

OCT 2 5 2006

The Honorable Frank R. Wolf
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
13873 Park Center Road Suite 130
Herndon, VA 20171

NVS-216 aae
Ref. # 10169111

Dear Congressman Wolf:

Thank you for your correspondence dated August 28 on behalf of your constituent, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] wrote concerning his model year (MY) 2002 Saab 9-3 vehicle. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission forwarded your correspondence to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). It was received on September 19.

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. 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.

We appreciate the report you provided on behalf of [REDACTED] and the report [REDACTED] provided on August 24. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. Each report is analyzed and entered into a database to determine whether an investigation into a possible safety defect or safety defect recall adequacy is warranted.

On April 7, 2005, NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) opened an investigation into allegations of engine stalls and/or fires in Saab 9-3 and 9-5 vehicles. On September 13, 2005, the General Motors Corporation (GM), Saab Automobile AB's (Saab) parent corporation and designated agent, notified NHTSA of a safety defect in certain MY 2000 through 2002 Saab 9-3 and 9-5 vehicles with 4-cylinder gasoline engines and MY 2001 9-5 vehicles with 6-cylinder gasoline engines (NHTSA Recall Campaign No. 05V-399000, summary enclosed). Based on that recall, ODI closed its investigation on September 23, 2005. [REDACTED]'s vehicle was not included within the scope of that recall.

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On August 24, 2006, [REDACTED] reported to NHTSA that his MY 2002 Saab 9-3 caught fire on August 13 while his wife was driving the vehicle. On September 7, ODI Investigators examined [REDACTED]'s vehicle at International Motors Ltd. in Falls Church, Virginia, to determine whether the fire in his vehicle was related to the issue previously under investigation and the related recall. Based on ODI's examination, it was determined that the vehicle fire reported by [REDACTED] on his MY 2002 Saab 9-3 vehicle was not related to that issue. Therefore, it appears at this time that the scope of NHTSA Recall Campaign No. 05V-399000 is adequate.

ODI did contact GM (Saab), which advised ODI that [REDACTED]'s vehicle is covered by two outstanding safety recalls (NHTSA Recall Nos. 04V-557000 and 01V-314000, summaries enclosed) but that his vehicle has not received the remedies available under those recalls. NHTSA's Recall No. 04V-557000 concerns a fuel leakage at the fuel pump that may ignite and result in a fire; however, the fuel pump is not located in the engine compartment. We recommend [REDACTED] contact a Saab dealership to have the corrective action for the safety recalls identified above completed.

Further, a review of NHTSA's data concerning engine compartment fires in vehicles outside the scope of NHTSA Recall Campaign No. 05V-399000 revealed insufficient evidence to initiate a safety defect investigation at this time. The information provided by [REDACTED] has been entered into our database. It will be considered with future reports to identify any safety defect trends that may require our attention.

With regard to [REDACTED]'s request for reimbursement assistance for repairs to his vehicle from both Saab and USAA Insurance Company, we have no authority to assist [REDACTED] with his request for compensation. If [REDACTED] has not done so, he may consider contacting his local Consumer Protection Agency, Better Business Bureau, or the Virginia State Office of the Attorney General regarding this matter.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please contact me or Mr. Ronald L. Medford, Senior Associate Administrator for Vehicle Safety, at (202) 366-1810.

Sincerely yours,

Original Signed By

Michael W. Harrington
Director of External Affairs

Enclosures

cc: Washington Office

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NHTSA: NVS-210: Congressional Response

NVS-216: Ms. Alonso ext: 6-6903

NHTSA Control No. ES06-005993

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cc:

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