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Virten, MB
Canada

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25 January 2005

DaimlerChrysler Canada Customer Service
Chrysler Center
PO Box 1621
Windsor, Ontario
N9A 4H6

Dear Customer Services

Dangerous brakes on 2002 Jeep Liberty

In August 2001 we purchased a new 2002 Jeep Liberty Sport, VIN 1J4GL48K62W from Stewart Chrysler Plymouth Ltd of Virten. We have experienced continual problems with the brakes locking in slippery conditions since. The vehicle has been repeatedly back to Stewart Chrysler and it is still very dangerous.

We bought this vehicle and as soon as road conditions become wet or snowy, it became apparent that the brakes completely locked and the vehicle was dangerous to drive in such conditions. The brakes fully lock as the pedal is touched every time. We asked for the brakes to be checked and they were altered at that time and at subsequent checks, the effect being to make the travel of the pedal longer before lock up. They still locked however and it was implied that we should have bought a vehicle with ABS if we wanted brakes that did not lock. We have driven a great many hundreds of thousands of kilometers using several different makes of vehicle (European or Japanese) with or without ABS and they never locked like this. They never locked at all, even in the worst conditions. Our Dodge Ram half ton has never had any serious brake or other troubles and has a great deal more mileage than the Jeep.

We continued to use the vehicle in dry conditions (which fortunately prevail throughout Manitoba - annual precipitation of only 8 inches), albeit somewhat disappointed that something so new and smart could be so defective and dangerous. We have explored changing it for another vehicle, one that stops, but this problem needs fixed first, before somebody is killed.

The following fall and winter the vehicle was too dangerous to use and the brakes were checked again and we upgraded the tires. One of the dealership mechanics locked it and slid trying to move it from the carpark at 2 kph. The consensus at this time was that the rotors should be skimmed and this was done, although we suggested in view of all the problems that replacement was a better option. This made a big difference but the vehicle would still completely lock up in wet or snowy conditions. We have always left it at home when conditions were icy as it cannot be stopped if there is ice on the road. We know that ice is a challenge for every vehicle but all other cars on the same road can be seen stopping, whereas ours just cannot. There have been some very near misses at pedestrian crossings, when even old rust buckets were well able to stop safely and the Jeep simply locked and slid at 10kph! If there had been less agile or aware people using the crossing they would have been hit. They were certainly frightened.

This winter the problem has resurfaced and is as bad as ever. The dealer says that the rotors should be changed as they are worn and that as it has done nearly 100 000km that this is not at all unusual and even to be expected. It has only done about 25 000km since the rotors were skimmed however. We are not sure that we should be more frightened that they might actually believe this or angry that they are telling us a bare-faced lie. Having put many more kilometers onto a variety of vehicle makes without ever having to replace worn brake rotors (just pads at regular intervals) we are sure that **these brakes which have been dangerous from new, are defective**. What the dealer is implying is that Jeep brake rotors need skimmed or replaced annually! Furthermore, we live in a very rural area and the brakes in our vehicles have to be applied only three times in the average trip to our nearest town of Virten 20 minutes drive away, and it is a tiny place. It is not as if this vehicle has to contend with city rush hour traffic on a daily basis. So it would seem that Jeep brakes need major repair annually with very little relative use. This seems unbelievable.

However they insist that we should pay for this as it is a moving part and not covered by warranty. Whilst this will not be very expensive we are extremely angry that it should even be suggested that we should pay for this. It has always been our position that **the whole system has always been completely defective and very dangerous**. Given that skimming the rotors has lasted so little time we are not entirely convinced that new ones will correctly fix the problem either. The excessive warping and wearing must have a cause and it may not be just with use.

Other Jeeps and other North American manufactured vehicles we own or have used stop reliably. It seems far more

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likely that **our vehicle has an inherent defect with the whole braking system** that very much needs cured and we certainly do not think it is our responsibility to fix it. It has been like this from new, the dealer has tried unsuccessfully to repair the problem and is now trying to make it our responsibility. **It is my opinion that it is DaimlerChryslers' responsibility to correctly and permanently fix the problem**, something our service dealer disagrees with us about. We have otherwise always been very happy with the service from this dealership.

We very much hope to hear from you soon and that you will be able to help us with this matter.

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Copy to Stewart Chrysler Plymouth Ltd
PO Box 1448
Virden, MB
R0M 2C0

Transport Canada
PO Box 8880
Ottawa Postal station
Ottawa, ONT
K1G 3J2

NHTSA
US Dept of Transportation,
Washington DC 20590
USA
Copy sent to NHTSA as vehicle assembled in Toledo, Ohio