



10130172

John C. Bickla
Owner/Operator

(330) 535-8400

June 24, 2005

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation
NVS-210, 400 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Gentlemen:

Enclosed you will find two sets of correspondence between myself and Mercedes-Benz and their response.

I am filing a complaint with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration on the failure of three wheels on this 2006 car within the period of less than 30 days.

I believe that Mercedes-Benz has produced a set of equipment for this car that is substandard and not capable of being driven under normal driving conditions, and as a result should be investigated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Sincerely yours,



Cc: Mr. Paul Juron
Mercedes-Benz Customer Assistance Center
Enclosure

BicklaJohnUSDeptHighwaySafety2006MercedesBenzCLS55

Mani
7/12/05



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1-888-DASH-2-DOT
(1-888-327-4236)

TTY

- 1-800-424-9153 or
- 1-202-484-5238

Form Approved O.M.B. No. 2127-0008

Consumer

Complaint

Preview

Consumer Information

* Denotes required field

Title :

Mr.

Org. Name

First Name :*

MI

Last Name :*

Address 1 :*

Address 2 :

c/o mcdonald's

City :*

akron

Zip Code

State :*

OHIO

Country

Daytime Phone :*

Evening Phone

Fax :

Email :

There are occasions when NHTSA would like to provide automobile manufacturers with copies including personally identifiable information (e.g. name, address, telephone number, etc.). NHTSA uses these questionnaires to identify safety-related defects, analyze alleged problems, defects. By providing manufacturers with questionnaires that contain personally identifiable information, manufacturers can contact owners to seek clarity, obtain additional details, and in some cases owners of actions being taken to rectify the problem.

If you would like to authorize NHTSA to release this questionnaire (including your personally identifiable information) to the manufacturer of your vehicle, please check the "YES" box. Your personally identifiable information will be used only for the purposes described above. If you do not wish to authorize, please check the "NO" box and your personally identifiable information will not be released to

See [Privacy Statement](#) below.

I hereby consent to the release of the personally identifiable information contained in this questionnaire to the manufacturer of my vehicle.

[View Data](#) [Back](#)



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Consumer	»	Complaint	»	Preview
Complaint Information * Denotes required field				
Please enter the complaint details and then click on "Process" to select a Complaint Type				
Details		Complaint Type		
Narrative Description of Incident(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies). Please describe: (1) events leading up to the failure, (2) failure and its consequences, and (3) what was done to correct the failure; i.e. parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available) see attached correspondence				
Description : *				
Incident Date : *		May	10	2005
Number of Failures:		3		
Number of Deaths:		0		
Number of Persons Injured:		0		
Was there a Fire :		☐ Yes ☒ No		
Property Damage :		☐ Yes ☒ No		
Was there a Crash :		☐ Yes ☒ No		
Reported to Police :		☐ Yes ☒ No		
What source referred you to this site :		OTHER		
Start Over		Back		Proceed
				Exit



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Complaint Information

* Denotes required field

Please enter the complaint details and then click on "Process" to select a Complaint Type

Details

Complaint Type

Narrative Description of Incident(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies).
Please describe

- (1) events leading up to the failure,
- (2) failure and its consequences, and
- (3) what was done to correct the failure; i.e., parts repaired or replaced (and if old part is available)

see attached correspondence

Description : *

Incident Date : * May 10 2005

Number of Failures: 3

Number of Deaths: 0

Number of Persons Injured: 0

Was there a Fire : ☐ Yes ☒ NoProperty Damage : ☐ Yes ☒ NoWas there a Crash : ☐ Yes ☒ NoReported to Police : ☐ Yes ☒ No

What source referred you to this site : OTHER

Start Over

Back

Process

Exit



Mercedes-Benz

June 14, 2005

Mercedes-Benz USA, LLC
Customer Assistance Center

[REDACTED]
Akron, OH [REDACTED]

Subject: Model 2006 CLS55
Serial No. [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

We regret your disappointment regarding the tires and wheels on your CLS55 and understand that the need for repairs is seldom pleasant. We cannot agree, however, that your experiences resulting in the need to replace these components constitutes a design flaw or defect and, as such, must respectfully decline your request for reimbursement.

As you know, your CLS55 is equipped with 19" AMG wheels and 19" Z-rated ultra-low-profile performance tires. The Warranty for these components pertains to flaws in manufacturer's materials and workmanship; not damage resulting from outside influences, such as potholes, curbs, maintenance practices/proper inflation, etc. Upon receipt of your letter, we contacted Jeff Huckabone, the Service Manager with Ganley Akron, Inc., who confirms that their inspection revealed damage to the tire/wheels on both occasions; thus, said damage would not be covered by our Manufacturer's New Vehicle Limited Warranty.

[REDACTED] we encourage you to review our recommendations for the proper care and maintenance of your tires on pages 287 through 321 in your Owner's Manual. We have also included a copy of pages 26 & 27 from the 2006 CLK Class Product Brochure which advises "Serious wheel and tire damage may occur if the vehicle is operated on rough or damaged road surfaces or upon encountering road debris or obstacles."

We recognize that this is not the response you hoped for and solicit your understanding and acceptance of our company's position. Thank you for this opportunity to respond.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Customer Relations Liaison

CF/jla
Enclosure



SPECIFICATIONS P26/27

ENGINE		GLS 500	GLS 500 AMG
Engine size and type		4,966-cc SOHC 24-valve 90° V-8	5,439-cc AMG-built supercharged SOHC 24-valve 90° V-8
Construction		High-pressure die-cast alloy cylinder block. Alloy heads. Counter-rotating balance shaft	Reinforced high-pressure die-cast alloy cylinder block. Alloy heads. Counter-rotating balance shaft
Net power		302 hp @ 5,600 rpm	469 hp @ 6,100 rpm
Net torque		339 lb-ft @ 2,700-4,250 rpm	516 lb-ft @ 2,650-4,500 rpm
Compression ratio		10.0:1	9.0:1
Induction		Magnesium 2-stage resonance intake manifold increases intake runner length at lower rpm for improved response	Helical high-pressure supercharger with liquid-to-air intercooler
Fuel/air ignition system		ME 2.8 engine management. Integrated sequential multipoint fuel injection and phased twin-spark ignition includes individual cylinder control of fuel spray, spark timing/phase, and anti-knock. Electronic throttle. Two high-energy ignition coils and two spark plugs per cylinder, with 100,000-mile spark plug intervals	
Fuel tank (capacity—reserve)		21.1 gal/80.0 liters—2.4 gal/9.0 liters	21.1 gal/80.0 liters—2.4 gal/9.0 liters
Fuel requirement		Premium unleaded gasoline, 91 pump octane	Premium unleaded gasoline, 91 pump octane

DRIVE/TRAN		GLS 500	GLS 500 AMG
Transmission type		7-speed automatic	AMG-enhanced 5-speed automatic with AMG SpeedShift™ programming and fingertip manual mode
Transmission features		Electronically controlled shifting. Driver-adaptive programming adjusts shift points to the driver's current driving style. Touch Shift allows driver to manually downshift and allow upshifts by nudging the shift lever left or right from the Drive position. Shift into Optimum Gear programming allows one-touch selection of the best gear for maximum acceleration or engine braking by holding the shift lever to the left or right for one second. Driver-selectable Comfort mode starts vehicle moving in 2nd gear or a second Reverse gear, and upshifts at lower rpm, to help improve control on slippery surfaces	AMG SpeedShift programming provides up to 35% faster gear changes, automatically downshifts during braking, prevents unwanted upshifting in corners, and features torque converter lockup in all forward gears. Fingertip manual mode allows direct-access shifting through forward gears via buttons on back of upper steering-wheel spokes (left button downshifts, right button upshifts) or via Touch Shift feature of shift lever, and will automatically intervene only to select 1st gear when the vehicle stops. In Sport and Comfort modes, the steering-wheel buttons operate the Touch Shift feature
AMG SpeedShift and fingertip manual mode		Not available	
Fingertip shift control		Included with optional AMG Sport Package, fingertip shift control allows driver to operate Touch Shift via rocker-type buttons on back of upper steering-wheel spokes (both buttons upshift and downshift)	
Drive configuration		Rear-wheel drive	Rear-wheel drive
Rear axle ratio		2.65:1	2.65:1

TRACON / STABILITY

Electronic Stability Program	ESP compares the driver's intended course, via steering and braking inputs, to the vehicle's response, via lateral acceleration, rotation (yaw) and individual wheel speeds. ESP then brakes individual front or rear wheels and/or reduces excess engine power as needed to help correct understeer (plowing) or oversteer (fishtailing). ESP also integrates all-speed traction control, which senses drive-wheel slip under acceleration and individually brakes the slipping wheel or wheels, and/or reduces excess engine power, until control is regained*
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PERFORMANCE

Acceleration, 0-60 mph ¹	5.9 seconds	4.5 seconds
Fuel economy, EPA estimate ² highway estimate ³	Information not available at time of printing. See your dealer	Information not available at time of printing. See your dealer

¹ Delayed availability. See your dealer.

² No system, regardless of how advanced, can overcome physics or correct careless driving. Please always wear your seat belt.

³ Stated rates of acceleration are based upon manufacturer's track results and may vary depending upon model, environmental and road surface conditions, driving style, elevation and vehicle load.

⁴ 2006 EPA estimated fuel economy. Compare the estimated mpg to the estimated mpg

of other vehicles. You may get different mileage depending on how fast you drive, weather conditions and trip length.

⁵ Your actual highway mileage will probably be less than the highway estimate.

⁶ Please obey local speed laws.

⁷ AMG 18" and 19" wheels and accompanying high-speed-rated tires provide substantially increased treadwear and reduced ride comfort compared to H-rated tires. Serious wheel and tire damage may occur if the vehicle is operated on rough or damaged road surfaces

or upon encountering road debris or obstacles.

⁸ Z-rated tires are optimized for performance driving and may provide reduced ride comfort, increased tire noise, substantially increased treadwear and greater susceptibility to damage compared with H-rated tires.

⁹ Braking effectiveness also depends on proper brake system maintenance, and tire and road conditions.

AUDIO INFORMATION

- Modular COMAND Cockpit Management and Data system integrates AM/FM stereo/weatherband radio, single-CD player, and a large color-LCD screen. Controls for optional in-dash 6-disc CD changer and phone. Ten mode-dependent soft keys alongside screen for easy access to commands and menus.
- 9-speaker audio system with 4-channel amplifier and automatic speed-sensitive volume adjustment.
- harman/ardon® LOGIC7® digital surround sound system, with 12 speakers (including dual surround speakers) plus a subwoofer, 7.1-channel amplifier, multichannel digital surround-sound technology, and Digital Dynamic Volume Control.
- Fiber-optic network offers precise, high-speed communication among components and includes factory preparation for optional CD changer and phone, and SIRIUS Satellite Radio¹ providing
- Tele Aid system uses GPS satellites plus a cellular link to provide 24-hour live assistance for: emergency aid (SOS button), information (button) or Roadside Assistance (wrench button). Tele Aid Security & Care service includes Automatic Collision Notification, Stolen Vehicle Recovery, Remote Door Unlock service and Dealer Connect².

INSTRUMENTATION

- Electronic analog speedometer, tachometer and quartz clock, all with deep chrome rings. Electronic bar-graph fuel and coolant temperature gauges. Digital display for odometer and Tach Shift gear/mode selection.
- Black gauges with white markings and glacier blue backlighting.
- AMG-design ivory-color gauges with soft white backlighting.
- Multifunction display in center of speedometer, scrolled via steering-wheel controls to operate and display various menus and vehicle features:
 - Resettable trip meter and outside temperature indicator
 - Digital speedometer, Maintenance System (see below), and engine oil-level check
 - Low-tire-pressure warning system
 - Radio station, CD player/CD changer³
 - Navigation system route guidance⁴
 - Distronic adaptive cruise control settings⁵
 - Vehicle reminder and malfunction messages
 - Driver-programmable settings for instruments, lighting, vehicle and convenience features
 - Trip computer (elapsed time, fuel consumption, distance to empty)
 - Mobile phone book⁶
- Mercedes-Benz Maintenance System Plus displays distance to next basic maintenance service, indicates type of service due, and provides automatic reminder. System also monitors brake-pad wear

INSTRUMENT SYSTEMS

- Integrated Restraint System: Driver and front passenger are each provided with an adaptive dual-stage front air bag, side-impact air bag, and 3-point seat belt with an Emergency Tensioning Device (ETD) and belt force limiter. Rear passengers are each provided with a side-impact air bag and 3-point seat belt with ETD and belt force limiter.
- Head Protection Curtains: In a side impact exceeding a preset threshold, a multi-chamber air bag deploys along the front and rear side-door windows on the affected side of the car. Integrated rollover sensor automatically deploys the ETDs and, if deemed necessary, the Head Protection Curtains in a detected rollover.
- Adaptive dual-stage front air bags are deployed in response to frontal impact severity⁷.
- ETDs are deployed in a front or rear impact exceeding a preset threshold of severity, or certain rollovers. A front ETD will not deploy if seat belt is unfastened.
- Tele Aid Automatic Collision Notification engages SOS function if an air bag or ETD deploys⁸.
- Universal LATCH system (Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children) at rear seating positions. Selectable passenger seat-belt retractors help secure child seats⁹.
- Front seat belts include manually height-adjustable shoulder belts and lower points attached to seat frames. Rear shoulder belts are automatically height-adjusting.
- Front head restraints power-adjust for height, manually adjust fore-aft, and automatically height-adjust as seat is moved fore-aft.
- Dual rear head restraints, remotely retractable by the driver for improved rearward vision when the rear seats are unoccupied.

7 WARNING: THE FORCES OF A DEPLOYING AIR BAG CAN CAUSE SERIOUS OR FATAL INJURY TO A CHILD UNDER AGE 13. THE SAFEST SEATING POSITION FOR YOUR CHILD IS IN THE REAR SEAT, BELTED INTO AN APPROPRIATE, PROPERLY INSTALLED CHILD SEAT, OR CORRECTLY WEARING A SEAT BELT IF TOO LARGE FOR A CHILD SEAT. A CHILD UNDER 13 MUST NOT USE THE FRONT SEAT UNLESS THE CHILD IS BELTED INTO AN APPROPRIATE, PROPERLY INSTALLED MAINTENANCE-COMPATIBLE CHILD SEAT. A CHILD UNDER 13 WHO IS TOO LARGE FOR A CHILD SEAT MUST NOT USE THE FRONT SEAT. SEE OPERATOR'S MANUAL FOR ADDITIONAL WARNINGS AND INFORMATION ON AIR BAGS, SEAT BELTS AND CHILD SEATS.

8 Special-order option. A one-time surcharge applies when any one or more special-order options or color combinations are ordered.

9 DVD-ROM maps do not cover all areas nor all routes within an area. One U.S./Canada DVD-ROM is included with vehicle.

10 Standard on CLS 55 AMG.

11 AMG 18" wheels and accompanying high-speed-rated tires provide substantially increased treadwear and reduced ride comfort compared to H-rated tires. Serious wheel and tire damage may occur if the vehicle is operated on rough or damaged road surfaces or upon encountering road debris or obstacles.

12 Not included when ordered in combination with AMG Sport Package.

13 Not available in combination with AMG Sport Package.

■ STANDARD
□ OPTIONAL
— NOT AVAILABLE

IN DIVISION OPTIONS

- Distronic adaptive cruise control
- Keyless Go vehicle entry and starting system
- Electronic trunk closer
- Heated front seats
- Nappa leather upholstery (AMG-design Nappa on CLS 55 AMG)
- High-polish Laurel wood interior trim (no charge)
- Integrated single-feed in-dash 6-disc CD changer
- SIRIUS Satellite Radio equipment¹
- COMAND-DVD in-dash GPS navigation system, with map database for the contiguous U.S., Canada and Oahu, Hawaii, all on a single DVD.² DVD-ROM drive concealed in trunk
- Hands-Free Communication System, with voice control for commonly used telephone and audio system features. (Requires accessory telephone handset and cradle, sold separately. See your dealer for selection.)
- Parabolic audio-visual parking assistance system
- Mercedes-Benz extended-mobility (run-flat) tires
- Metallic paint (no charge)

OPTIONAL PACKAGES

- AMG Sport Package: AMG-design lower bodywork.³ Four staggered-width 18" AMG double-spoke wheels with high-performance tires.⁴ Steering wheel-mounted fingertip shift buttons
- Lighting Package: Bi-Xenon low-beam and high-beam headlamps with active curve illumination system. Heated headlamp washers. CLS 500 adds: Corner-illuminating front foglamps⁵
- Entertainment Package: harman/ardon LOGIC7 digital surround sound system.⁶ Integrated single-feed in-dash 6-disc CD changer
- Comfort Package: Active Ventilated front seats, with heating feature. Multicontour front seats.⁷ Power rear-window sunshade. CLS 55 AMG adds: Drive-Dynamic front seats, with adaptive side bolsters that inflate and deflate in response to cornering forces
- Premium Package: Active Ventilated front seats, with heating feature. Multicontour front seats.⁸ harman/ardon LOGIC7 digital surround sound system.⁹ Integrated single-feed in-dash 6-disc CD changer. COMAND-DVD navigation system.¹⁰ Power rear-window sunshade. CLS 55 AMG adds: Drive-Dynamic front seats
- Trim Package: Wood and leather trimmed steering wheel. Wood shift knob

CLS CLASS DESIGN EDITIONS

- ¹ □¹ See your dealer for information. (Availability is delayed)



John C. Blicke
Owner/Operator

May 27, 2005

(330) 535-8400

Mr. Paul Juron
Mercedes Benz Customer Assistance Center
1 Mercedes Drive
Montvale, NJ 07645

Dear Mr. Juron:

I am the proud owner of a 2006 Mercedes Benz CLS55. Well, I am proud of everything except for the fact that I have had to replace three wheels and one tire in less than thirty days since I purchased the car.

The first incident was speculated by the service department at Ganley Motors to be the result of a pot hole. The second incident occurred nine days after I received the car back where both the right rear and right front wheels were damaged. This time only the rims were damaged, whereas in the first instance both the rim and the wheel had to be replaced.

Having spent an additional \$3,700 on this car over and above its purchase price in less than thirty days causes me a great amount of concern.

I have reviewed the promotional letter that Mercedes has concerning this car and no where in any of the material do I find that there are any notices of any restrictions to be placed upon the wheels.

I could also safely say that I have never heard of an instance where, after thirty days of operation, under normal driving conditions, that three wheels had to be replaced. Have you?

I also understand that this is the first year that the 19 inch wheels were used. Is this true?

Mr. Paul Juron
May 27, 2005
Page Two

Obviously, I believe that I am entitled to some form of reimbursement from Mercedes and would ask you to consider the refund of the money that I spent on rims. I will absorb the cost of the tire.

I wait to hear your decision on this matter.

Sincerely yours,



Cc: Messrs. Ken Ganley
Jim Brink

Subj: Thanks
Date: 6/20/2006 1:00:10 P.M. Eastern Daylight Time
From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

Thank you so much for the high marks on the Mercedes survey. I am aware of the issues with your wheels and I will do anything I can to try and have Mercedes help out. In many years of driving thousands of cars, I've never bent a rim.

Thanks again,
[REDACTED]

THE ATTACHMENTS TO THIS
DOCUMENT HAVE BEEN REMOVED
TO PROTECT UNWARRANTED
INVASION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY
PURSUANT TO EXEMPTION 6 OF
THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6).