual 1-2 shift but no auto 1-2 shift are:

- 1-2 shift valve spring
- 1-2 clutch regulator valve
- Shift solenoid 2 Confirm the electrical command and install another solenoid pack.

The 1-2 clutch regulator valve can be a problem on these transmissions. It regulates oil flow to the  $2^{nd}$  clutch after the 1-2 shift valve. If it sticks closed, you won't have oil flow to the  $2^{nd}$ clutch, so no  $2^{nd}$  gear.

What often happens is the hard coating peels off the valve, causing it to stick. There are steel replacement valves available to replace these damaged valves.

The 1-2 clutch regulator valve bore can also become distorted from wear and warp (figure 3). If you overtighten the valve body bolts the problem gets worse.

In some cases the valve will be free while the accumulator body is on the bench. Once you bolt the accumulator body to the case, the bore collapses or distorts and the valve seizes in the bore.

To confirm this:

• Remove the 1-2 accumulator springs, piston, and 1-2 clutch

regulator retainer and spring. Leave the 1-2 clutch regulator valve in the bore.

- Bolt the accumulator body to the case.
- Slide a piece of hard nylon tubing, with the end tapered, into the spring pocket of the clutch regulator valve and check for valve movement.

If the valve sticks when you bolt the accumulator body to the case, try flat sanding the accumulator body. If that doesn't help, replace the accumulator body

These are the most common causes for a transmission that shifts 1-2 manually but not automatically. Here are a few other, less common areas to check:

#### Valve Body Gaskets or Checkballs

Always lay the new gaskets over the separator plate, one at time, and make sure the gaskets aren't covering any of the separator plate holes. If any of the holes are being covered, you have the wrong gaskets.

A missing or mislocated checkball can also cause no  $2^{nd}$  on certain models. So always verify the checkball locations before bolting the valve body onto the case.

#### Internal 2nd Clutch Problems

While hydraulic issues are the most common cause for a lost  $2^{nd}$  gear, they're not the only possibility. There are a couple clutch problems that can also cause it: improper  $2^{nd}$  clutch stackup or using the wrong clutches for the one-way clutch.

 $2^{nd}$  Clutch Stackup — The  $2^{nd}$  clutch stackup is different for the E4OD than for a 4R100. The main difference is the thickness of the pressure plate and steels.

Here's the stackup for the 4R100: Pressure Plate -0.324" (1) Steels -0.128" (3)

And here's the stackup for the E4OD: Pressure Plate -0.410" (1) Steels -0.082" (2), and 0.128" (1)

Note: Some early E4ODs coupled to 6-cylinder engines only used two friction plates. These models used a 0.578" pressure plate.

Keep in mind that the pressure plate always goes into the case first. If you install it last, you'll end up with no  $2^{nd}$  gear.

2nd Clutch Diode vs Standard One-Way Clutch — When working on units with a  $2^{nd}$  clutch diode, check the friction plates on  $2^{nd}$  clutch race. There's a small difference in the clutch ID between the diode versus the standard one-way clutch; the ones for a standard one-way clutch have a slightly larger inner diameter (figure 4).

If you install clutches meant for a standard one-way clutch in a transmission that uses a diode one-way clutch, you'll end up losing 2<sup>nd</sup> gear.

It's a real problem when a transmission loses 2<sup>nd</sup> gear. But with a little care and a basic understanding of how these transmissions operate, you should be able to ferret out these problems and take care of them once and for all.





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