

To: DOCUMENTATION CENTER OF TMC TECHNICAL ADMINISTRATION DIV.

Distribution in TMC TMC Request Dept.	GA Messrs. Ueno & Yoshii 2K,7K,ET,14U,CQE cc: K2x,FK,F1x,F2x,22F,24F,IT/ITS	Page	1/2
		TMC Report No.	
		TMA Report No.	UK0708WS - 14
		TMC Request No.	79
Dist. in affiliates	TMA-TRA <i>Messrs Lorne & Bradley TMS</i>	Report Date	August 20, 2007
TITLE	Safety News Articles For The Week of August 13 – August 17, 2007	Originated: M. Hoffman <i>[Signature]</i>	
		Reviewed: H. Kato <i>H. Kato</i>	
		Approved: C. Tinto <i>[Signature]</i>	

Following is a summary of the articles from major news outlets pertaining to safety issues for the week of August 13, 2007. The articles are attached:

Summary

REDACTED - RELEVANCY

[Redacted content area]

Attachments: Safety News Articles

“Lexus Safety Probe Widens: 40 Report Unintended Acceleration” Article 4 *Detroit Free Press* (August 15, 2007):

- NHTSA has stepped up an investigation into 98,454 Lexus ES 350 sedans
- There have been 40 reports of unintended acceleration, including 8 crashes & 12 injuries & cases in which drivers said their cars stopped only after an accident.
- Toyota told safety officials that the problem appeared to be caused by loose floor mats & contends that it dealt with the flaw through a mailing to customers earlier this year.
- NHTSA found an all-season floor mat that Lexus sold as an option in a majority of the cases it reviewed.
- Toyota told owners to not use the mat on top of the regular floor mats, & reminded them to check for proper installation.
- It also sent an orange warning sticker that owners were supposed to attach to the underside of the all-season mat.

REDACTED - RELEVANCY

TOYOTA



Daily News Clips

Wednesday 15-
Aug-2007

8/14 Toyota close: 117.99 (-1.41)

Yen/Dollar: 117.77 (-0.45)

Toyota News and related news clips are comprised of copyrighted material and are provided solely to Toyota associates. Do not forward any portion of Toyota News or any news clip to any outside party or non-Toyota associates.

Lexus Safety Probe Widens: 40 report unintended acceleration

Detroit Free Press 08/15/2007

Author: Justin Hyde

(c) Copyright 2007, Detroit Free Press. All Rights Reserved.



Federal regulators have stepped up an investigation into 98,454 Lexus ES 350 sedans after amassing 40 reports of unintended acceleration, including eight crashes and 12 injuries, along with cases in which drivers said their cars stopped only after an accident.

Toyota Motor Co. told safety officials that the problem appeared to be caused by loose floor mats and contends that it dealt with the flaw through a mailing to customers earlier this year. But the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration decided to continue its investigation last week to verify whether **Toyota's** efforts were sufficient.

Sudden acceleration problems carry a unique stigma in the U.S. auto industry, due to the collapse of the Audi brand in the late 1980s following a "60 Minutes" report alleging runaway vehicles. Federal safety officials later cleared Audi, but it took years for the company to clear its name with customers.

While some auto safety advocates maintain that several models still suffer from sudden acceleration, NHTSA has investigated hundreds of such complaints over the past two decades but rarely found any defects. Most of the complaints have been blamed on drivers mistaking the accelerator for the brake.

But in the Lexus investigation, NHTSA verified several of the complaints. One driver told the agency the vehicle had hit speeds of 100 m.p.h. over a 6-mile stretch of freeway due to the problem. A Michigan woman said the problem caused her to lose control of her Lexus, triggering a rollover crash on I-75 that totaled her car. NHTSA does not release the names of people who file complaints.

NHTSA found an all-season floor mat that Lexus sold as an option in a majority of the cases it reviewed. The rubber mat was sold as a replacement for the standard mats and should be secured by clips to the car's carpet. If left unclipped and installed over the regular mats, it can slide under the accelerator pedal.

In its letter sent in April, after NHTSA launched its investigation, **Toyota** told owners to

http://tmalive.tma.toyota.com/toyota/story.cfm?story_id=1984859

8/15/2007

not use the mat on top of the regular floor mats, and reminded them to check for proper installation. It also sent an orange warning sticker that owners were supposed to attach to the underside of the all-season mat.

As an option, the ES 350 offers an engine start-stop button instead of a traditional key. Some drivers tried to shut off the engine by pressing the button as the car accelerated, but without success. **Toyota** said that once the engine is running, owners must hold the button down for at least 3 seconds to shut it off in an emergency.

NHTSA's decision last week to upgrade its investigation to an engineering analysis means that it will review **Toyota's** mailings and perhaps solicit information from other automakers.

Lexus spokesman Greg Thome said that the company does not believe any safety defect exists with the ES 350 and that it was cooperating with NHTSA.

Toyota: External Affairs

Content: Lone Buffalo, Inc.

