From: Christopher Tinto/=WDC/Toyota_NY. Sent:10/2/2007 5:41 AM.
To: [-] Michiteru Kato/=HINPO/TMC0@TMC0@TMCE@TOYOTA.
Cc: [-] .
Bcc: [-] .
Subject: Fw: Investigative Reporter - Nashville station - Fw: background/questions.

FYI - see below. No need to do anything - just FYI...

Best Regards,
Chris

----- Forwarded by Christopher Tinto/WDC/Toyota_NY on 10/02/2007 08:40 AM -----

Bill Kwong/Mobile/Toyota@TOYOTA
10/01/2007 05:54 PM
To Ming-Jou Chen/TMS/Toyota@Toyota
cc Andrew Gilleland/Scion/Toyota@Toyota, Christopher Tinto/WDC/Toyota_NY@Toyota_NY, Clyde Dyson/Mobile/Toyota@Toyota, john_hanson@toyota.com, Martha Voss/WDC/Toyota_NY@Toyota_NY, Mona Richard/TMS/Toyota@Toyota
Subject Re: Investigative Reporter - Nashville station - Fw: background/questions

MJ,

Here is a quick summary of what I told the reporter.

Toyota has not received an official inquiry from NHTSA and we are not aware of any abnormal conditions withe the Tacoma.
The Tacoma is not involve with the Camry/ES 350 all weather mat equipment recall.
In regards to the customers' claims that the vehicle surges forward while the brakes are applied, "Our power brakes system will hold the vehicle in place".
The low transmission fluid will not cause the vehicle to surge forward. In fact, if the fluid is low enough, the transmission will slip in gear.
Ask those customers to contact our National Customer Experience Center to document their concerns and to get the appropriate people involved.
Don't know what basis Clarence and Joan based their statement on, so I cannot comment on their comment.
NHSTA usually found drivers' error and pedal misapplication on "sudden acceleration" complaints.

He would like to get a Toyota exe to go on camera via satellite to address this. I told him that it may not be possible and he is going to have to go with my statements. What do you think?

Bill Kwong
Product Communications
Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.
19001 S. Western Ave. A404
Torrance, CA 90501
Tel: (310) 468-3764 Fax: (310) 381-6398

Ming-Jou Chen/TMS/Toyota
10/01/2007 12:35 PM
To Mona Richard/TMS/Toyota@Toyota
cc Andrew Gilleland/Scion/Toyota@Toyota, Christopher Tinto/WDC/Toyota_NY@Toyota_NY, Clyde Dyson/Mobile/Toyota@Toyota, Martha Voss/WDC/Toyota_NY@Toyota_NY, Bill Kwong/Mobile/Toyota@Toyota,

john_hanson@toyota.com
Subject Re: Investigative Reporter - Nashville station - Fw: background/questions

Mona, I'm out of the office.

I'm not aware of anything, but I will ask Bill to look into this. We can't diagnose a vehicle over the phone and will need to see if a case has been opened with CAC.

Bill, can you please investigate and follow up with the reporter just to let him know we're looking into this? And maybe check with PQSS on this since they say that in #8, two directors believe Toyota has a defect, but we don't know if they really know what's going on and on what they're basing this conclusion.

Thanks.

_____
Ming-Jou Chen
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Mona Richard/TMS/Toyota
10/01/2007 12:28 PM
To Ming-Jou Chen/TMS/Toyota@Toyota, Martha Voss/WDC/Toyota_NY@Toyota_NY, Christopher Tinto/WDC/Toyota_NY@Toyota_NY
cc Clyde Dyson/Mobile/Toyota@Toyota, Andrew Gilleland/Scion/Toyota@Toyota
Subject Investigative Reporter - Nashville station - Fw: background/questions

Ming-Jou, I have forwarded Jeremy's request to speak to someone from Toyota, to Clyde and Andrew. However, because they have not yet returned from the dealer meeting, I thought, you, Martha and Chris should be aware of this situation. Please advise. Thanks.

----- Forwarded by Mona Richard/TMS/Toyota on 10/01/2007 03:26 PM -----

"Jeremy Finley" <Jeremy.Finley@wsmv.com>
10/01/2007 02:27 PM
To <mona_richard@toyota.com>
cc
Subject background/questions

Hi Mona -

Good to speak with you.

As we discussed, here is some background as well as initial questions.
Again, our story airs next Monday, so we will begin editing the middle of the week. It's imperitive that we hear something from Toyota as soon as possible to indicate how you will be able to respond to our questions. Best case scenerio - we can speak to your representative via satelite.
Look forward to hearing from you -

Jeremy Finley
Reporter
Channel Four I-Team
WSMV-TV
(desk) 615-353-2421
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jfinley@wsmv.com

The WSMV-TV investigative unit has spoken with 12 different people, across the country, who say their toyota tocamas "take off" on their own without the driver's control. We have documented 20 complaints on NHTSA's website about this problem. All of the complaints have to do with the 2007 Toyota Tacoma.
The problem appears to have two different complaints.
The first problem is the vehicle accelerating on the interstate without the driver's intention - it happens either when their foot is taken off the gas pedal, or when the brake is applied. Drivers say their cruise control was not in operation at the time.
The second problem is when the vehicle has come to a stop, such as at a stopsign, and the brake is pushed, and the truck "surges" forward. Drivers describe it as if someone has rear ended them. Several drivers fear they will be forced out into the street (if at a stop sign) or they will hit someone. One complaint on NHTSA's website documents how one driver struck another car in front of her in a parking lot because of this.

Questions:

1. As for the complaints about the vehicle taking off on the interstate, there is a gentlemen in the Clarksville, TN region that blames the problem for an accident that destroyed his tacoma. Here is his complaint to NHTSA:

Complaints Summary

Make: TOYOTA
Model: TACOMA

Year: 2007
Complaint Number: 10201655
Summary:
OVER A PERIOD OF SEVERAL MONTHS AFTER PURCHASING A NEW 2007 TOYOTA TACOMA, I EXPERIENCED FIVE INCIDENTS OF BRAKE/ACCELERATION PROBLEMS FINALLY RESULTING IN A CRASH. FIRST INCIDENT: STOPPED AT A TRAFFIC LIGHT WITH MY FOOT ON THE BRAKE, THE TRUCK LUNGED FORWARD A FEW FEET. THE DEALERSHIP TOLD ME THEY COULD NOT FIND ANY PROBLEM. A MONTH LATER, STOPPED IN A GAS STATION DRIVE WITH MY FOOT ON THE BRAKE WAITING TO EXIT, THE REAR WHEELS BEGAN SPINNING OUT OF CONTROL. I PRESSED ON THE BRAKE AS HARD AS I POSSIBLY COULD TO KEEP FROM ENTERING TRAFFIC. THREE WEEKS LATER, APPROACHING THE BOTTOM OF A HILLY SHARP TURN, I TAPPED THE BRAKES TO SLOW DOWN. AGAIN THE REAR WHEELS ACCELERATED TO A HIGH RATE OF SPEED. I COULD NOT STOP THE TRUCK TO KEEP FROM STRIKING A VAN IN FRONT OF ME SO I CROSSED OVER A DOUBLE YELLOW LINE TO AVOID A COLLISION. IT TOOK ABOUT A THOUSAND YARDS TO GAIN CONTROL. THE DEALERSHIP SAID, "WE CAN'T FIX THE PROBLEM" UNTIL WE CAN DUPLICATE IT". I CALLED TOYOTA OF AMERICA, AGAIN ONLY TO BE TOLD THAT TOYOTA COULD DO NOTHING. THE FOURTH INCIDENT OCCURRED ON AN ENTRANCE RAMP TO A HIGHWAY. I TAPPED THE BRAKES TO SLOW DOWN. THE VEHICLE ACCELERATED TO A HIGH RATE OF SPEED. I GOT IT UNDER CONTROL QUICKLY. FINALLY THE FIFTH AND FINAL INCIDENT. COMING OUT OF NASHVILLE WHERE IT WAS RAINING HARD, I GOT FURTHER NORTHBOUND ON THE I-24 WHERE IT WAS RAINING LESS AND THE PAVEMENT WAS WET. WHILE IN THE SHOULDER LANE, A VEHICLE IN THE LEFT LANE STARTED MOVING OVER TO THE RIGHT CAUSING ME TO TAP MY BRAKES. THE REAR WHEELS ACCELERATED TO A VERY HIGH RATE OF SPEED CAUSING THE TRUCK TO HYDROPLANE. THE REAR END OF THE TRUCK SPUN AROUND TO THE LEFT AND, STILL ACCELERATING ON ITS OWN, DROVE INTO THE EMBANKMENT, FIRST SKIDDING SIDEWAYS THEN THE TRUCK BEGAN TO ROLL SEVERAL TIMES. IT STRUCK A RUT CAUSING IT TO GO AIRBORNE FINALLY LANDING ON ITS ROOF. IT ROLLED SEVERAL MORE TIMES COMING TO A

STOP IN A DITCH ON THE DRIVERS DOOR. I WAS TRANSPORTED TO THE HOSPITAL. *JB

Another driver in Cape Cod says the unexpected acceleration almost caused her to wreck. How many complaints has toyota recieved about this "unexpected acceleration" on the interstate, and what could be causing it?
2. Has Toyota explored the possiblity of a design flaw - either with the cruise control or the throttle sticking?
3. Drivers say the current recall of the floor mats in the recent lexus and camri model can't possibly be happening with their trucks. The gentlemen in the accident says he removed the floor mats that came with his truck before the accident. Do you believe this is causing the problem - and do all 2007 Tacomas have these "all weather" floormats?
4. The second problem of the trucks “surging” forward when stopped, either at stop signs or stoplights. One driver documented to Toyota that it caused her to have an accident in the parking lot of a school. Here is her complaint:

Complaints Summary

Make: TOYOTA
Model: TACOMA

Year: 2007
Complaint Number: 10192866
Summary:
MAY 30, I WAS PULLING INTO A PARKING SPACE AT KIEWIT MIDDLE SCHOOL WITH MY TACOMA. WHILE I WAS APPROXIMATELY 5-10 FEET FROM THE CAR IN FRONT THE ENGINE BEGIN RACING. MY FOOT WAS NOT ON THE ACCELERATOR, IT WAS FIRMLY ON THE BRAKE. THE ENGINE CONTINUED REVVING AND THE BRAKES FINAL GAVE AND I HIT THE CAR AHEAD. AS IT IS I DAMAGED THE FRONT OF MY TACOMA, AS WELL AS THE REAR OF CAR AHEAD OF ME. I AM SURE IF THERE WERE NOT A VEHICLE AHEAD AT SUCH A CLOSE DISTANCE GREAT DAMAGE AND INJURY WOULD HAVE BEEN INCURRED. I DO NOT FEEL THAT CURRENTLY THE VEHICLE IS SAFE TO DRIVE, I CONTACTED TOYOTA, NATIONAL -- THEY TOLD ME THAT IT WAS OK AND TO TAKE IT HOME. I FELT SO STRONGLY THAT THE VEHICLE WAS NOT SAFE THAT I IMMEDIATELY TRADED IT IN FOR A NISSAN -- IF YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION OF WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK WITH OTHERS THAT SAW WHAT HAPPENED PLEASE LET ME KNOW. I HAVE ALSO KEPT ALL RECEIPTS AND DOCUMENTATION FROM TOYOTA. BTW -- ACCORDING TO TOYOTA -- YOU GUYS DON'T EXIST. -- I STUMBLED UPON YOUR INFORMATION IN THE BACK OF MY NEW NISSAN'S OWNER MANUAL.

Do you feel there is a design flaw with this truck that is causing this “surge?” or what could be causing it?
5. Some drivers who have complaints about this “surge” while the brake is depressed say they checked the transmission fluid on their trucks only to find that the fluid is low. These are trucks that are either brand new or under 100,000 miles. They suggest that they are coming out of the factory without proper fluids. How would you respond?
6. Many of the drivers are upset that they have taken these trucks into their dealerships only to be told that there is nothing wrong with them, OR they could not replicate the problem. What would you say to these drivers?
7. Many of the drivers feel Toyota has a dangerous truck on the road. Your response?
8. Already, Clarence Ditlow, the director of the Center for Auto Safety, and Joan Claybrook, the former director NHTSA, believe Toyota has a defect that needs to be addressed. Do you believe this is a defect, and what would you say to them?
9. Are these trucks experiencing the problem of “sudden acceleration?”
10. Do you believe this is simply driver error?

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