



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-DOOT
(1-888-327-4236)
INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 1367

Date Received

Repository ☐

26-OCT-2004 5:51

Reference No.
10087740

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name

Address

City

FOND DU LAC

State

WI

Zip Code

Daytime Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Evening Telephone Number

Do you authorize NHTSA to contact the manufacturer of your vehicle?
In the absence of a signature of owner

YES ☒ NO ☒
I provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Date 11/21/04

VEHICLE INFORMATION

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

1B7HG48N02

Make

DODGE

Model

DAKOTA

Model Year

2002

Date Purchased

2002

Dealer's Name and Telephone Number

ABHOLDS GARAGE

Engine: 4.7

No. Cylinders 8

Fuel Type:

GAS

Original Owner

MT

Dealer's City

MT CALUARY, WI

State

Zip Code

Transmission Type

AUTO

☒ Antilock Brakes

☒ Cruise Control

Powertrain

Vehicle Component Code

021540 SUSPENSION:FRONT:CONTROL ARM:LOWER BALL JOINT

Multiple Failure: 1 (SAME PART IN 2 LOCATIONS)

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s)

28-OCT-2004

Failure Mileage

54000

Failure Speed

Tire Make

Tire Model (Name or Number)

Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)

DOT No. (Example: DOTM19ABC018)

☐ 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

Number of Deaths

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 TIRE RETAIL STORE WAS UNABLE TO PERFORM A FRONT END ALIGNMENT AFTER REPLACING THE FRONT TIRES BECAUSE 3 OF THE BALL JOINTS WERE DEFECTIVE, AND THE FOURTH WORE OUT. *AK

I JUST SPENT ABOUT \$500.00 TO HAVE 2 OF THE 4 BALL JOINTS REPLACED BY A DODGE DEALER IN FOND DU LAC (SEE COPY OF RECEIPT). CORRESPONDENCE AND ASSISTANCE FROM THE FACTORY HAS BEEN UN-IMPRESSIVE AND NON-SUPPORTIVE (SEE PRIOR CORRESPONDENCE).

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.

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From:

 | | | [Inbox](#)

Sent:

Monday, November 22, 2004 8:59 AM

To:

customerassist@daimlerchrysler.com

CC:

Subject:

RE: DaimlerChrysler Customer Assistance Reference Number

11-7-04

Dear Daimler Chrysler, Dodge Truck Division at
customerassist@daimlerchrysler.com :

As a former Director of Service Operations and Technical Support for a major manufacturer of heavy duty off-road construction equipment, I feel it is my responsibility to inform you that you have violated the single most important tenet of providing GOOD CUSTOMER SERVICE. To be more specific, you have simply DECIDED NOT TO LISTEN to what it is I have been trying to say. Instead, you have attempted to deflect the REAL issue(s) by searching for ANYTHING that will absolve you (and your corporation) of any accountability and/or culpability regarding the real problem(s). You do this even if the sources you use are incorrect, misinformed, or just plain flat-out WRONG. Does my contestation of a few incorrect observations of your dealer support network not merit any (reasonable) consideration? Does the fact that I offered to make my vehicle available for your further inspection not garner any sense of truth, sincerity, nor reasonableness on my behalf? What about the digital photos I also offered for your review?

Observation and Comment:

- #1) you seem to 'hang your hat' on the incorrect observation from a dealer of yours stating that I have employed a 'lift-kit' on my vehicle, thereby 'aggravating' the front ball-joint situation. Nothing could be further from the truth as stated in my prior emails.
- #2) you STILL have not answered my question regarding the safety issue. Is safety and the overall well-being of your customer not paramount in the objective of your job performance? You never did advise on the risk and/or dangers of continued operation as I requested.
- #3) what about my other question where I asked who the original supplier of the suspect ball-joints was? And YES, by the way, I am also well aware you have advised the U.S. Federal Government's 'Safety Advisory Group', the NHTSA that you have in fact, changed to an alternate ball-joint supplier (call NHTSA at 1-888-327-4236 and ask simply them for verification). Now, certainly you can empathize with me as I am currently faced with having to repair my 2 YEAR-OLD VEHICLE at my expense and OBVIOUSLY do not wish to purchase 'suspect' ball-joint from your prior supplier. So, I beg of you, why do you refuse to assist me further by not advising exactly who was your

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REFUND

prior vendor/supplier/manufacture of the suspect ball-joints?

In today's highly competitive auto industry, (annual) market share and customer retention is measured in tenths and even hundredths of a singular percentage point. I find it quite appalling that you make very little effort to keep me as a satisfied customer. I have been always been loyal to both your product and market direction.....but, just like in the past, it now appears that "minimizing your corporate exposure" is more important than simply listening to a good customer.

Have a nice day.

Sincerely,

Fond du Lac WI

-----Original Message-----

From:

Sent: Friday, October 29, 2004 1:28 PM

To: customerassist@daimlerchrysler.com

Cc:

Subject: Re: DaimlerChrysler r Customer Assistance Reference Number

Dear Customer (non)Assistance Personnel:

It appears your ENTIRE argument for NOT assisting me on the defective manufacturing and poor quality issue of the suspect Ball Joints hinges on your statement of 'Oversized Tires AND a Lift Kit'. Well, well, well. If this argument goes away..... I can then assume you will be able to assist me.....correct?

Well folks, there is NO LIFT KIT ON MY Vehicle.....AND, the 'OVERSIZED TIRES' that you refer to are the NEW ones I installed just last week. Remember!!!! The reason I was told the Ball Joints were defective is because I HAD REQUESTED an ALIGNMENT be performed IN CONJUNCTION with the new tires I just purchased (receipt available). Also, the ORIGINAL TIRES I just took off have about 20 - 25% of the ORIGINAL tread REMAINING and show NO INDICATION of suspect or faulty Ball Joints.....and, the vehicle tracked straight ahead and had no shimmy nor vibrations. From an engineering perspective, The Bigger Tires would NOT adversely affect the performance nor longevity of the Ball Joints, anyways. (note: these are also the SAME SIZED TIRES your latest Dodge Truck Sales Literature advertises and 'brags' about in its newest product line offerings).

As I've said before, you need to forward this to an individual in a higher authority with more experience in these issues as I fear all of this will most likely come back to haunt you.

P.S. My vehicle is readily available for your inspection, anytime, or, I can provide digitals of anything you wish in reference to suspension, etc. By the way; my last question asked about the safety factor involved with my continuing to drive this vehicle with the Ball Joints in their current condition.....and your answer was???????

Thanking you again for your continued assistance.

[REDACTED]
Fond du Lac, WI

Now, my vehicle is READILY available for your INSPECTION if you so warrant

>From: customerassist <customerassist@daimlerchrysler.com>

>Reply-To: customerassist <customerassist@daimlerchrysler.com>

>To: [REDACTED]

>Subject: Re: DaimlerChrysler Customer Assistance Reference Number [REDACTED]

>Date: Fri, 29 Oct 2004 13:23:14 -0400

>

>Dear [REDACTED]

>

>Thanks for your additional information. We had a chance to discuss this concern with Brian, the Service Manager at POMMERENING. He advised that you have oversized tires on your truck as well as a lift kit. He states that this may have contributed to the problem you are having. Due to this, we would not be able to offer assistance on the repair in question. If the addition of bigger tires and the lift kit compromises the integrity of the suspension, then we would not be able to offer assistance.

>

>I am sorry I cannot provide you with a more favorable reply.

>

>

>Thank you again for your email.

>

>NOTE: Please do not use the 'Reply' function of your email system. If you have a need to respond to this message, please visit us at our reply form (link provided below). Our system is NOT able to accept any emails at this address.

>

>For any future communications related to this email, please refer to the following information:

>REFERENCE NUMBER:

>REPLY LINK:

>http://www.chrysler.com/wccsapp/wccs/brand_forms/us/reply.jsp?trk_ID=KM

>M2014212C0KM6

>

>

>Sincerely,

>

>Michael Fairro

>Senior Staff Representative

>DaimlerChrysler Customer Assistance Center

>

>

>Original Message Follows:

>-----

> RE: Dodge Dakota Ball Joints - Reference Number [REDACTED]

>

>

>Dear Customer Assistance Person(s):

>

>As you suggested, I took my Dodge Dakota to the local Dodge Servicing Dealer for Ball Joint evaluation earlier today. They did confirm that ALL of my Ball Joints do require replacement. The Servicing Dealer is

>Pommerening Dodge Jeep at 264 North Washburn Street in Oshkosh
>Wisconsin 54904, 920 236-3113. Pommerening suggested that I re-contact
>you with the latest information concerning their evaluation and/or
>examination.

>I will be flying to the West Coast on business for the next two weeks
>and view this as an ideal time to have my vehicle repaired as I would
>then be able to leave my truck sit at a Dealer while said repairs are
>performed.

>I
>may not elect to take my truck to Pommerening in Oshkosh as I may find
>Abhold's Garage of Mt Calvary WI or Holiday Auto of Fond du Lac WI to
>be more convenient and/or accommodating.

>I am also aware that you are now using a different supplier for the
>Ball Joints. I am hoping and asking that your corporation make a
>'policy decision' or 'special warranty consideration' regarding the
>repairs of my vehicle (including an alignment). However, If I am
>forced to repair my vehicle at my own expense, I would like you to
>provide me with the vendor who previously supplied the suspect Ball
>Joints as I certainly do not wish to do business with them. I have
>just installed new tires on my vehicle within the last week (small
>fortune \$\$\$) and would now like to have it aligned so that uneven wear
>does not result due to the Ball Joint issue.
>Also, please advise on how safe it is to operate my truck in its
>present condition.

>Sincerely,
[REDACTED]

>Fond du Lac, WI
[REDACTED]

>-----Original Message-----

>From: [REDACTED]
>Sent: Thursday, October 28, 2004 10:27 AM
>To: customerassist@daimlerchrysler.com
>Cc: [REDACTED]
>Subject: Re: DaimlerChrysler Customer Assistance [REDACTED]

>Dear Unidentified Recipient at DaimlerChrysler Motors Customer
>Assistance:

>Thank you very much for being so insistent that I return to the Dodge
>Dealer to have my vehicle inspected. Early this morning I stopped at
>my Dodge Dealer to make an appointment to have my vehicle checked, and,
>guess what???? There was a 4 Door 4WD Dodge DAKOTA identical to mine
>(except for the color) sitting 'disabled' and parked directly outside
>the Service Entrance (see attached pictures). By the way....you will
>recall that earlier this week I had enquired about a 'silent re-call'
>regarding Ball Joints? Well.....it WAS the Upper and Lower Ball joints
>that failed (while the vehicle was being driven at unknown speeds) on
>this truck (see attached photos). I suggest you forward this email to
>your Supervisor, or, better yet, also send it to the Director of
>Customer Support and Consumer Affairs.

>NOTE: You can plainly see my own personal vehicle, a Black 4 Door) in

>the foreground of the 1st photo, and, I do have numerous additional
>photos available for your review, if you so desire. Now, what will be
>the next recommended course of action? I can be reached via my
>cellular phone at [REDACTED] Thank you very much for your time and
>assistance.

Sincerely,

>Fond du Lac, WI

> >From: customerassist <customerassist@daimlerchrysler.com>

> >Reply-To: customerassist <customerassist@daimlerchrysler.com>

5. **STO:**

> >Subject: Re: DaimlerChrysler Customer Assistance

>>Date: Wed, 27 Oct 2004 16:08:36 -0400

> >Dear

> > Thank you for your recent email to DaimlerChrysler Motors regarding

» »VOLUX

> >'02 Dodge Dakota.

> >Our records indicate that you contacted us previously and were
> >advised to have the vehicle inspected by your servicing dealership.
> >Was the vehicle inspected by the dealer? If so, please provide the
> >name of the dealer. Thanks for your patience in this matter.

> > Thank you again for your email.

> NOTE: Please do not use the 'Reply' function of your email system. If
> you have a need to respond to this message, please visit us at our
> reply form (link provided below). Our system is NOT able to accept
> any emails at this address.

> >For any future communications related to this email, please refer to
> >the following information:

> > REFERENCE NUMBER:

> >REPLY LINK:

> >http://www.chrysler.com/wccsapp/wccs/brand_forms/us/reply.jsp?trk_ID=

→ KM

> 20100111C0K8

> >Sincerely,

> >Michael Fairo
> >Senior Staff Representative
> >DaimlerChrysler Customer Assistance Center

> >Original Message Follows:

Form Selected:

Category: US Customer Service

Brief Description:

> >I own a 2 year old Dodge Dakota 4-Door 4WD w/every option. I just
 > >installed new tires for winter, and when I asked for a front-end
 > >alignment I was told 3 of the 4 Ball Joints require replacement and
 > >the
 >
 > >4th showed excessive wear. This is only 2 years old
 > >Comments:
 > >-----
 > >Corporate People: A 2 year old vehicle should not incur repairs such
 > >as this. It makes me wonder if the competition could be any
 > >worse(?)....
 > >I
 > >like Dodge and have been quite loyal over the years (check your
 > >computer records). Incidentally, my wife also owns a new 2004 'custom'
 >
 > >JEEP w/every available option, and she is very content. Please keep
 > >me
 >
 > >loyal and happy with your product(s). I am not afraid to pay
 > >(preventive) maintenance and operating costs on my
 > >vehicles.....but, I also have an engineering background (includes
 > >engine design and endurance as well as warranty
 > >administration) and this is not an acceptable time frame for these
 > >components to require attention and \$\$\$\$\$\$. I appreciate your
 > >consideration and look forward to your timely response. Sincerely,
 > [REDACTED]

> > Sender Information:
 > >-----

> > Title: Mr.
 > > First Name: [REDACTED]
 > > Middle Initial: [REDACTED]
 > > Last Name: [REDACTED]
 >
 >
 >

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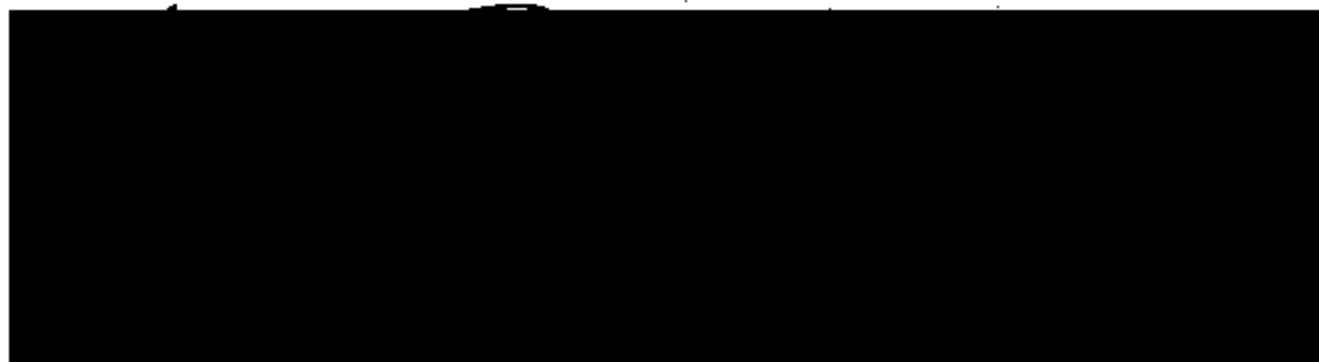
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11-29-04

FYI : THIS IS ANOTHER CUSTOMER'S
VEHICLE THAT 'GREETED' ME AT
6:30 AM IN FRONT OF A
DODGE SERVICE CENTER'S SERVICE
DOOR. THIS WAS OBSERVED THE
MORNING AFTER CHRYSLER CORP. ~~MANAGE~~
DENIED THERE WERE ANY POSSIBLE
PROBLEMS BUT, THEY DID

INSIST THAT I HAVE MY
VEHICLE CHECKED 'JUST IN
CASE'.



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