

December 14, 2004

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San Diego, CA

Acura Client Services
Mail Stop 500-2N-7A
1919 Torrance Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90501-2746

Client Services Manager:

I am writing this letter to document the problems I have experienced with my 2003 Acura TL Type-S, VIN 19UUA56893, and to express my dissatisfaction with its level of quality, specifically with respect to the transmission.

I am the original owner of this vehicle, which was purchased from Ball Acura in National City, CA in November of 2002. Within weeks of taking delivery of the vehicle, the transmission started to show signs of a problem. While driving at highway speed in fifth gear, the transmission would hesitate and feel like it was hunting between gears, causing the car to shudder. This occurred at part throttle on level ground, with the accelerator being pushed lightly to maintain speed, but not enough to cause a gear change. When I brought the car into the dealership for the first oil change in March 2003, I described the problem to the Service Manager. They test drove the car and could not duplicate the problem. By this time, I read online of other TL owners having similar problems and having transmissions replaced, some of them having multiple transmission replacements on the same vehicle. At that time, I contacted Acura Client Services and opened case number N032004-04-0100432.

The problems continued throughout the next year. On February 12, 2004 while driving home from work, my transmission failed. The vehicle had 18,434 miles on it. As had happened before, I was at highway speed at part throttle. The transmission began to hesitate and hunt, but then the engine started revving as if the transmission had slipped into neutral, even though it was still in D5 in automatic mode. I coasted to the shoulder of the highway and stopped. Regardless of what gear the transmission was put in, no power went to the front wheels. There was a strong burning smell coming from the car at this point and I turned the car off. The car was towed to Ball Acura, where the transmission was replaced. Within a week of getting my car back with the replacement transmission, the same problems began again.

On August 20, 2004 I brought my car in for regular service, and informed the Service Manager I was experiencing the same problems as before, only significantly worse. On the day I called, the transmission slipped and the car shuddered about ten separate times in the span of about one mile. The Service Manager test drove the vehicle and confirmed he felt the same thing, and ordered a new transmission. The car had 25,362 miles on it, and less than 7,000 miles on this

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transmission. By now, the current transmission recall had been issued where an oil jet kit would be installed to direct additional lubrication to the transmissions "secondary shaft second gear" (according to the recall notice).

With the issuance of the recall, and what I saw was a description of the problem and what sounded like a solution, I thought this would be the end of the problems and I would have a reliable car. Unfortunately, a month after getting what was now the third transmission in my car, the same problems returned.

To say that I'm disgusted with this situation and what appears to be Acura's inability to fix this problem is an understatement. This is supposed to be the family car when we travel. Every time we put our 8-month old son in the car, I have to worry about whether we're going to be stuck on the side of the road waiting for a tow truck because of another failed transmission. The only bright spot in this situation has been the high level of customer service provided by Ball Acura's Service Department. They have been extremely professional, helpful, and understanding throughout this ordeal.

I want to know what Acura is going to do about this problem. A two-year-old car with 30,000 miles on it should not be on its third transmission, with signs of needing a fourth. I sold my Honda Accord and bought an Acura because I wanted to step up to a higher level of luxury and still retain what I thought was a high level of quality. I feel I made a mistake and now am stuck with a lemon.

Regards,

Cc: Jenifer Ball – Ball Acura
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National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
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