

U.S. Department of Transportation,  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration,  
Office of Defects Investigation  
NSA-10.01, 400 7th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20590

2005 MAR 28 AM 7:37

Subj: FAULTY VW JETTA SIDE AIRBAG DEPLOYMENT

QID #  
10112747

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to respectfully request that my case (ODI file: 8022481) be re-evaluated. I have also made this request on-line and have an additional ODI file (10112747), requesting the same.

In addition to my original case (ODI file: 8022481), I have also enclosed a copy of my letter addressed to the VW Customer Care Center in 2002.

In short, page 23 of the VW JETTA 2001 Owner's Manual states the reason in which the side airbags would deploy: "The side airbags inflate ONLY in some side collisions occurring within the approximate area indicated in the illustration." Note the picture illustration does NOT include the wheel-wells, tire, and axle areas. The manual - again on page 23 - goes on to state that the airbags will deploy ... only in certain kinds of accidents" The manual specifically states that side airbags WILL NOT INFLATE if: (1) if the ignition is switched off, (2) in frontal collisions, (3) in side collisions in which vehicle deceleration is not high enough, (4) in rear collisions, (5) IN ROLLOVERS!

Oddly enough, and taking into consideration the above paragraph and the reasons the side airbags are NOT SUPPOSED TO INFLATE, even during a rollover, VW Corp. contends that a small ding located on the rear axle, passenger side, is the sole reason my side and seat airbags deployed!!! For the record: it was a very clear morning on the interstate and there was no accident, no foreign object on the road, or any other reasons for the airbags to deploy.

To date, I continue to operate my vehicle with inoperative and deployed side airbags. Again, your attention to this matter is appreciated. And as reported recently on the CBS Evening News, I am not the only victim. It is time for the VW Corp. to take responsibility and right their wrong.

I remain available for any additional questions that you have which could assist in this vital, safety-related investigation.

Thank you.

Enclosures: (1) NHTSA ODI 10112747, (2) My Letter to VW in 2002, (3) Portions of VW 2001 Jetta Owner's Manual

Mania  
3/29/05



## Office of Defects Investigation

## VOQ Confirmation

Your Complaint Information is successfully submitted.

Your Confirmation number (ODI Number) is: 10112747

## Your Complaint Information

## Consumer Information

Name : [REDACTED]  
Org. Name :  
Address : [REDACTED]  
City, State, Zip : morgan city, LA [REDACTED]  
USA  
Daytime Phone : [REDACTED] 5 Ext :  
Evening Phone : [REDACTED] Fax :  
Email : [REDACTED]

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## Complaint Information

Description : please refer to case/ODI: 8022481; respectfully request case be re-evaluated. VW claims small ding on underside of VW Jetta is to blame for side and seat airbag deployments. They are wrong and are trying to use this excuse to get out of numerous faulty airbag deployments. No VW experts could answer my specific technical questions. The owner's manual specifically states reasons for airbag deployments, and the small ding on the underside of my vehicle is a not a reason; instead it serves as an unsupported excuse. [Jetta ride extremely low to ground; there will always be dings, marks, etc., for the VW Corporation to use as an excuse.]

|                   |            |                   |    |
|-------------------|------------|-------------------|----|
| Incident Date :   | 10/18/2002 | Fire :            | No |
| Num. Failures :   | 2          | Property Damage : | No |
| Num. Deaths :     | 0          | Crash :           | No |
| Num. Injured :    | 1          | Police Report :   | No |
| Referral Source : | BBB        |                   |    |

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## Vehicle Information

VIN : 3VWRP68HXL [REDACTED] Purchase Date : 4/21/2001  
Manufacturer : VOLKSWAGEN OF AMERICA, INC  
Year, Make :

|                   |                       |                        |                   |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Year and Model :  | 2001/VOLKSWAGEN/JETTA | Original Owner :       | Yes               |
| # of Cylinders :  | 4                     | Trans. Type :          | AUTOMATIC         |
| Engine Size :     | 1.8L turbo (TDI)      | VehicleDetails Usage : | UNKNOWN           |
| Cruise Control :  | Yes                   | Antilock Brakes :      | Yes               |
| Current Mileage : | 129000                | Speed :                | 70                |
| Failure Mileage : | 60250                 | Powertrain :           | FRONT WHEEL DRIVE |
| Body Style :      | 4-DOOR                | Fuel System :          | TURBO             |
| Fuel Type :       | DIESEL                | Vehicle Type :         | PASSENGER CAR     |

## Vehicle Component Information

Component 1: AIR BAGS:SIDE/WINDOW      ODI: No

## Vehicle Dealer Information

|               |                                                        |               |              |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| DI Dealer :   | 1                                                      | Dealer Type : | SALES DEALER |
| Name :        | Gunther motor corp.                                    |               |              |
| Address :     | 1660 south state road 7<br>fort lauderdale<br>FL 33317 |               |              |
| Dealer Phone: | 954-797-1660                                           | Dealer Fax:   | 954-321-1367 |
| Email:        |                                                        |               |              |

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VW Customer Care Center  
3499 W. Hamlin Road  
Rochester Hills, MI 48309  
ATTN: Mr. Gerd Klaus, CEO

Reference Case Number: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Klaus,

On 18 October 2002, my 2001 VW Jetta TDI suffered faulty front passenger-side seat and overhead airbag deployments -- at no fault of my own.

I will not go into the specific details of the events on said date/time, rather you may instead refer to my case. However, a point of contention is the fact that no VW representative could point out the exact location of the airbag sensors that are reportedly housed underneath the vehicle. Furthermore, in the VW Owner's Manual, 2.1, pp. 23 it specifically states reasons for side airbag deployment -- this does not coincide with VW's current reasoning for airbag deployment: ding/defect on portion of rear axle (see pictures on enclosed floppy disk). On pp. 23 it also depicts an overhead illustration with the indicated side impact zone which would cause the side airbags to deploy -- please note that the rear axle and wheels are not included in this zone (where the noted ding/defect resides).

I continue to operate my vehicle with inoperative (and deployed) front passenger seat and front and rear overhead airbags, as well as non-functional seatbelt. This is an unsatisfactory situation and noted safety concern.

At the time of the incident, my vehicle's odometer read just over 60K miles; the vehicle currently remains within the 100K mile warranty.

I firmly request that my side airbags - both passenger seat and overhead (front and rear passenger side) be replaced by VW free of charge, including all parts, labor, any other associated costs, including rental vehicle. One agreeable option is to replace my vehicle with a new, similar vehicle at no cost to me.

I intend to seek additional counsel - including reparations related to physical injury & emotional trauma suffered by my spouse - in a most expeditious fashion, should one of my requests as noted in the above paragraph not be agreed to.

I remain confident in your product. However, the result of this specific case will forever determine my future endeavors (namely purchases) and recommendations with and for VW products.

Sincerely,  
[REDACTED]

Enclosure (2)



# 2001 Jetta

## Safety First

Important information about the

- Safety belts
- Airbags
- Seats
- Child safety



Booklet 2.1

