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Subject: BuzzUpdate: Toyota Tacoma Unexpected Acceleration.

In the past few days, new articles regarding unexpected acceleration incidences in the current generation Toyota Tacoma have emerged on several websites, including Freep.com (DetroitFree Press) and Thetruthaboutcars.com.

There is some online discussion from individuals having experienced issues like this, who have seen it happen, or who discuss mechanical errors related to unexpected acceleration. Some online consumers are skeptical and suggest driver error may be causing the problem. Others question if the Tacoma's brake and gas pedals are too close together or if floor mat placement may have interfered with throttle position. Several also note that properly-functioning brakes should be able to override acceleration in all cases.

Though the Detroit Free Press article has been re-posted to, or referenced by, several automotive-related sites such as Motortrend.com, owner and consumer reaction currently appears concentrated on Freep.com and Thetruthaboutcars.com.

Direct Links:
http://www.freep.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080407/BUSINESS01/804070374

http://www.thetruthaboutcars.com/unintended-acceleration-rears-its-ugly-head/
http://wot.motortrend.com/6237475/recalls/owners_claim_toyota_tacoma_has_sudden_acceleration_issue/index.html
(Example only, no CGM as yet)

Owner and consumer verbatim:
"For everyone questioning the "superior" quality of foreign cars, yahoo! I have never driven a foreign car and never will. Now, with all the recent developments about Toyota's quality, my decision is paying off. As for engine revs in cars, I worked at an auto auction and saw this happen to two fellow employees. One lady even turned off the ignition like we were always taught, because it should have stopped the car. But, it didn't. These were people who were parked in a bay, started the car, and slowly pulled ahead. No confusing the brake with the gas there. One ran up the back of the car in front of her, the other hit two cars and barely made it between two concrete pillars. More investigations need to be done."
Freep.com, April 7, 2008

"Years ago, most cars had plenty of room between the gas, brake and clutch peddles. Now they are jammed together and the plastic over those peddles range down too close too. It is NOT a surprise to me that somebody could step on both the brake and gas peddles at the same time. I hit them over and over again with my size 11 boots on, in the winter. And let's face it if there is a voltage spike, static charge, or whatever, the computer which CONTROLS all of the cars locomotion could be compromised, just like your computer locks up at home. No evidence...go figure!!!"

Freep.com, April 7, 2008

"schuh, GM uses 3 sensors in the accelerator pedal; two rising voltages (on different scales), and one decreasing voltage. If all three do not correspond, the TAC module will go to limp mode. We still saw complaints of unintended acceleration, and we still never found anything. I'm still calling driver error on this story."

Freep.com, April 7, 2008

"When I worked for one of the big 3, we had a vehicle in development where people thought it was accelerating. Turns out the gas and break were just too close together and too easy to push both at the same time. The average persons foot would clip the gas while they were breaking."

Freep.com, April 7, 2008

"I have a 2007 Tacoma, and while I can't say that the thing has ever taken off on me, it did take me by surprise a couple of times before I got used to it.AC on, foot on the brake, and when the compressor cycles off, the incremental power available from the decreased accessory load will surge the truck forward if you're not firm on the pedal.I don't know about you, but generally I just keep enough pressure to make sure the thing is stopped, not all the way to the floor. Just takes some getting used to is all."
Thetruthaboutcars.com, April 8, 2008

"So if "unintended acceleration" is solely the result of "stupid" people, but 33 of 37 of all the complaints happened in Tacomas, does that mean stupid people have some natural predisposition to Tacomas?" Please, 33 of the presumably thousands of complaints were from Tacomaowners. This does happen from time to time, throttle cables get rusty, floor mats get bunched up etc. It does not mean there is a design flaw. Usually though, it's driver error. I had my throttle stick wide open once because the pivot on my pedal had caught the top of a Husky Liner floor mat right after I had floored it to pull out into trafic, took me about a second and a half to realize it and turn off the key. Panic is what did these people in."
Thetruthaboutcars.com, April 8, 2008

"OK, guys, here's how unintended acceleration can work, especially in an older vehicle. Most fuel injection vehicles out there have what's known as an "IAC" (idle air control) valve, a little solenoid that advances the throttle whenever a load (such as a/c) is placed on the engine. Over time, some of these valves can fail, leaving little pieces of rubber or other debris inside the metal solenoid valve. This can cause the valve to stick and actually pull the throttle cable wide open. Remember those old, old cars with vacuum wipers? What happened when the throttle was pushed wide open? Right, the wipers stopped. Why? No vacuum at the manifold. Now, power brakes are mostly controlled by- wait for it- vacuum! There is a tank on the master that "stores" some, so that supposedly the car or truck will stop at least once before the vacuum runs out. But, with age, some of these don't work too well. Older, or inexperienced, or just startled drivers experience the tremendous increase in pedal pressure required when the vacuum runs out as a "failure " of the brakes. Bingo! Unintended acceleration, inability to stop the car. Not always completely the driver's fault, huh?"
Thetruthaboutcars.com, April 8, 2008

"Because absent brake failure, a car's brakes should always stop an accelerating car. Always. Hit the gas and brakes simultaneously from a dead stop, and that vehicle should not move. As some have noted, though, there could be ergonomic issues that make some cars more prone to human error than others. Without knowing anything about the specifics in this case, pedal placement would be a good place to start looking for issues. Floor mats can be another culprit."
Thetruthaboutcars.com, April 8, 2008

"Try this — take a car, any car. Hold the brake to the floor. Then, hit the accelerator while keeping the brake pedal to the floor. I don't care what kind of car it is — if the brakes are working properly, the car will not move forward. Period. Doesn't made what kind of car it is or who built it, it isn't going to budge.
It is certainly possible for an engine to race. But there is absolutely no way on earth that the motor should be able to override a working set of brakes.
If these drivers are claiming that they were on the brakes, then they are (a) mistaken, (b) lying, or (c) victims of brake failure. There are no other options. If an investigation suggests that (c) did not occur, that leaves the other two options.
That doesn't mean that there isn't an ergonomic problem or that the design shouldn't be changed. However, you can bet that the drivers were not braking, as they claimed."
Thetruthaboutcars.com, April 8, 2008

"I think it's a combination of throttle mapping/weak return springs and poor pedal placement.
It seems that new vehicles (even with throttle cables) use an overly-agressive throttle mapping; combined with light gas pedal resistance and close brake/gas pedal placement (or wayward floor mats) could result in more "unintended" events. However, the ECU should vindicate drivers by indicating that the gas and the brake were being operated

simultaneously."
Thetruthaboutcars.com, April 9, 2008

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