



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

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

MAY 10 2005

[REDACTED]
Lansdowne, PA [REDACTED]

NVS-216aae
Ref. #10117688

Dear [REDACTED]:

Thank you for your correspondence dated March 22, 2005, concerning a problem you have encountered with your 1998 Ford Windstar vehicle. Your correspondence was received by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation on April 4, 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.

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.

Clearly, transmission failure and the cost of its replacement is frustrating. While frustrating, the type of transmission problem you described is not related to motor vehicle safety within the meaning of our authorizing statute. The agency has no jurisdiction over non-safety defects, warranty, and remuneration matters. If you have not done so, you may consider contacting your local Consumer Protection Agency, Better Business Bureau, or the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General regarding your problem. You may also ask your local Ford Motor dealership for a meeting with Ford's district manager regarding your problem.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has jurisdiction over non-safety defects, paint, fraud or deception, warranty and dealership problems, remuneration matters, and fair trade practices. There are three ways you can contact the FTC: by toll free telephone at 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); by mail at Federal Trade Commission, CRC-240, Washington, DC 20580; and by using the Internet complaint form at <http://www.ftc.gov/ftc/complaint.htm>.



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

You can contact our toll-free DOT Auto Safety Hotline (Hotline) at 1-888-DASH-2-DOT (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 DOT 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