

TOYOTA
TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.

WASHINGTON OFFICE
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November 18, 2004

Mr. Kenneth N. Weinstein
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance – NSA-01
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: Toyota Prius and Lexus RX330 Stop Lamp Switch
Part 573; Defect Information Report

Dear Mr. Weinstein:

In accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 and 49 CFR Part 573, on behalf of Toyota Motor Corporation ["TMC"], we hereby submit the attached Defect Information Report concerning a voluntary safety recall of certain 2004 model year Toyota Prius and Lexus RX330 vehicles to address an issue with the stop lamp switch.

Should you have any questions about this report, please contact Mr. Sid Yokoi or Mr. Chris Santucci at (202) 463-6856.

Sincerely,

TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.


Chris Tinto
Director

CT:cs
Attachment

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(4 pages)
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DEF. INFO. INVESTIGATION

DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT

1. Vehicle Manufacturer Name:

Toyota Motor Corporation ["TMC"]

1, Toyota-cho, Toyota-city, Aichi-ken, 471-8571 Japan

Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada Inc. ["TMMC"]

1055 Fountain Street North, Cambridge, Ontario, Canada N3H 5K2

Affiliated U.S. Sales Company

Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Inc. ["TMS"]

19001 South Western Avenue, Torrance, CA 90509

2. Identification of Affected Vehicles:

Based on production records, we have determined the affected vehicle population as set forth in the table below.

Make/ Car Line	Model Year	Manufac- turer	VIN		Production Period
			VDS	VIS	
Lexus RX330	2004	TMC	GA31U	40001010-40042379	February 10, 2003 through July 1, 2004
			HA31U	40001045-40072005	
		TMMC	GA31U	4C001001-4C019006	September 19, 2003 through September 3, 2004
			HA31U	4C001002-4C039897	
Toyota Prius	2004	TMC	KB20U	40001009-40086109	May 30, 2003 through June 15, 2004
			KB22U	40001142-40086097	

Note : Although the involved vehicles are within the above VIN ranges, not all vehicles in these ranges were sold in the U.S.

Component containing defect: Stop Lamp Switch

Manufacturer Name: Tokai Rika Co., LTD.

Address: 3-260 Toyota, Oguchi-cho, Niwa-gun, Aichi 480-0195, JAPAN

Telephone: +81-587-95-5211

Manufacturer Name: Wakasa Matsushita Electric Co.,Ltd.

Address: 26-1-1 Dou, Tsuruga City, Fukui 914-8567 JAPAN

Telephone: +81-770-23-5201

3. Total Number of Vehicles Potentially Affected:

183,090

4. Percentage of Vehicles Estimated to Actually Experience Malfunction:

Unknown

5. Description of Problem:

In the stop lamp switch of the subject vehicles, there is a possibility that silicon oxide may be generated on the surface of the contact point and the contact resistance could increase. Consequently, current may not flow at the contact, causing the stop lamp to become inoperative.

6. Chronology of Principal Events:

September 2003 – January 2004

Toyota received field information from the Japanese market that intermittently the stop lamp was not being activated. Toyota immediately recovered the stop lamp switch and began investigations. As a result, it was found that current could not flow at the contact points due to silicon oxide on the surface of the contact points. Toyota confirmed the manufacturing process of the stop lamp switch and it found any silicone, which might be resulted in the failure, was not used in the manufacturing process of the switch.

In order to confirm the formation mechanism of the silicon oxide, TMC conducted cyclic electrification tests in a silicone gas atmosphere. As a result, it was found that the silicon oxide was being generated on the surface of contact when under the electrical load of the LED stop lamp. However, when under the electrical load of a stop lamp that uses an incandescent bulb, the silicon oxide did not accumulate since the current required for a stop lamp that uses an incandescent bulb is larger than that of an LED.

February 2004 – November 2004

TMC inspected all interior components to identify a source of the silicone gas in the vehicle. As a result, volatile silicone was being used in the manufacturing process of polyurethane used in the vehicle seat. In the meantime, the shape of the stop lamp switch's contacts was changed to prevent the formation of silicon oxide.

TMC conducted a test that estimated the silicone gas concentration in the vehicle cabin from the amount of silicone in the polyurethane used in the seat. As a result of testing with this estimation of silicone gas concentration, it was determined that the silicon oxide was being generated on the surface of contacts.

As a result of the investigation above, Toyota decided to conduct a voluntary safety recall of all vehicles equipped with the LED stop lamp. This safety campaign will also be conducted in Japan, Canada, Australia, Europe and other countries.

7. Description of Corrective Repair Action:

All known owners of the subject vehicles will be notified by first class mail to return their vehicles to a Lexus or a Toyota dealer for inspection, and the dealer will replace the stop lamp switch.

Reimbursement Plan for pre-notification remedies

The vehicles involved were built between October 2001 and September 2004. As the owner notification letters will be mailed out well within the active period of the Lexus/Toyota New Vehicle Limited Warranty ("Warranty"), all involved vehicle owners for this recall would have been provided a repair at no cost under the Lexus/Toyota's Warranty.

8. Recall Schedule:

Mailing of the owner notifications will commence on early December, 2004 and be completed before mid January, 2005.

Copies of the owner notification and dealer instructions will be submitted as soon as they are available.

9. Distributor/Dealer Notification Schedule:

Notifications to distributors/dealers will be sent on November 17, 2004.