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2006 AUG 16

August 3, 2006

OFFICE OF
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

2006 AUG 14 P 2:58

RECEIVED
NVS-215

George H. Person
Chief, Recall Management Division
Office of Defects Investigation Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Person,

I am sending you a copy of a letter outlining an incident with our 2004 Volvo XC90. This model is currently being recalled (R157) for the equipment failure that could have led to a terrible car accident with my teenage sons. We are trying to get Volvo North America to act responsibly to our individual concern. Can you offer any advice or help for us as we try to get our boys safely back to school in September. It would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]
Ridgewood, NJ

*Anamari
8/16/06*

August 2, 2006

William Shapiro, P.E.
Manager, Regulatory and Product Compliance
Customer Service
Volvo Cars of North America, LLC
7 Volvo Drive
Rockleigh, NJ 07647

Dear Mr. Shapiro,

Last summer I spent countless hours researching the safest car to buy for our teenage sons to drive to school. Our newly licensed 17 year-old would drive himself, his 16 year-old brother and a friend 37 miles down Route 287 S to Morristown, New Jersey from Ridgewood. A thorough research of all crash testing, including European studies, led us to buy a Volvo. We purchased a used 2004 Volvo XC90 at Ramsey Volvo in Ramsey, New Jersey. We chose the XC90 because it was the heaviest Volvo, weight being considered a factor in crash worthiness. We were very pleased with our purchase and the boys commuted safely to Morristown for just about the entire school year. Then, one morning in May, I got the feared phone call- the car had broken down in the middle of a busy intersection just after pulling off the highway exit. The boys were alright but scared. While driving down the exit ramp of Rte. 287 the front right tire became disconnected from the axle, rotated 90 degrees and collapsed under the body bringing the car to a dead halt. My first thought was, thank God it had not happened 10 seconds earlier when they were driving 70 miles an hour down the highway causing, most likely, a high speed fatal accident with many rush hour cars involved. I shudder to think of it now. This was on May 24, 2006. A tow truck was summoned and the mechanic mentioned that it appeared the tie rod had snapped in half, something he had never seen or even heard of. At our expense, the car was towed to Smythe Volvo in Summit, New Jersey. Initially no one could explain why this happened. My persistent skepticism and utter shock at such an awful occurrence led an agent at Smythe to look into the matter and he found that the tie rod assembly on this model car was defective, subject to metal fatigue and was issued a recall on May 5, 2006. The tie-rods were replaced on both sides and the car was returned to us at Ramsey Volvo.

Everyone in the family is now afraid to drive the Volvo. We purchased the car initially because we trusted Volvo but now we don't, especially the two boys who need a car to drive to school in September. I had several conversations with Volvo North America customer service and voiced my fears and concerns. The first representative, Anne, was helpful and sympathized with my concerns. She suggested that the dealer may be willing to do an "assisted buy-back". Frank Benedict of Ramsey Volvo was also helpful and concerned when I contacted him. He offered to trade our car back for another Volvo on their lot. I appreciated the offer but it would not serve our purposes because we would never trust another XC90 and we had only considered cars weighing over 4,000 pounds in our initial purchase. All the other Volvos are lighter. There

was no satisfaction for us in this arrangement. The only arrangement that would satisfy us would be a buy back of our vehicle for the price we paid.

I called Volvo North America again, two more times and each time was confronted with a somewhat hostile representative that dismissed my pleas as ridiculous and not even to be considered. I had to ask one representative to calm himself and remind him that he was a customer service representative! It was shameful how I was treated. The Volvo corporation should consider themselves extremely lucky that the tie rod broke when the boys were going slowly in an intersection, that no one else was involved and that it didn't break while they were going 70 miles an hour on a major highway where that car was driven probably 90% of the time. I considered it divine intervention, personally. In the opinion of your customer service people the case is closed and I am now stuck with a vehicle that my boys are afraid to drive. I deserve better treatment from a company which enjoys a reputation for building safe, reliable family cars. I would like you to take back the vehicle for what I paid. It is the fair and responsible thing to do. Please let me know how you would like to proceed. If you feel this is not possible, I would like to let other people know what happened to our family and how we were treated. There are many avenues to get the word out and I hope I can prevent a future disaster for someone else's family.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of the sender.



Office of Defects Investigation

Recalls - Search Results

Report Date : August 15, 2006 at 05:02 PM

NHTSA Campaign ID number : 06V155000

Make / Models :

VOLVO / XC90

Model/Build Years:

2003-2006

Manufacturer : VOLVO CARS OF N.A. LLC.**NHTSA CAMPAIGN ID Number :** 06V155000 **Mfg's Report Date :** MAY 03, 2006**Component:** STEERING:LINKAGES:TIE ROD ASSEMBLY**Potential Number Of Units Affected :** 108766**Summary:**

ON CERTAIN PASSENGER VEHICLES, THE OUTER TIE ROD BALL JOINT CAN DEFORM AT HIGH LOADS CAUSING A LOSS OF THE CLAMPING FORCE AND THE NUT MAY LOOSEN, WHICH MAY EVENTUALLY LEAD TO A FATIGUE FRACTURE OF THE OUTER TIE ROD BALL JOINT.

Consequence:

THE DRIVER MAY NOTICE THAT THE VEHICLE IS DIFFICULT TO MANEUVER INCREASING THE RISK OF A CRASH.

Remedy:

DEALERS WILL REPLACE THE OUTER BALL JOINT TIE RODS WITH IMPROVED OUTER BALL JOINT TIE RODS FREE OF CHARGE. THE RECALL BEGAN ON JUNE 23, 2006. OWNERS MAY CONTACT VOLVO AT 1-800-458-1552.

Notes:

VOLVO RECALL NO. R157. CUSTOMERS MAY ALSO CONTACT THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION'S VEHICLE SAFETY HOTLINE AT 1-888-327-4236 (TTY 1-800-424-9153), OR GO TO [HTTP://WWW.SAFERCAR.GOV](http://www.safercar.gov).