

04/07/05

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 APR 18 AM 4:09

Gentlemen:

10119009

Potential problems with a Sonar controlled
Cruise control on my AVALON LIMITED 2005 Model

I have previously dropped an e-mail with this problem but did not get any reply;

I have a new car which has a sonar controlled cruise on it. It works fine as it is intended to work. However, there is a very big safety problem involved with the use of the cruise. The problem is as follows: When the cruise control is on, I'm kept at a very safe distance from the car in front of me. However, when and if that car in front for some reason or other, will slow down quickly, the driver behind me has no idea as to what is happening as the brake lights do not warn of of my car slowing down. That could end up in rear end collusion.

I have written to Toyota about this problem and was told the following.
1. First contact the dealer and explain that problem to him. I already did so and was told "that is a good question and I will have to look into it".

I then contacted Toyota again and was told the following. "Do not use the cruise control where there is traffic". The main thing that was stated was that the brake lights **do not go on** when the car is slowed down for any reason.

My car is not the only car that has the sonar device. The Lexus have it, and other makes and models have it. It is not only dealing with my car, but other cars that on the road.

Thanks for you prompt response to the above problem, and if there is anything that you can do to help me or any other cars with the above problem, would be greatly appreciated. Thanks,

Davie, FL.

PS. Enclosed you will find copies of my correspondence with Toyota

Michael
4/24/05

Print Message**Close this window**

From: Ask Toyota <toyota_cares@toyota.com> 
Date: 2005/03/16 Wed PM 08:28:08 EST
To:
Subject: Using sonar on cruise control (2005 Avalon Limited) [Incident: 080316-000103]

Thank you for contacting Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. We appreciate your consideration and hope to have your email addressed as quickly as possible. If you need immediate assistance we recommend you contact the Customer Relations Manager at your local Toyota dealership.

[====> Please enter your reply below this line <====]


[====> Please enter your reply above this line <====]

Discussion Thread**Customer**

03/16/2005 03:23 PM

The cruise control works as it is expected to work, however there is a problem. This is it. When my car is slowed down by the Sonar unit, how does the car behind me know that I am slowing down and sometimes it happens very quickly. He can rear-end me if my brakes light do not show that I am slowing down, especially if we are traveling at high speeds. Is there a fix for this problem, as it can become a real safety hazard.

Print Message

From: Ask Toyota <toyota_care@toyota.com> 

Date: 2005/03/30 Wed PM 12:28:15 EST

To:

Subject: Sonar with cruise control [incident: 050327-000034]

Recently you contacted Toyota. Below is a summary of your contact message and our response.

Thank you for allowing us to be of service to you.

[====> Please enter your reply below this line <====]

[====> Please enter your reply above this line <====]

Subject

Sonar with cruise control

Discussion Thread

03/30/2005 09:25 AM

Response

Thank you for contacting Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.

We apologize if you feel our previous email did not address your inquiry.

The sonar is operating as designed, there is no warning for the other driver, however, when the sonar slows down the vehicle, it is a subtle deceleration and the cruise control should be used only when traffic conditions allow.

Your feedback is appreciated. It is through comments such as yours that we are able to review and improve our product.

Your email has been documented at our National Headquarters under file #200503180780. If we can be of further assistance, please feel free to contact us.

Toyota Customer Experience

03/27/2005 10:20 AM

Customer

When the sonar slows down the car because of a car in front slowing down, do the rear brake lights go on automatically, or there is no warning for the car in the rear of my car. If the lights do not go on as a warning to the othr driver, he can rear end me. This poses a real safety threat. If the brake light do not respond to the sonar, is there a "fix" to take care of that problem. I had already asked a service rep. at the dealership and was told, "that is a good question", meaning that he did not know the answer. IS THERE AN ANSWER for the above? This is the second e-mail to you as the answer just skipped the issue entirely.