



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration

**DOT Auto Safety Hotline**  
**Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire**  
**To Report Vehicle Safety Defects**  
1-888-DASH-2-DOT  
(1-888-327-4236)  
INTERNET: [www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline)

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 335

Date Received

Repository ☐

Reference No.  
10048646

2004 EB 12-NOV-2005 37

**OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)**

Name

Address

City

STOCKHOLM

State NJ

Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening Telephone Number

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle?  
In the absence of an authorized signature, provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.  
Signature of Owner *[Signature]* Date 1/29/04

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side

NOT AVAILABLE

WVWEE83A6TE033148

Make

VOLKSWAGEN

Model

PASSAT

Model Year

1994

Date Purchased  
02-NOV-95

Dealer's Name and Telephone Number

MotorSports LLC (formerly InterCar) 973-283-2626

Original Owner

☒

Dealer's City

Newton NJ

State

NJ

Zip Code

07860

Engine:

No. Cylinders

6

Fuel Type:

gasoline

Transmission Type

AUTOMATIC

☒ Anti-lock Brakes

☒ Cruise Control

Powertrain

Vehicle Component Code

116100 ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:IGNITION:SWITCH

Multiple Failure: 1

**FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION**

Incident Date(s)

10/11/03

Failure Mileage

58,800 (approx)

Failure Speed

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE**

Tire Make

Tire Model (Name or Number)

Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)

DOT No. (Example: DOTM19ABC036)

☐ Original Equipment

☐ Prior Repair

Failure Location:

Tire Component Code

Tire Failure Type

**ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE**

Make:

Date Manufactured:

Model No./Name:

Seat Type:

Installation System:

Child Seat Component Code:

Failed Part:

**APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION**

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), failure(s), crash(es), and injury(ies).)

Crash

☐ Yes ☒ No

Fire

☐ Yes ☒ No

Number of Persons Injured

0

Number of Deaths

0

Reported to Police

N

Narrative Description of Incident(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies).

Please describe (1) events leading up to the failure, (2) failure and its consequences, and (3) what was done to correct the failure; i.e., parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available).

THE CONSUMER PARKED THE VEHICLE AND 45 MINUTES LATER SMOKE BEGAN TO COME FROM UNDER THE HOOD. THE CONSUMER TOOK OUT THE BATTERY TO STOP VEHICLE FROM CATCHING FIRE. THE INSURANCE COMPANY SAID THE SMOKE WAS DUE TO A FAULTY IGNITION SWITCH. PLEASE PROVIDE ANY FURTHER DETAILS. \*NLM

See attached letter to VW.

The ignition switch was fixed (due to recall) in Dec 2002 but was faulty. One week after the electrical burned & melted, another letter from VW came to extend the warranty on the ignition switch.

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

The Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-579) This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.

fill out report

To date VW of America has not responded to our letter nor to the dealer himself.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

Stockholm, NJ  
U.S. Department  
of Transportation

National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration

400 Seventh St., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Official Business  
Penalty for Private Use \$300

**BUSINESS REPLY MAIL**

FIRST CLASS PERMIT NO 73173 WASHINGTON, D.C.

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY NATL. HWY. TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMIN.

U.S. Department of Transportation  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration  
Office of Defects Investigation, NVS-216  
400 7th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20590

NO POSTAGE  
NECESSARY  
IF MAILED  
IN THE  
UNITED STATES

**VEHICLE  
OWNER'S  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

**DOT AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE**

TO REPORT VEHICLE SAFETY DEFECTS  
COMPLETE THIS FORM

OR

**DASH2DOT**

and dial toll free at

**1-888-DASH-2-DOT  
1-888-327-4238**

DOT Auto Safety Hotline  
(DASH) 2 DOT



U.S. Department of Transportation  
National Highway Traffic Safety  
Administration  
<http://www.nhtsa.gov>

December 22, 2003

FROM:

Stockholm, NJ

TEL:

TO: Volkswagen of America, Inc.  
3800 Hamlin Road  
Auburn Hills, MI 48326

RE: Faulty ignition switch damage reimbursement

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am the owner of a 1996 Volkswagen Passat. On October 11, 2003 my car was parked in the garage and my daughter opened the door. Smoke came pouring out. We tried to start the engine but the car was dead. We pushed the car outside and smoke continued pouring out of the ignition area and from the area between the driver and front passenger seats. We took the key out of the ignition and the car kept smoking. We disconnected the battery and called for help.

Examination by the Volkswagen dealership Newton MotorSports, LLC in Newton NJ, confirmed that the smoldering was due to the ignition switch.

Please see the attached document marked DOCUMENT 1, which is a notice we received in November of 2002 that the ignition switch was faulty and subject to recall. We followed the instructions in this notice and had the recalled ignition switch replaced on December 18, 2002. See DOCUMENT 2, which is a receipt from Newton MotorSport, LLC, proving that we had the ignition switch replaced in accordance with the recall notice.

Now see the attachment marked DOCUMENT 3. This document, which we received in October, 2003, informed us that the electrical portion of the ignition switch was known to have a problem and that our warranty was extended due to the problem. Please also notice the following line from this letter:

"It is not necessary for you to take any action unless the electrical portion of the vehicle's ignition switch has become inoperative or becomes inoperative in the future."

Now please consult the attachments marked DOCUMENT 4 and DOCUMENT 5, which are bills for repair of the extensive damage the car incurred because of the faulty

electrical switch. In the case of DOCUMENT 4, we had to pay that bill out of pocket. In the case of DOCUMENT 5, the dealership absorbed the cost of that bill. So, our out of pocket expense due to this faulty component was \$2,424.69. In addition, the dealership absorbed the other bill for \$2,287.44.

Please consult the attachment marked DOCUMENT 6, in which our insurance company declined to pay for the damage we incurred, noting that the damage was due to "mechanical failure and not related to collision or comprehensive."

In short, these documents prove the following points:

- 1) By your own admission, the part was faulty and subject to recall.
- 2) We followed the instructions contained in the recall properly.
- 3) A follow up letter from Volkswagen admitted, once again, that there was a problem with the part. However, this letter explicitly instructed us *not to take any action*.
- 4) As a direct result of this faulty part, which was confirmed both by an authorized Volkswagen dealership as well as an insurance investigation, my car required thousands of dollars of repairs which was not covered by insurance.

In light of these indisputable facts, I demand that you cover the entire cost of these repairs that I paid out of pocket, or a total of \$2,424.69. I also would like to suggest that you reimburse your dealership for the cost that they incurred and decided not to charge to me, however that is between you and the dealership.

Please contact me at your earliest convenience to arrange payment of the sum above. Please note that I am prepared to file a complaint with the US Department of Transportation, National Highway Safety Administration, Office of Defects Investigation in Washington, DC, if I do not receive reimbursement for these expenses immediately.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me at the above address or telephone number.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

# Document 1

Volkswagen of America, Inc.



3800 Hendon Road  
Auburn Hills, MI 48326  
Tel. (248) 754-8000

November 2002

Subject: Safety Recall

Dear Volkswagen Owner:

*Monday 11-18-02*

This notice is sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

Volkswagen has decided that a defect, which relates to motor vehicle safety, exists in some 1996 model year Volkswagen Passat vehicles. Our records show that your car is one of the vehicles affected by this recall.

#### What Is The Problem?

Volkswagen has found that the electrical component of the ignition switch assembly could fail in a manner causing the headlights and windshield wipers to become inoperative. If such failures are discovered by the driver while the vehicle is in use at night or in rainy or snowy weather, an accident could occur resulting in injury.

#### What Will Volkswagen Do?

Your authorized Volkswagen dealer will replace the electrical part of the ignition switch assembly. The lock itself will not be replaced so that you will continue to be able to use your current ignition key. The repair work will take approximately one hour and, of course, be performed without charge. Repair instructions and replacement parts are available at dealers.

#### What We Would Like You To Do

Please contact the Service Department of any authorized Volkswagen dealer and schedule an appointment as soon as possible. Please present the enclosed "Campaign Authorization" form when you bring your Volkswagen for service.

**Please note that this work will be performed free of charge by authorized Volkswagen dealers only. Volkswagen will not pay or reimburse for any such work if performed by non-authorized Volkswagen facilities.**

#### Precautions

If, prior to having this recall repair work performed, you find that the headlights or windshield wipers do not operate immediately after you start your engine, please contact your Volkswagen dealer immediately.

# Document 3

Volkswagen of America, Inc.



3800 Hartin Road  
Auburn Hills, MI 48328

October 17, 2003

**Subject:** Volkswagen Ignition Switch Special Warranty Extension

Dear Volkswagen Owner:

We are writing to inform you of a special 8-year/100,000 mile extended limited warranty covering the electrical portion of the ignition switch on 1996 - 1997 Passat vehicles and 1996 - 1997 Jetta vehicles. Our records show that you are the owner of one of these vehicles.

## What is the problem?

It is possible that, under certain conditions, the electrical portion of the ignition switch of affected vehicles could become inoperative due to a combination of unfavorable manufacturing tolerances, especially if a heavy bundle of keys is regularly attached to the ignition key. In cases where the electrical portion of the ignition switch malfunctions the windshield wipers, headlamps and the air conditioning system could become inoperative immediately after the engine is started.

## What will Volkswagen do?

To help ensure that owners of vehicles with the above-mentioned problem do not encounter unexpected out-of-pocket expenses, Volkswagen is offering an extended limited warranty covering the free replacement of the electrical portion of a malfunctioning ignition switch on affected vehicles. This warranty extension will cover the electrical portion of the vehicle ignition switch that upon failure results in the windshield wipers, headlamps, or the air conditioning system becoming inoperative immediately after the engine is started. This warranty will be in effect for a total period of eight (8) years/100,000 miles, whichever occurs first, from the original in-service date of the vehicle.

The original in-service date of the vehicle is defined as the date the vehicle was delivered to either the original purchaser or the original lessee; or if the vehicle was first placed in service as a "demonstrator" or "company" car, on the date such vehicle was first placed in service.

## What We Would Like You To Do

It is not necessary for you to take any action unless the electrical portion of the vehicle's ignition switch has become inoperative or becomes inoperative in the future. Simply contact your authorized Volkswagen dealer so that the necessary repair can be made. Replacement of the electrical portion of your ignition switch will be performed free of charge within the 8-year/100,000 mile extended warranty period. Any malfunction of other electrical components of your Volkswagen, and/or other shortcomings, however, remains covered by the normal terms of your New Vehicle Limited Warranty or other warranties that you received at time of purchase. Please be sure to place or staple this letter in the front of your vehicle's warranty booklet for future reference.

**THE ATTACHMENTS TO THIS  
DOCUMENT HAVE BEEN REMOVED  
TO PROTECT UNWARRANTED  
INVASION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY  
PURSUANT TO EXEMPTION 6 OF  
THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION  
ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6).**