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12 July 2005

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

Greetings:

RE: 2006 Toyota Solara Convertible
"An accident waiting to happen"

My wife and I rented an '06 Toyota Solara Convertible from Hertz in Las Vegas. We were in favor of purchasing a new Solara but wanted to try one first. We drove from Las Vegas to Denver June 2-9, 2005. The Solara Convertible was one of the finest cars that I have ever driven. *However, the safety concerns were so great that we would not buy one.*

The problems we encountered:

1) The rear vision has an approximate 150 degrees of blind spot. Two "Godzilla" size head rests protruded from the back seat restricting the already tiny rear window. When backing from any parking space, with the top up, we could not see pedestrians on a shopping center lot. When parking at an angle, we had to reverse blindly into traffic hoping we would not be hit. We had one near miss after another. We were very frightened over these glaring engineering design by Toyota.

2) The car had 4-8 second delays when automatically shifting from second to a higher gear. This same thing occurred when we bought a new Lexus RX300 a few years back. Whenever I accelerated rapidly, at less than 35 mph, the car would almost die with a great pause. This was quite dangerous in heavy traffic.

3) The outside temperature guage failed when we needed it the most. We were caught in an unseasonable snow storm driving I-70 from Glenwood Springs 200+ miles of mountains to Denver. As the snow and sleet got worse, the outside temperature guage became stuck at 49 degrees and continued throughout the entire storm. We needed to know when the temperature got less than 35F as bridge decks begin freezing at that time. The guage failed us but seemed to operate ok in warmer weather later.

4) The LCD gauges basically cannot be seen in bright sunlight. The top informational gauges could not be seen at all when the sun was brightly shining.

5) Toyota has not had the least concern for even providing Rear Parking Sensors. This model could use a *wide angle backing camera* as well. Neither the Sensors nor camera are even offered by Toyota. This company has had no concern over or minimizing these problems during the past three years.

Heather
7/29/05

Recommendations:

A. Toyota get rid of its Godzilla size headrests in the back seat. We find no other car on the market with such an outrageous apparatus. If it is for "safety" sake, then why does it add to the already poor rear visibility and create a major visibility safety problem itself? A *Saab 9-3 convertible*, for example, has a great way to provide both better visibility as well as safety in the same motion. The back head rests are flush with the top of the rear seat but can be extended upward manually. If there is an accident with a Saab, two heavy posts are activated upward whenever sensors determine an impact causing possible rollover.

B. Toyota re-design its convertible top and recall all sold to date to replace with the better visibility design.

C. Toyota take care of the "lull in speed acceleration" which seems to possess most if not all of its automatic transmissions.

D. Toyota find a reliable parts manufacturer that will supply reliable outside temperature gauges.

E. Toyota should re-design the convertible top and get rid of the huge rear head rests. The NHTSA should force Toyota, Georgetown, Kentucky, to make a recall of all '04-'06 convertibles and retro fit with a new NHTSA approved design.

In conclusion, we would not buy a Toyota Solara Convertible due to the great safety risks it imposes on the driver. It is a great driving, handling and economical auto to drive. It is really perhaps the most beautiful of all convertibles. However, Toyota's lack of safety consciousness raises our concern over purchasing this model Toyota.

Sincerely yours,

[REDACTED]
Mailing Address:

[REDACTED]
Henderson, NV [REDACTED]

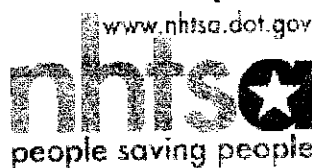
Tel: [REDACTED]

Fax: [REDACTED]

Cell: [REDACTED]

e-mail: [REDACTED]

attachments



Office of Defects Investigation

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

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

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

File a Complaint

Use one of the following methods to file a complaint:

Web Forms

Non-Secure Submission

Secure Submission (Using SSL)



By Phone

Call the DOT Vehicle Safety Hotline at 1-888-DASH-2-DOT (1-888-327-4236) and a NHTSA/representative will record your complaint information.

By Mail

You may also print the web form out and fax it to (202) 366-7882 or mail it to:

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

General Information

Your complaint information will be entered into NHTSA's vehicle owner's complaint database used with other complaints to determine if a safety-related defect trend exists.

- If a safety-related defect exists in a motor vehicle or item of motor vehicle equipment manufacturer must fix it at no cost to the owner. Your complaint is the first step in process.
- Government engineers analyze the problem. If warranted, the manufacturer is asked to conduct a recall. If the manufacturer does not initiate a recall, the government car manufacturer to initiate a recall.



Office of Defects Investigation

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- [Add childrestraint](#)

NOTE: Please review your Complaint information and click on "Submit Complaint" button at bottom of this page to Submit your complaint to NHTSA.

Consumer Information

Name : [REDACTED]
Org. Name : [REDACTED]
Address : [REDACTED]
City, State, Zip : Henderson, NV [REDACTED]
 USA
Daytime Phone : [REDACTED] **Ext :** [REDACTED]
Evening Phone : [REDACTED] **Fax :** [REDACTED]
Email : [REDACTED]

Complaint Information

Description : 1) massive headrests almost totally blocking view thru tiny back wind. Cannot see for huge "pillars" creating large 150 degree plus blocking view. Cannot see oncoming traffic when backing out of angle parking a major accident waiting to happen. 2) great pause of five seconds or wheneveru accelerator pedal is depressed desiring quick acceleration. dangerous in heavy traffic situations; 3) Outside temperature guage is tempermental and does not work at all under very cold conditions.

Incident Date : 6/4/2005 **Fire :** No
Num. Failures : 5 **Property Damage :** No
Num. Deaths : 0 **Crash :** No
Num. Injured : 0 **Police Report :** No
Referral Source : INTERNET

Vehicle Information

VIN :		Purchase Date :	
Manufacturer :	TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.		
Year, Make and Model :	2005/TOYOTA/CAMRY SOLARA	Original Owner :	No
# of Cylinders :	6	Trans. Type :	AUTOM
Engine Size :	3.3	VehicleDetails Usage :	RECREA
Cruise Control :	Yes	Antilock Brakes :	Yes
Current Mileage :	5555	Speed :	25
Failure Mileage :	3800	Powertrain :	FRONT DRIVE
Body Style :	2-DOOR	Fuel System :	FUEL INJECTI
Fuel Type :	GAS	Vehicle Type :	PASSEN

Vehicle Component Information

Component 1:	VISIBILITY:REARVIEW MIRRORS/DEVICES:INTERIOR	OEM:	Yes
Component 2:	VEHICLE SPEED CONTROL	OEM:	Yes

Vehicle Dealer Information

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dealer :	1		
Name :	Hertz	Dealer Type :	SERVICE DEALER
Address :	5909 Stephanie Henderson NV 89052		
Dealer Phone:		Dealer Fax:	
Email:			

[Start Over](#) | [Back](#)

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RR M12465434 VEH 01197/8652034 #01PT
CLS YU 05NSLC LIC: NV
FUEL OUT: 8/8 MILES OUT: 2444
CDP: 18131- AMER ASSN RETIRED PERSON
RES: C9373675038/LOCW5 /F
PREPARED BY: 4092/NVHLE02

Hertz



RR M12465434 VEH 01197/8652034
RENTED: 06/02/05 14:46 0719202
AT HLE - HENDERSON
PG 3 OF 3 #01 PT

Hertz

RENTED BY THE HERTZ CORPORATION

THIS IS YOUR STATED RETURN
RETURN: 06/09/05 14:00 @ HLE - HENDERSON
RENTED: 06/02/05 14:46 @ HLE - HENDERSON

PLAN OUT: LOCW5 (T) RATE CLASS: F
\$ 1 @ 208.99 PER WEEK WITH ALL MILES FREE
\$ 41.40 PER EX DY
\$ 20.70 PER EX HR
\$ 20.70 PER XDY XHR

ADDITIONAL CHARGES (T)
UPGRADE CHG \$ 20.00 DY \$ 10.00 EX HR
DISCOUNT - R 10 %
LDW DECLINED
LIS DECLINED
PAL, PEC DECLINED
FUEL & SERVICE \$.250 /MM \$ 4.99 /GL 18.5 /TK CAP
TAX RATE - 7.500 %
GOV SVC FEE - 6.000 %
RECOV SCHG - 4.000 %
RENT FP VISA XXXXXXXXXXXXX3113
AUTHORIZED FOR \$ 417.00

STATE LAW REQUIRES THE OPERATOR AND ALL PASSENGERS AGE 6 AND OVER, OR LESS THAN 60 POUNDS, REGARDLESS OF AGE, TO USE THEIR SAFETY BELTS. If you decline Loss Damage Waiver (LDW), which is optional, You may be responsible for any loss or damage to the Car regardless of fault -- see Par. 4 of the Rental Agreement Terms And Conditions, which appear on the folder (GN1900005) delivered to You with this Rental Record (the Rental Terms). Coverage for all or part of Your responsibility may be provided by Your own auto insurance or under your credit card agreement. By signing below, You acknowledge that You have read, understand, accept and agree to the above and the Rental Terms, and You accept or decline the Optional Services as shown on Card 1.

HERTZ EXPRESS RETURN

IF USING EXPRESS RETURN, PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AND DEPOSIT THIS CARD IN THE EXPRESS RETURN BOX. A DETAILED COPY OF YOUR RENTAL CHARGES WILL BE MAILED TO YOU PROMPTLY.

RETURN DATE: _____ RETURN TIME: _____ : _____ AM.
PM.

RETURN MILEAGE: _____

I did NOT buy gas.

I DID buy gas and the fuel gauge level is: (Circle One)

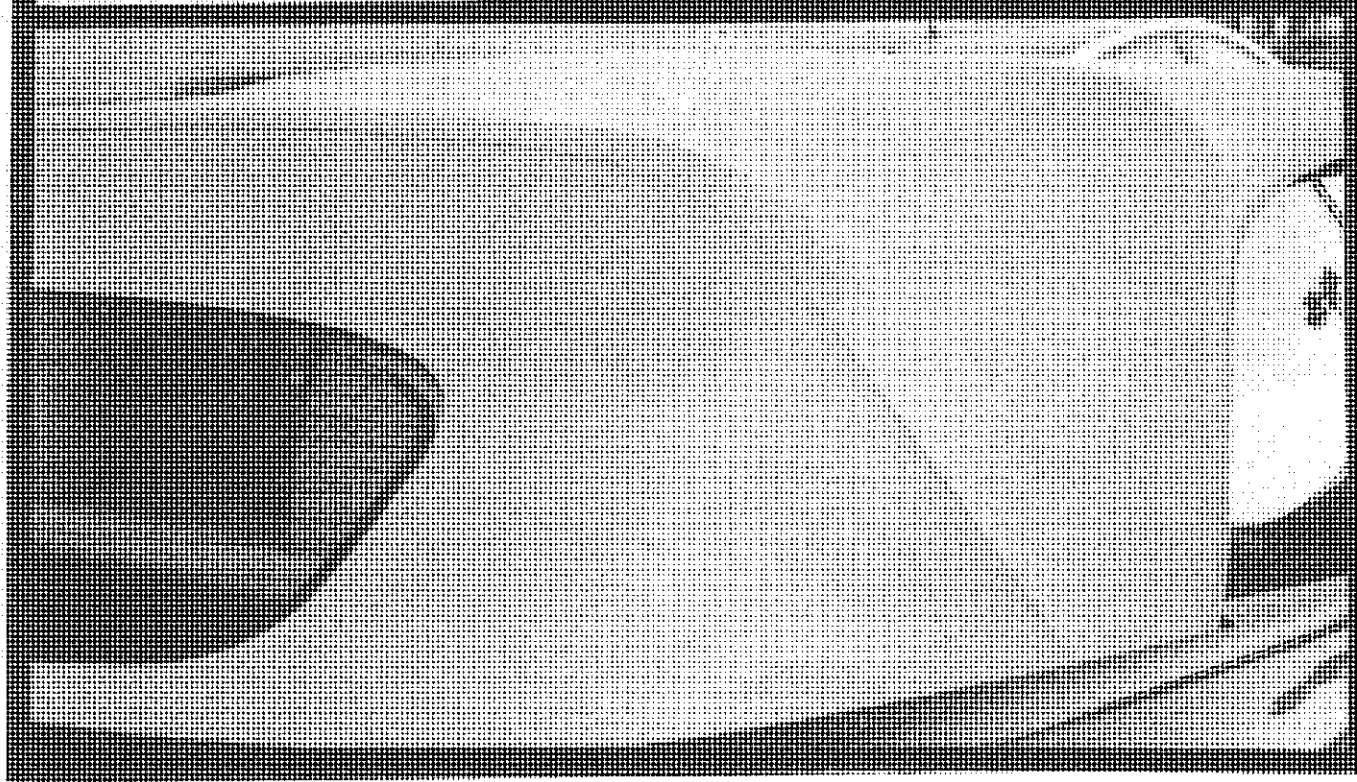
E 1/8 1/4 3/8 1/2 5/8 3/4 7/8 F

RETURN LOCATION COPY - NOT VALID FOR RENTAL

X CUSTOMER COPY - SIGNATURE ON FILE

The Hertz Privacy Policy governs the use of data about you. A copy of the policy is available at the rental counter and online at hertz.com.

2006 Toyota
Camry Solara Convertible

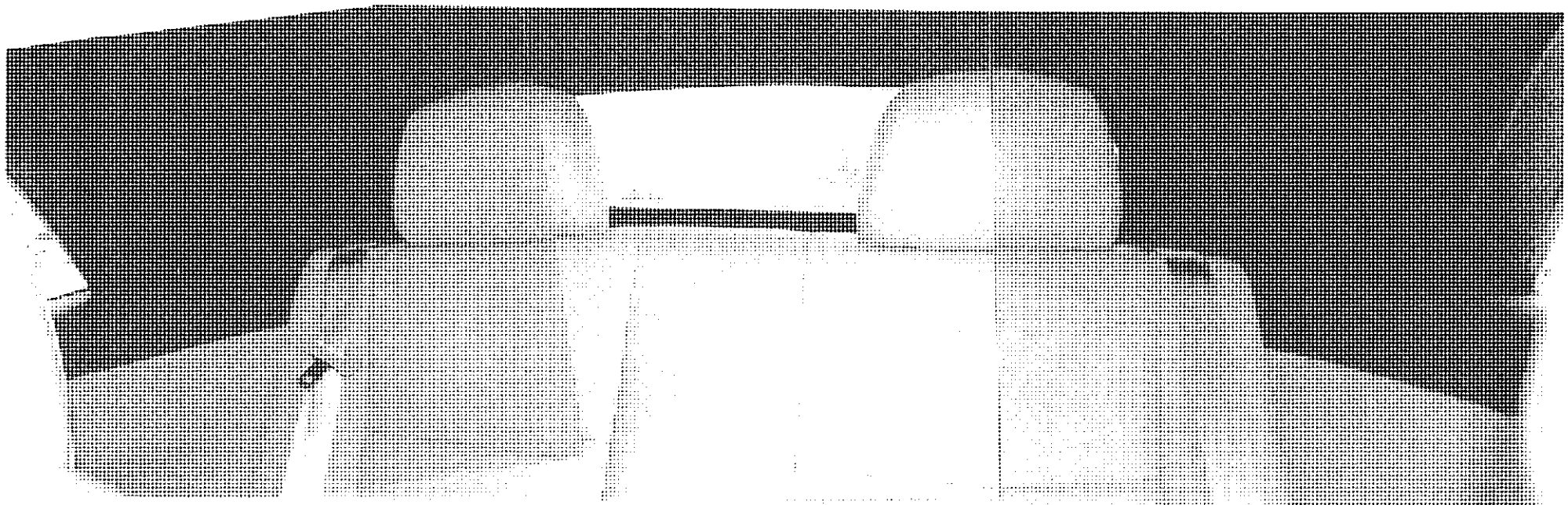


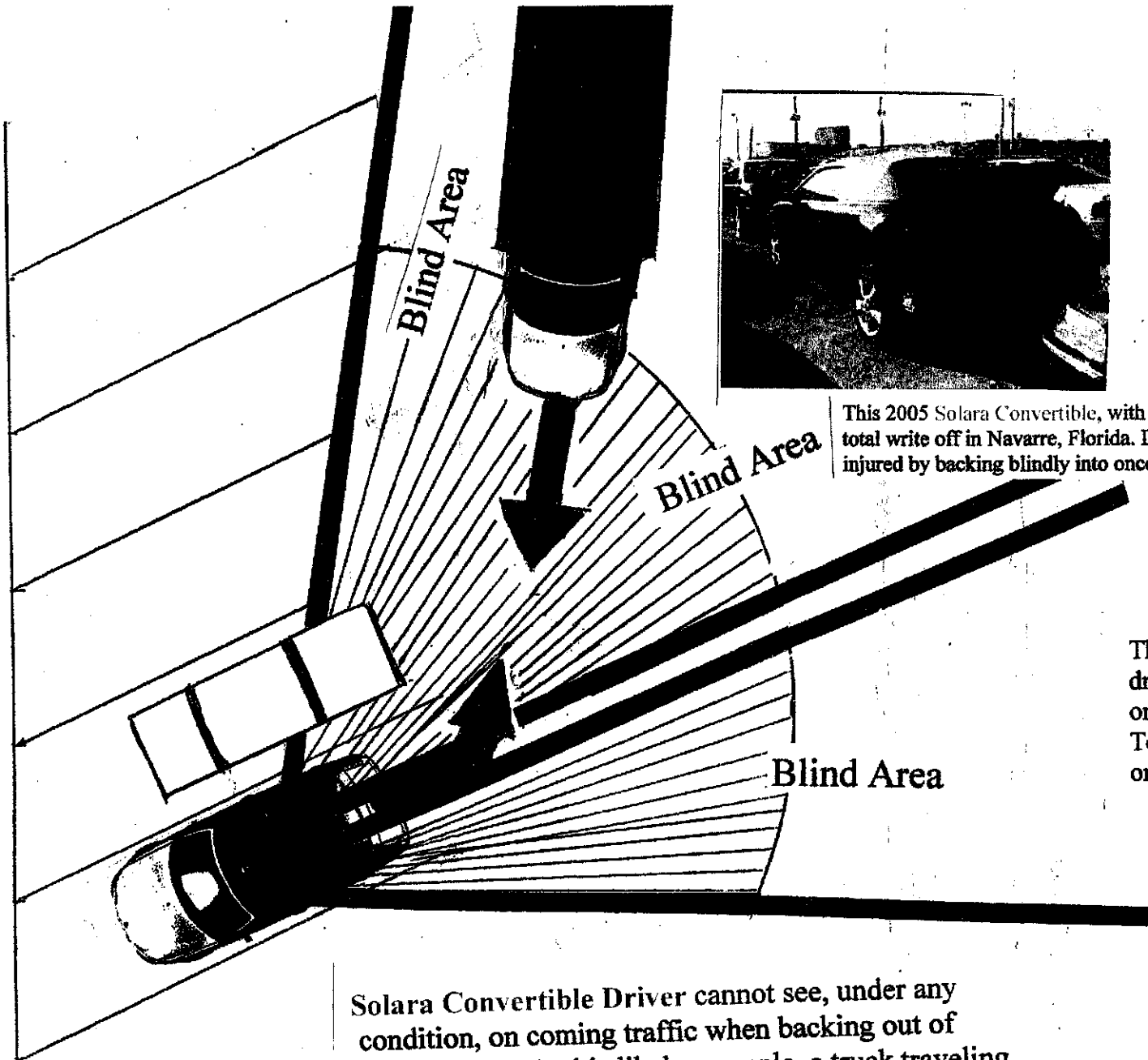
2006 Toyota Camry Solara Convertible

Approximately

150 Degree Rear Vision Blind Spots

"Most Unsafe Convertible on the Road?"

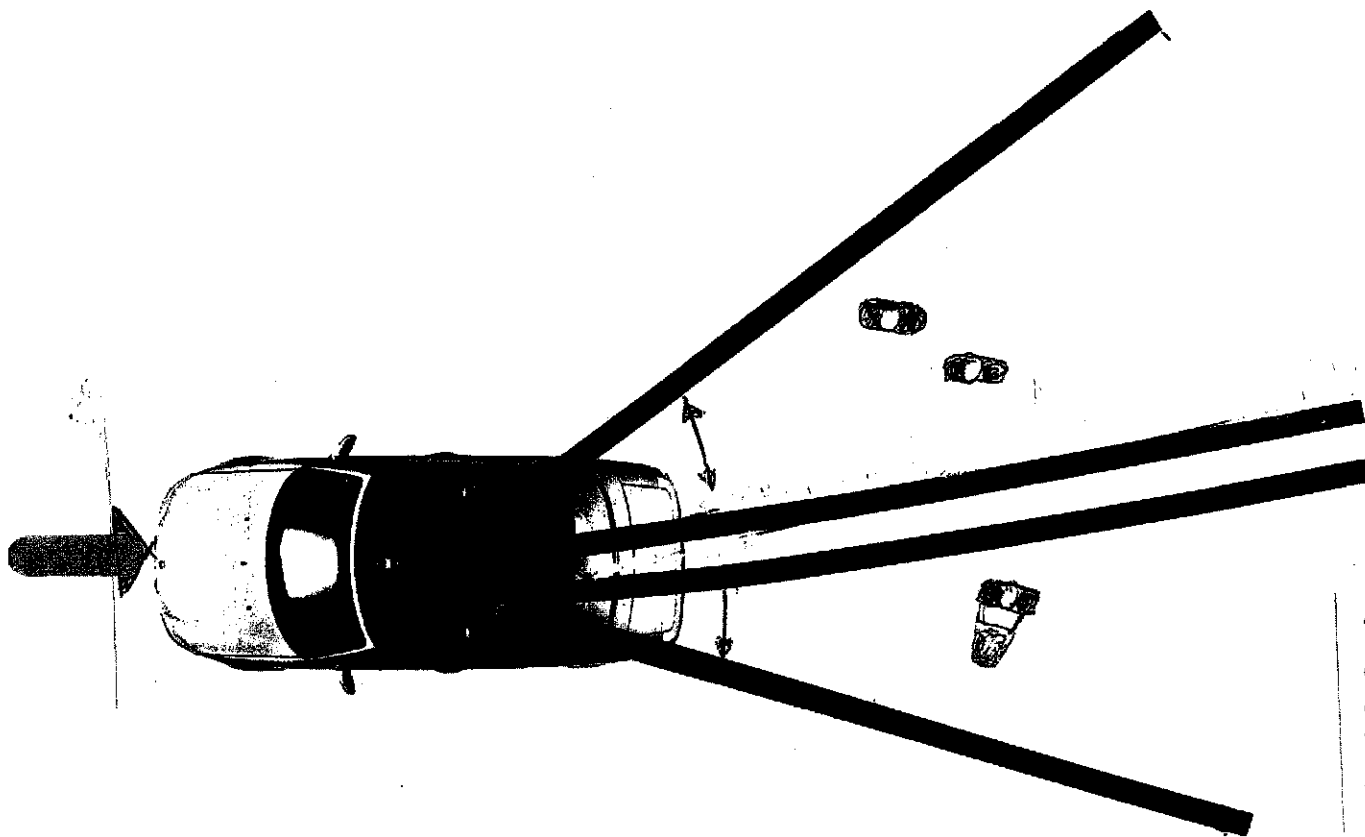




This 2005 Solara Convertible, with 2,700 miles, was a total write off in Navarre, Florida. Driver was seriously injured by backing blindly into oncoming traffic.

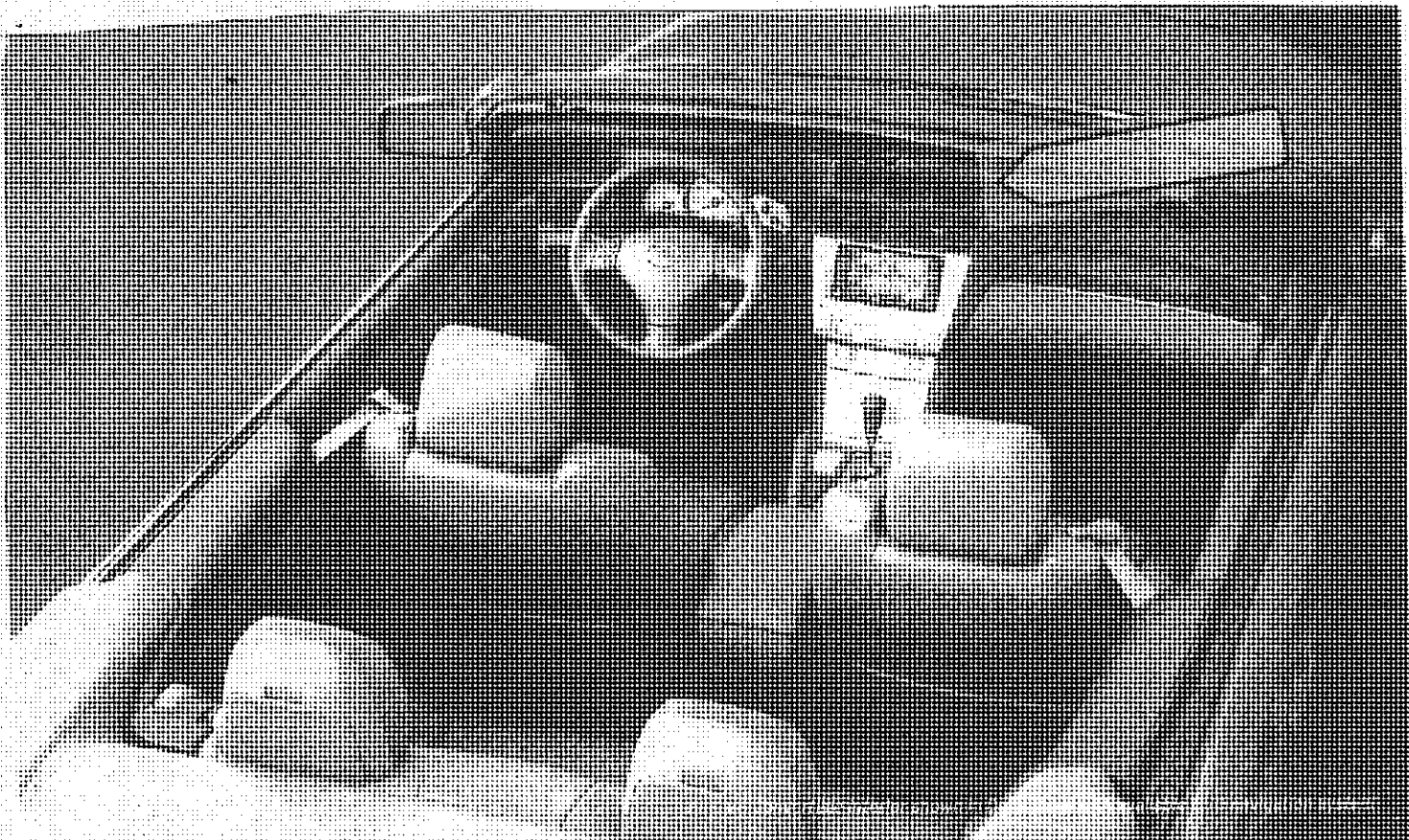
This is not a scale engineering drawing. It is provided for the only purpose of illustration. Toyota can assess the accuracy on its own accord.

Solara Convertible Driver cannot see, under any condition, on coming traffic when backing out of angle parking. In this likely example, a truck traveling at only 15/mph can totally wreck a Solara traveling 5/mph blindly in reverse.

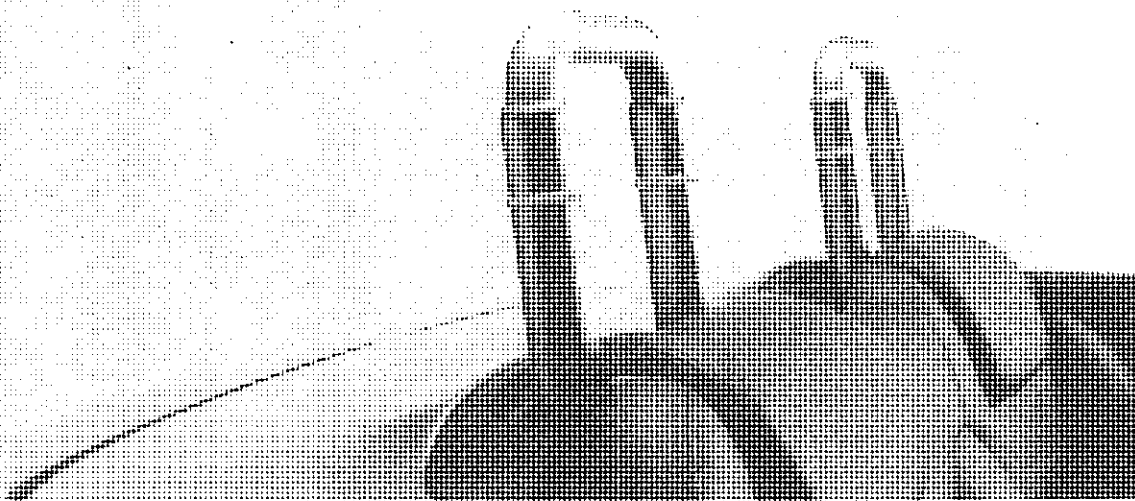


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Pedestrians do not have a chance surviving a Toyota Solara Convertible blindly driving in reverse. The Convertible driver cannot see moving pedestrians. Worse, Toyota doesn't have the common sense of at least offering rear parking sensors.



LCD informational cluster gauges, top of Solara dash board, cannot be seen during bright sunlight.



Saab 9-3 convertible has "recessed backrests" that can be manually thrust up to desirable height. Saab also has safety posts that pop up, on heavy impact, for assistance in possible rollover.