



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

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

AUG 30 2005

NVS-216 mec
Ref. No. 10113821

[REDACTED]
Somers, CT [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]:

Thank you for your correspondence concerning a problem you encountered with your 1998 Volkswagen Passat vehicle. Your correspondence was received by the Office of Defects Investigation on March 8, 2005. Due to limited resources we were not able to respond to you in a more timely manner. We regret any inconvenience our delay may have caused you.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's highways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair vehicles or items of motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain serious safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. We also monitor the adequacy of manufacturers' recall campaigns. In order for the agency to initiate an investigation, we look carefully at the body of consumer complaints and other available data to determine whether a defect may exist. We cannot act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

We appreciate the report you provided. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. Each report is analyzed and entered into a database to help us determine whether an investigation into a possible safety defect is warranted.

We have reviewed our database in an effort to identify whether a safety defect trend exists with regard to problems associated with the suspension system, specifically the lower control arms in 1998 Volkswagen Passat vehicles. At this time, there is insufficient evidence to warrant opening a safety defect investigation. The information you provided has been entered into our database. It will be considered with other reports to identify any safety defect trends that may require our attention.

NHTSA is aware of Volkswagen's Technical Service Bulletin (TSB) Revised Service Action VM, dated December 2004, (copy enclosed) concerning the front suspension lower control arms in certain 1998 through 2000 Volkswagen Passat vehicles. However, the issuance of this TSB is not a recall and does not necessarily reflect the existence of a safety-related defect in accordance with the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act. Neither Volkswagen nor NHTSA has



DOT AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE
888-DASH-2-DOT
888-327-4236

determined that the vehicles in question contain such a safety defect. Therefore, NHTSA cannot require Volkswagen to perform the corrective action described in the TSB on your vehicle at no cost to you. If you have not done so, you may consider contacting your local Consumer Protection Agency, Better Business Bureau, or the Connecticut Office of the Attorney General regarding your problem.

You can contact our toll-free Vehicle Safety Hotline (Hotline) at 1-888-327-4236. One of our representatives may be able to assist you on matters concerning motor vehicle and motor vehicle equipment safety recalls or to report an alleged safety problem. You can also request safety information. If our telephones are busy, or you call during non-working hours, you can leave your name, telephone number, and a brief subject on our recording system. A Hotline representative will return your call.

Additionally, we have an Internet Web site at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov> that you may want to visit. An electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire (VOQ) is also available on this Web site at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/ivoq>. This form is for vehicle owners to report safety related problems about their motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment, e.g., child safety seats, jacks, tires, brake fluid, etc. The reports submitted are transferred to our database and are used to identify safety-related defect trends that require our attention. If you do not have access to the Internet, please use the enclosed VOQ to inform this agency of any future motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment safety problems you may experience. Also, a summary listing of vehicle owners' complaints, safety recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, etc., can be obtained at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems>.

If further assistance is needed, please contact Mr. Michael J. Jordan, Safety Defects Program Assistant, Correspondence Research Division, Office of Defects Investigation, at (202) 493-0576.

Sincerely,



Alberto A. Jimenez, Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement

Enclosure