Lexus Consumer Safety Advisory Q&A

Q1: Is this Lexus Consumer Safety Advisory a recall?

A1: This is a Consumer Safety Advisory based on the potential for an accelerator pedal to get stuck in the full open position due to an unsecured or incompatible driver's floor mat on certain Lexus and Toyota vehicles.

Q2: Why did Lexus issue the Consumer Safety Advisory?

A2: Recent events have prompted Lexus to take a closer look at the potential for an accelerator pedal to get stuck in the full open position due to an unsecured or incompatible driver's floor mat. A stuck open accelerator pedal may result in very high vehicle speeds and make it difficult to stop the vehicle which could cause a crash, serious injury or death.

Q3: Was there a specific incident related to the Consumer Advisory?

A3: On August 28th, 2009, California Highway Patrol Officer Mark Saylor and three members of his family tragically lost their lives on a highway near San Diego, California, while driving a 2009 ES350 loaned to them by a local Lexus dealer.

Preliminary information from law enforcement investigators indicates that the ES350 involved in the crash contained a driver's all-weather floor mat from a different model Lexus. If incompatible driver's floor mats are installed in any vehicle, or if the floor mat is not properly secured by the retaining hooks, this could cause it to interfere with the accelerator pedal.

Q3a: Electronic systems, such as drive by wire, have been suggested as a possible culprit in the persistence of sudden unintended acceleration incidents. Is this part of the investigation of the San Diego accident.

A3a: All aspects of the vehicle are being studied, but preliminary indications are that an all weather floor mat not designed for the ES350 was installed at the time of the Saylor crash. We have seen no evidence that electronic engine control systems were the cause.

Q4: Which models and model years are impacted?

A4: Lexus

2007 – 2010 ES350
2006 – 2010 IS250 and IS350

Toyota

2007 – 2010 Camry
2005 – 2010 Avalon
2004 – 2009 Prius
2005 – 2010 Tacoma
2007 – 2010 Tundra

Q4a: How many vehicles are involved?

A4a: We are currently determining the number of vehicles.

Q5: Is Lexus planning another recall for the all-weather floors mats or other components as a result of this Consumer Advisory?

A5: Lexus considers this a critical matter and will soon launch a safety campaign on specific Lexus and Toyota vehicles. Throughout the process of developing the details of the action plan, it will advise the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Until we develop a campaign remedy, we recommend that owners remove ***any*** driver-side floor mat from the specific models identified and **NOT** replace it with any other floor mat.

Q5a: Why didn't the previous all-weather floor mat recall alleviate this problem?

A5a: The previous floor mat recall was aimed at replacing accessory all weather floor mats with a newly designed one as well as advising users not to place all weather mats on top of any other floor mats. Despite this effort, unsecured or incompatible driver's floor mats can present a hazard and Lexus/Toyota is exploring remedies that can further reduce the likelihood of an crash that could result from mis-installation.

Q6: What should customers do?

A6: Lexus/Toyota is committed to finding the right solution for this condition. Until the campaign remedy is developed and customers receive notice from Lexus, we request that customers take out any removable driver's floor mat and NOT replace it with any other floor mat.

Q6a: What if a customer chooses not to remove their floor mat?

A6a: In the event a customer chooses not to remove their floor mat, Lexus strongly recommends that they ensure that the correct floor mat is being used, that it is properly installed and secured, that it is not flipped over with bottom-side up, and that one floor mat is not stacked over another. Information on proper floor mat installation can be found on http://www.lexus.com.

Q6b: What if a customer requires assistance in checking the floor mat?

A6b: If a customer chooses not to remove their floor mat and requires assistance, they may check with any local Lexus dealership's Parts or Service Department to verify the application. Dealers will re-install only those floor mats designed specifically for that model and model year.

Q6c: What if a customer needs retaining hooks (clips)?

A6c: Replacement retaining hooks (clips) for Lexus carpeted and all-weather floor mats are available at any Lexus dealership. Please check with the dealer for details.

Q7: What if a floor mat is an aftermarket rubberized floor mat?

A7: Driver's floor mat interference is possible in any make or model vehicle with any combination of floor mats. Therefore, consumers need to make sure the floor mats are compatible for their model and model year. Also, they need to be sure they are properly secured using the appropriate retention device (clips). Driver's floor mats should never be stacked. Consumers should never place any floor mat – aftermarket or not -- on top of another driver's floor mat. Mats should also not be flipped over with the bottom-side up.

Q8: What if a driver experiences accelerator pedal interference. What should they do?

A8: Should the vehicle continue to accelerate rapidly after releasing the accelerator pedal, this could be an indication of floor mat interference. If this occurs, Lexus recommends the driver take the following actions:

First, if it is possible and safe to do so, pull-back the floor mat and dislodge it from the accelerator pedal; then pull over and stop the vehicle.

If the floor mat cannot be dislodged, then firmly and steadily step on the brake pedal with both feet. Do not pump the brake pedal repeatedly as this will increase the effort required to slow the vehicle. If you are still unable to stop the vehicle, then do the following:

Shift the transmission gear selector to the Neutral (N) position and use the brakes to make a controlled stop at the side of the road and turn off the engine.

If unable to put the vehicle in Neutral, turn the engine OFF. This will not cause loss of steering or braking control, but the power assist to these systems will be lost.

-If the vehicle is equipped with an Engine Start/Stop button, firmly and steadily push the button for at least three seconds to turn off the engine. Do NOT tap the Engine Start/Stop button.

-If the vehicle is equipped with a conventional key-ignition, turn the ignition key to the ACC position to turn off the engine. Do NOT remove the key from the ignition as this will lock the steering wheel.

Q8a: Why does the Engine Start/Stop button require 3 seconds to shut off?

A8a: This is to prevent accidentally shutting off the engine in case the button is bumped or mistaken for another control. The resulting loss of engine power could cause a loss of the power assist to the brakes and steering, and possibly an unsafe situation.

Q9: What if an owner has additional questions or concerns?

Owners with questions or concerns, are asked to please contact the Lexus Customer Assistance Center (1 800 255-3987), or consult the information posted at http://www.lexus.com.