



U.S. Department
of Transportation

National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

DOT Auto Safety Hotline
Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire
To Report Vehicle Safety Defects
1-888-DASH-2-DOT
(1-888-327-4236)
INTERNET: www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 100148

Date Received

Repository ☐

01-FEB-2007

Reference No.
10181318

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Name [REDACTED] Address [REDACTED] City PHILADELPHIA State PA Zip Code [REDACTED] Daytime Telephone Number [REDACTED] E-mail Address [REDACTED] Evening Telephone Number [REDACTED]

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of this report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? ☐ YES ☒ NO
In the absence of an answer, provide your name or address to the vehicle manufacturer.
Signature of Owner [REDACTED] Date / /

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side: 1T8UJ30C4N0 [REDACTED]
Make LEXUS Model SC400 Model Year 1992
Date Purchased 01-JUN-99 Dealer's Name and Telephone Number [REDACTED] Engine: No. Cylinders 6 Fuel Type: Gas
Original Owner [REDACTED] Dealer's City [REDACTED] State [REDACTED] Zip Code [REDACTED]
Transmission Type AUTOMATIC Antilock Brakes ☐ Cruise Control ☒ Powertrain REAR WHEEL DRIVE Vehicle Component Code 060000 ENGINE AND ENGINE COOLING Multiple Failure: 2

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Incident Date(s) 31-JAN-2007 Failure Mileage [REDACTED] Failure Speed 50

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make [REDACTED] Tire Model (Name or Number) [REDACTED] Tire Size (Example P215/65R15) [REDACTED]
DOT No. (Example: DOTM19ABC036) Original Equipment ☐ Prior Repair ☐ Failure Location: [REDACTED]
Tire Component Code [REDACTED] Tire Failure Type [REDACTED]

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE

Make: [REDACTED] Date Manufactured: [REDACTED] Model No./Name: [REDACTED]
Seat Type: [REDACTED] Installation System: [REDACTED]
Child Seat Component Code: [REDACTED] Failed Part: [REDACTED]

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

Crash ☒ Yes ☐ No Fire ☐ Yes ☒ No Number of Persons Injured 0 Number of Deaths 0 Reported to Police N

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).

TL* - THE CONTACT STATED THAT THE 1992 LEXUS SC400, ACCELERATED RAPIDLY TO ABOUT 80 MPH WHILE IN THE DRIVEWAY. SHE STATED THAT WHILE BACKING INTO A DRIVEWAY AT ABOUT 2 MPH THE VEHICLE ACCELERATED. THIS WAS EARLY MORNING OF 01/31/07. THE WEATHER AND DRIVEWAY CONDITIONS WERE DRY. THE GAS PEDAL ACCELERATED AND PRESSED TO THE FLOOR. SHE APPLIED THE BRAKES WITH FORCE, BUT THE VEHICLE DIDN'T STOP. THE CONTACT STATED THAT THE VEHICLE HIT ANOTHER VEHICLE IN THE DRIVEWAY. THIS ALSO HAPPENED TO HER HUSBAND LAST MONTH, AND HE ALMOST RAN INTO THE A GARAGE. *AK

Owner is: [REDACTED]
Warminster, PA. [REDACTED]

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

The Privacy Act of 1974-Public Law 93-579 This information is requested pursuant to authority vested in the National Highway Traffic Safety Act and subsequent amendments. You are under no obligation to respond to this questionnaire. Your response may be used to assist the NHTSA in determining whether a Manufacturer should take appropriate action to correct a safety defect. If the NHTSA proceeds with administrative enforcement or litigation against a manufacturer, your response, or a statistical summary thereof, may be used in support of the agency's action.



Executive Office
Lexus National Headquarters

February 26, 2007

[REDACTED]
Philadelphia, PA [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]:

Thank you for contacting the Lexus Customer Satisfaction Department regarding your daughter's 1992 SC 400, Vehicle Identification Number JT8UZ30C4N0 [REDACTED]. We appreciate the time you have taken to share your thoughts.

We apologize that you were involved in a collision at your grandson's day care provider. We appreciate how traumatic such an experience can be. After reviewing the information available for the Vehicle Identification Number you provided, JT8UZ30C4N0 [REDACTED], we have concluded that this matter should be addressed with your mechanic and your insurance company. Our records indicate that this vehicle has not been at a Lexus dealer since 2001. We must therefore decline any assistance in this matter. We apologize that this may not be the response you hoped for.

Please contact the Lexus Customer Satisfaction Department at 1-800-255-3987, Monday through Friday, 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., or Saturday, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Pacific Time, if you require further assistance.

Sincerely,

Vaughn Wendelstadt
Executive Coordinator

vw/200702210137fl

[REDACTED]
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania [REDACTED]

February 1, 2007

Lexus

Customer Satisfaction Department

Mail Drop L203

19001 South Western Avenue

Torrance, California 90509-2732

RE: Lexus SC400

VIN JT8UZ30C4N0 [REDACTED]

(owner is [REDACTED] my daughter)

Gentlemen:

Yesterday, January 31, 2007 while taking my grandson to daycare in my daughter's car, the Lexus SC400 accelerated rapidly and uncontrollably while in the sitter's driveway, causing me to hit her vehicle. No injuries were sustained. Weather conditions were clear with dry road surfaces.

I was proceeding in reverse slowly up the sitter's sloped driveway with my foot on the accelerator when the car just "bolted" at full force as if "possessed". I immediately applied the brakes as hard as I could; however, I could not stop in time to avoid the accident. I have filed both a police report and an incident report with the NHTSA.

I am a responsible driver and have had no accidents in my 42-year driving history. I *know* this accident was beyond my control, and I am requesting that Lexus take the responsible initiative to investigate this for me by one of your expert mechanics. I have read about defective electronic control systems, but do not know if this is the case here. By the way, a similar experience happened to my husband on Christmas Day, 2006 IN THE SAME CAR while driving in reverse in our daughter's driveway. However, he was luckily able to stop the vehicle in time before striking her garage door.

I commend Lexus for producing reputable and solidly built vehicles, but I believe there is a serious mechanical flaw with our family's Lexus and request your assistance to correct this before another accident occurs, possibly causing injuries... or worse..., the next time.

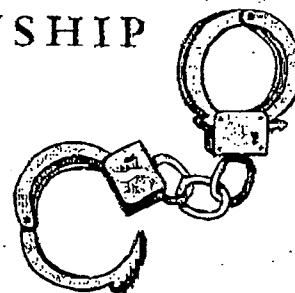
Thank you for your interest and your forthcoming response.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] ext. 11 (workday)
[REDACTED] (home)
[REDACTED]

UPPER SOUTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

939 STREET ROAD
SOUTHAMPTON, PA 18966
PHONE (215) 364-5000
FAX (215) 357-8098



FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

TO: [REDACTED] FROM: *Mami*
COMPANY: DATE: *USPD*
FAX NUMBER: TOTAL NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER: *3*

☐ URGENT☐ FOR REVIEW☐ PLEASE COMMENT☐ PLEASE REPLY

NOTES/COMMENTS:

Call 215-364-5000 X-120

If you need me.

Mami

UPPER SOUTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

ORI: PA0092000

Incident Investigation Report

20070201M0028 (73)

Incident Data

Class (UCR) Code: 7010 PUBLIC SERVICES-NOTIFICATIONS(POL.INFO.) Complete

Crimes Code: Title: ☐

Date/Time Reported: 02/01/2007 Thursday 18:50

Discovered Date/Time: 01/31/2007 Wednesday 08:15

Last Known Secure :

TIME - Received: 18:50 / Dispatched: 18:50 / Arrived: 18:50 / Cleared: 18:55

Badge: 017 - SGT JOHN COSTELLO

Location: 1010 WILLOW ST - SOUTHAMPTON

Landmark:

Patrol Zone: 1 - ZONE 1

Premise Type:

BIAS: 88 NONE (NO BIAS)

MO:

Weapon/Tools:UNDEFINED Additional weapon:

Persons Involved

Number of Victims: 0 Number of Offenders: 0 Persons Involved: 1

REPORTING PARTY [REDACTED] (NP039295)

Incident Classif.: 7010 PUBLIC SERVICES-NOTIFICATIONS(POL.INFO.)

Type: INDIVIDUAL/PERSON (NOT L.E.OFFICER) Injury: UNDEFINED

Age/DOB: 58 04/11/1948 Race: U Sex: F Ethnic: U Marital: U Resdnc: U

SS#:

Height: 0 Weight: 0 Eye: Hair: Build: Compl.:

GBM ID number: Date Entered: / / Date Released: -/ /

Comment:

Home: [REDACTED]

Home Phone: [REDACTED]

PHILADELPHIA PA [REDACTED]

Work Phone: [REDACTED] EXT: 11 Cell Phone: [REDACTED] Pager:

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Employer: [REDACTED]

DOCUMENTS ON FILE:

Vehicles Involved

VYR	Make	Model	Style	Color	License	St
-----	------	-------	-------	-------	---------	----

Officer: SGT JOHN COSTELLO
Case Status: UNDEFINEDBadge: 017
Case Disposition:

Page: 1

Vehicles Involved

(0) 92 LEXUS 400 SC

VIN:

Serial:

PA

Owner Name:

Owner Address:

WARMINSTER PA

PA Title:

Insurance Co: USAA

Policy:

Summary

02/01/2007 18:58 Page 1 Ofc. 017 Reporting party, [REDACTED], requested a record be made of an incident she was involved in at 0815 hours, January 31, 2006, while dropping her grandson at the babysitters residence, 1010 Willow Street, Southampton. She was driving her daughter in law's 1992 Lexus 400 SC and the car began to accelerate rapidly and uncontrollably resulting in the Lexus colliding with the babysitter's car. The Lexus' rear bumper, trunk lid and tail lights were damaged. The request was less to report the accident than it was to document a possible manufacturer's problem that have affected similar vehicles recently. She stated that a similar event occurred when her husband was driving it on Christmas day.

Officer: SGT JOHN COSTELLO
Case Status: UNDEFINED

Badge: 017
Case Disposition:

Page: 2

1-800-251-8011

DEARDEN, MAGUIRE, WEAVER AND BARRETT, LLC.

INVESTMENT ADVISORS

February 6, 2007

TO: Kathy Tapia, USAA

FROM: [REDACTED]

RE: Policy No. [REDACTED]

Kathy, thanks for calling me on my cell phone yesterday evening and advising that you'll arrange for a claims adjuster to inspect the Lexus at the Maple Auto Body shop in Langhorne, Pennsylvania.

I am enclosing copies of my certified letter to Lexus and also a police incident report stating that the accident was caused by uncontrolled rapid acceleration. I have also filed a report with the National Highway Traffic Safety Act so that they also can review and, hopefully, follow up on my experience. They said that they would be sending me a copy of my report in approximately two weeks.

I have read with interest of other incidents on uncontrolled rapid acceleration and include some of these reports with my fax.

→ I would be interested, Kathy, to learn how many claims handled by USAA that are related to the rapid acceleration reason as I wish to pursue this with the Lexus corporation.

Thanks for your help.

Phones: [REDACTED] ext. 11 (workday)
[REDACTED] (home)
[REDACTED] (cell)

Kathy, please include this packet with my claim record

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, February 03, 2007 10:54 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: (no subject)

#10 of 45 **Unexpected Rapid acceleration - dangerous** by paul23 Apr 06, 2005 (4:38 am)

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I have a new Magnum (70 miles on it). While driving 20 mph under idle power, my car rapidly accelerated. I stepped on the brake and came to a stop, but the engine revved to 3000 rpm. I slowly eased off the brake but the car would have taken off. I re-applied the brake and came to a stop, but the car still wanted to take off as the engine was at 300 rpm. What do you do in this situation. Since I was at a stop, I shifted to neutral, the engine almost red-lined, I quickly shifted into park and turned off the engine. I checked that the floor mat was not up against the accelerator. It was not. I re-started and drove 30 miles home with no problem. I hope this doesn't happen again.

FYI: I am 40 yrs old- male , I drove 2 Corvette for 15 years and no way I was pressing on the accelerator. My foot was on the brake only as the engine continued to accelerate. I always thought most uncontrolled rapid accelerations were people getting the brake and accelerator pedals mixed up. Now I am not sure.



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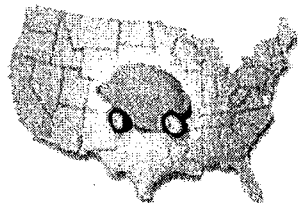
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Technology Puts Unintended Acceleration Back in Spotlight

By Jayne O'Donnell and David Kiley, USA TODAY

ROCKVILLE, Md. — Carol Mathews, 60, has been driving since she was 12 years old on a South Dakota farm. So when her 2002 Lexus ES 300 ran into a tree as she pulled into a restaurant parking space last fall, she was pretty sure she wasn't the problem. She says it was the third time the car lurched forward without her help.

Marlene Fett, 70, swears she hadn't touched the gas pedal when her 1988 Lincoln Town Car plowed into a carousel outside an Arkansas Wal-Mart in 1995. The crash killed 6-month-old Nathaniel Chapman and seriously injured his then-2-year-old brother, Jonathan.

Was it the car or the driver?

The question lingers 15 years after federal auto safety officials said so-called unintended or sudden acceleration was caused when drivers stepped on the gas instead of the brake. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's 1989 report was in response to well-publicized complaints that models sold by Audi and other automakers would take off on their own from a standstill, travel several feet and usually crash.

But lack of ironclad proof that the cause of unintended acceleration lies either with a car defect or driver error has made the issue a recurring nightmare for automakers and regulators. Each new spate of incidents can cause renewed jitters among drivers.

Now, NHTSA has opened an investigation into whether a new technology is making unintended acceleration more frequent — or just giving errant drivers and plaintiffs' lawyers something new to blame for crashes.

The technology, electronic throttle control, uses sensors to tell a car's computer how much to open the throttle, which lets in air, and how much fuel to inject into the engine to control speed. Automakers like the technology, which replaces a mechanical cable, for reliability and cost savings, and because it helps fuel economy and improves performance. But it works with other new and often bug-ridden electronics that plaintiffs' lawyers say are leading to unintended acceleration.

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Safety

Specifically, NHTSA is investigating the electronic throttle control system in more than 1 million 2002-03 Toyota Camrys, Solaras and Lexus ES 300s. It has narrowed the probe to 11 complaints of engine surge, five that involved crashes. More than two dozen other complaints were dropped from the investigation.

But the Toyota case is only one of several recent unintended acceleration developments. Others:

- At least 16 drivers have told NHTSA that their 1998-99 Audi A6 sedans pick up speed without help while already moving, mostly in subzero temperatures in Northeastern states. Drivers said the only way to stop the car was to turn the ignition off. The agency is investigating.
- Subaru recalled 128,000 vehicles because of a possible defect in the cruise control system that could leave throttles sticking wide open. The throttle stayed open rather than returning to idle when the driver removed his foot, NHTSA says.
- For more than a decade, decisions usually favored car companies and blamed drivers in unintended acceleration cases, but some recent trials and court decisions reversed that. Ford Motor and General Motors each recently lost a high-profile case.

Complaints about unintended acceleration have mostly come in three phases. After the surge of complaints in the 1980s, automakers added mechanisms known as shift-locks, which force drivers to press the brake pedal if they want to shift into drive or reverse. That cut the number of unintended acceleration complaints considerably in the 1990s.

But in the mid to late '90s, plaintiff lawyers began to blame increasingly popular cruise control systems for new unintended acceleration problems. They say simultaneous and undetectable cruise control failures can give cars power as soon as the ignition is turned on and cause them to accelerate on their own.

Automakers and regulators say that cruise control, like any component, can malfunction, but they dismiss the lawyers' theory that it is linked to cars taking off on their own from a stop. They say all the incarnations of cruise control have given often-elderly drivers a complicated new technology to blame for their own mistakes.

Now, many expect electronic throttle control will be the new lawsuit target.

Incident followed concerns

Carol Mathews is no mechanic, but she says she knows her car and her driving. And she's all but certain her car was operating on its own when it hit the tree last fall in the parking lot in Rockville, a Washington suburb. The incident followed several months of concerns about jerkiness, deceleration and acceleration without her help while driving at highway speeds. After seeing dozens of related complaints about Lexus and Toyota models on



NHTSA's Web site, she petitioned NHTSA to open a probe, which it did last month.

Mathews, a nurse and school health official, bought her Lexus about a year before her crash and after putting 155,000 miles on a 1989 Oldsmobile Toronado Trofeo. She dismisses the longtime argument by regulators and automakers that it might have been hard to adjust to a new vehicle with new pedals that are positioned differently. Older-model American cars often have larger brake pedals than Japanese models, and the gas pedal might be where the brake was in a drivers' previous car. In Mathews' cars, the pedals are only slightly different in size and position.

Toyota spokesman Mike Michels says the automaker takes the complaints seriously but believes it's significant that NHTSA has already reduced the number it is investigating to 11. "That's a pretty small number, and we do not think that there is any event that could take place that couldn't be overcome by applying the brake," says Michels.

Electronic throttle control units show trouble codes on the car's computer and illuminate the check-engine light on the dash if there are malfunctions. Michels says Toyota technicians found no trouble codes with Mathews' car. None of the other complaints mentions a check-engine light.

Fett and her lawyer blame cruise control for her 1995 crash. "The car just took off," she says.

The deadly collision sent her to the hospital, where she says she had a heart attack and a bleeding ulcer that burst. Her husband, William, says that for six months, Fett couldn't look at a child without crying and couldn't bear to drive by Wal-Mart.

A Chapman family lawsuit against Ford is scheduled to be heard in November. The family settled its lawsuit with the Fetts, who now also are suing Ford.

Little Rock attorney Sandy McMath, who is representing the Chapmans, says the Town Car's cruise control put Fett on a "rocket ship to Mars" after she pulled out of her parking place. He petitioned NHTSA to investigate what he says is a defect in Ford and Lincoln models' cruise control that causes the accelerator to stick.

In a lengthy 1999 report denying McMath's petition, NHTSA investigator Bob Young wrote that even if such an occurrence took place and didn't leave evidence of a mechanical malfunction, the situation should be reproducible through in-vehicle and laboratory tests. None of NHTSA's testing could do so.

McMath says he has an expert who can replicate it, "But it is not a road show you can put on and bring around the country."

Despite NHTSA's rulings, automakers have suffered recent losses in cruise control cases:

- A Missouri jury last year ordered GM to pay Constance Peters and her husband \$80 million for the crash of her 1993 Oldsmobile Cutlass, which accelerated 120 feet in reverse and into a tree while she was backing up. They blamed faulty cruise control. GM is appealing.
- The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New York in 2002 reinstated a \$1.1 million judgment against Ford in the crash of a 1991 Ford Aerostar. Jurors had found that the crash was caused partly by a "negligently designed" cruise control system.

Age as an issue?

In its 1989 report, NHTSA noted that drivers over 60 were as much as six times as likely as younger drivers to be involved in an unintended acceleration incident, suggesting that deteriorating reflexes are a contributing factor.

But the older-driver theory raises the ire of McMath and Tom Murray of Sandusky, Ohio, another Chapman attorney. McMath calls it "the hobgoblin of geezer negligence." Murray says, "These cases go back to the 1980s and involve Audi 5000s, Ford Thunderbirds, Mercury Cougars and Grand Marquis, Ford Aerostar vans, as well as Town Cars, and the complaints and incidents cover a broad demographic waterfront."

Audi, which has been linked for many years to real or imagined unintended acceleration, perhaps has the most to fear from a fresh look at the issue. In the mid-1980s, the German automaker, owned by Volkswagen, was investigated for hundreds of complaints of unintended acceleration in its 5000 sedan. The resulting bad publicity caused Audi sales to drop 60% in three years, even though NHTSA never found a flaw in Audi's design and blamed driver error.

The company says it is cooperating fully with NHTSA's new probe into its A6 models but, like Toyota, doesn't believe the cars are defective.

"Our engineers are looking into what could have caused the complaints, but we don't believe this is related at all to claims of years ago," says Audi spokesman Doug Clark.

Michels says electronic throttle control systems are not likely to blame for Toyota models, either: "That's not to say they don't fail or they can't fail, but they are very reliable."

In the future, technology might lead to more concerns about unintended acceleration, but it may also finally bring some answers.

Automakers are rapidly adding electronics to cars, including systems that will control acceleration, braking and steering if a vehicle gets too close to another. While most of the high-tech additions are expected to make driving safer, some in and out of government expect they'll also be the source of more complaints.

At the same time, new data-recording devices, similar to the black boxes on

airplanes, are increasingly showing up on vehicles. They will show computer codes that tell whether the throttle control system failed, the brakes were used and numerous other details about cars before a crash. That means the often-missing electronic footprints of what caused a crash finally will be available.

Still, it's hard to imagine it will end the debate forever.

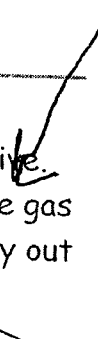
Says Chicago attorney John Coleman, who has represented Ford in numerous unintended acceleration cases: "There will always be something to argue about in court."

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 31, 2007 10:17 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: (no subject)

Re: Sudden acceleration

Posted by Joe Reinhart (GUEST) on 04/21/2006 15:18:56

March, 2006 -- New 2006 Mercury Grand Marquee -- I was going to take this car for a test drive. As I pulled out of the line of new cars, turning to the right, it accelerated like I had pushed the gas pedal to the floor. There were black marks on the pavement and they started before I was fully out of the space. I hit the brakes as hard as I could. That only seemed to keep the car from accelerating to a higher speed. 

I hit the back of a golf cart my salesman was riding in, which was directly in front of me. I turned right, as soon as I could, into an aisle with a small open area and away from the golf cart. The car then slowed to a stop with the engine still trying to overcome the brakes. The engine then suddenly seemed to shake or quiver a little, followed by some internal mechanical noises and it stalled. The salesman in the golf cart was taken to the hospital, as a precaution, to make sure he had no broken bones from whiplash. The Sheriff's deputy that came said he wouldn't give me a ticket because it was on private property. I told the deputy that if I hadn't been on the brake I would have killed the salesman. From the start of unintended acceleration until I got the car stopped couldn't have been more than 10 seconds.

Joe Reinhart

Re: Sudden acceleration

Posted by karen (GUEST) on 05/25/2006 23:07:54

My 2001 Ford Expedition accelerated out of control on SUPER busy 4 lane intersection. I was driving 30 mph one minute, and car floor boarded next minute ON ITS OWN. I put my foot on brake and it was locked. I did a 180 degree turn, headed west. Tried putting vehicle in neutral, missed and apparently hit reverse. When it stalled for a second coming out of 180 deg. turn, it accelerated again, this time in reverse. Did another 180 deg. turn, headed north, and apparently I had sense enough left to turn off key. Miraculously, I did not hit anyone else, nor did I get hurt. Took car to dealer. Picked it up today, 5 days later, and dealer says he cannot find anything wrong. It is terrifying to drive it now. Only have 32000 miles, so can't afford to trade it. If any of you have had 

02/01/2007

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 04, 2007 9:46 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: pmviola@Verizon.net
Subject: Comments about my accident

People are writing into Edmunds about my posting...

3177 of 3178 Re: Uncontrolled Rapid Acceleration (Lexus) [Mr_Shiftright] by user777 Feb 04, 2007 (6:13 pm)

Replying to: Mr_Shiftright (Feb 03, 2007 11:33 am)

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shifty, with a cable-linked system, can't the cable get caught up in the cable enclosure?

also, in a fully electric DBW system, if i'm not mistaken it is a servo motor that positions the throttle valve based on command and position feedback. there's still opportunity for mechanical binding, or electrical problems causing the throttle to fail to close.

back to the poster's problem, i could see a mechanical throttle binding because of the cable linkage binding. or how about the floor carpet slipping and depressing the accelerator. wasn't there a toyota recall not long ago for a problem with floor mats and the accelerator?

back to DBW, didn't one poster claim their vehicle did not accelerate when they pressed on the accelerator in the parking lot, then all of a sudden took off and they hit a curb or another car?

i'm with you on confusing the brake and the accelerator. i did that in a jeep laredo myself once. but, i think there are some other scenarios both dbw- and non-dbw possible.

Replies to this message:

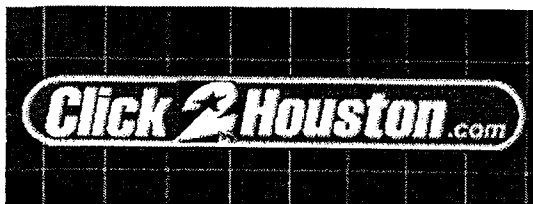
• Mr_Shiftright (Feb 04, 2007 6:29 pm)

#3178 of 3178 Re: Uncontrolled Rapid Acceleration (Lexus) [user777] by Mr_Shiftright HOST
 Feb 04, 2007 (6:29 pm)

Replying to: user777 (Feb 04, 2007 6:13 pm)

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I guess the only scenario that I absolutely don't believe is that the driver could be pressing hard on the brake and the vehicle is still accelerating.



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Drivers Blame Sudden Acceleration For Crashes

Acceleration Complaints Can Be Filed Online

POSTED: 2:25 pm CDT May 4, 2004

UPDATED: 10:20 am CDT May 5, 2004

[E-mail this story](#) | [Print this story](#)

HOUSTON -- Last December, a car crashed into a strip center soccer store in Kingwood. As it plowed inside, 45-year-old Debbie MacAfee was killed. Another woman survived, but is still recovering from her injuries.

Video

Carol Parish was the driver that day. She still cries about the crash, five months later.



Carmakers: Driver Error, Not Mechanical Failure, Causes Cars To Accelerate Without Warning

☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Yes ☒ No

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"It's a horrible hole that is sh through your spirit," Parish said.

She said that she was backin out of a parking space, and then started to pull away. That's when she said her ca took on a life of its own.

"The minute it hit drive, it jus shot out like a rocket," Parish said. "As it shot forward, I ju kept thinking it would stop. And it went right in through t glass."

Parish is convinced that her foot was not on the gas ped:

She blames a problem that she and others say is causing cars to run away, out of control.

"My car wreck brought so much grief to so many families and people involved. I'd never heard of it," Parish said.

It's called sudden acceleration -- a problem that drivers claim causes a car to suddenly take off for no reason. While drivers believe it's a real issue, the government and automakers say it is a myth that has never been proved.

But as the debate goes on, so do the accidents, according to industry experts.

"We have seen literally hundreds of deaths and thousands of serious injuries in crashes caused by unintended acceleration," said Clarence Ditlow, with the Center for Auto Safety.

Ditlow is head of the Center for Auto Safety in Washington. He's one of the authors of a new book claiming sudden acceleration is real and automakers know about it.

Their research shows dozens of models have had high rates of sudden acceleration complaints, beginning when

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electronic controls like cruise control became more common. They said it has continued as cars became more advanced.

"When manufacturers go to new electronic control systems, such as drive-by wire, I expect every manufacturer in the next few years to have incidents of sudden acceleration," Ditlow said.

Marian Armstrong has been fighting Nissan over sudden acceleration for more than a decade. She says the problem caused her 300 ZX to crash in a Greenway Plaza parking lot in 1992. She hit a building and a pole, putting her in a hospital.

She sued Nissan, claiming a defect caused the accident and that the company knew about it.

Armstrong won her lawsuit.

A Houston appeals court approved the verdict, saying evidence showed Nissan had recorded numerous reports of similar accidents and did not tell the government or its customers.

The case is in its final appeal.

A Nissan spokesman said the company believes it was driver error, and not a defect.

The debate rolls on -- are drivers pushing the wrong pedals or is there really a defect?

A 1989 federal study said the likely cause was drivers. It said there is no proof of a widespread defect.

Automakers back up the claim with videos, saying even if sudden acceleration did occur, brakes would stop the car.

But drivers like Parish and Armstrong said they did slam on the brakes, but the car was already out of control.

"Sure brakes can stop the car, but what happens if there's a child in the road before the brakes bring you to a stop? It's that first 100 feet that's so crucial," Ditlow said.

Ditlow said all the questions should force the government to reopen the book on sudden acceleration.

Houston-area Rep. Nick Lampson is asking for just that.

"There should be a resolution to the issue to give both sides the confidence level that enough work and enough study has been done," Lampson said.

Government safety investigators are currently looking into sudden acceleration claims in 2002 and 2003 Toyota Camrys, Solaras and Lexus ES 300s.

Toyota told News2Houston that it is studying the complaints, but no defect has been found or any cases proved.

Parish's Lexus model is not a part of that study.

A Lexus spokesman told News2Houston that the accident is tragic, but because a fatality was involved and the possibility of legal action, it would not be appropriate to speculate about the circumstances or cause.

The National Highway Traffic Administration encourages anyone who experiences acceleration problems to file a complaint by calling (888) 327-4236 or by filling out an online form at www.odj.nhtsa.dot.gov/ivoq/index.cfm.

News2Houston worked on this story through their local newspaper partnership with Houston Community Newspapers and the *Kingwood Observer*.

On The Net:

- National Highway Traffic Administration
- Center for Auto Safety

boston.com

THIS STORY HAS BEEN FORMATTED FOR EASY PRINTING

Friends mourn woman killed by cruiser Beverly victim was semiretired

The Boston Globe

By Suzanne Smalley, Globe Staff | January 23, 2007

A 61-year-old woman struck and killed by an on-duty Beverly police officer Saturday morning was a Baptist churchgoer, a square dancing enthusiast, and a breast cancer survivor, relatives and friends said.

Newton native Bonney Burns moved to Beverly about a decade ago, said her cousin Susan Vik of Cambridge.

Vik said Burns was a registered dietician who was semiretired. Burns worked part time for an online prescription drug company and picked up extra work at H&R Block during tax season, Vik said in a telephone interview. Burns spent much of her time square dancing, a hobby she developed while she was a student at Otterbein College in Westerville, Ohio, Vik said.

Burns had no siblings or children and was divorced, Vik said.

"I'm just in shock," Vik said. "Like everybody, I just want to know what happened. It's really a strange thing."

Beverly Police Chief John Cassola did not return calls for comment yesterday.

Steve O'Connell, a spokesman for the Essex district attorney's office, also declined to comment on the investigation into the crash. O'Connell also said he is barred from discussing the investigation in general terms, including whether it is standard for authorities to test police officers for drugs or alcohol after on-the-job car accidents.

Beverly's mayor, William F. Scanlon Jr., said last night that he does not know what caused the accident. On Sunday, he said he did not believe that mechanical problems caused Officer Stuart Merry to swerve across a lane of oncoming traffic before striking and killing Burns, who was in a car parked outside her home.

He said Ford Motor Co. checked Merry's cruiser for acceleration problems shortly after the vehicle was purchased and found none. Yesterday, Scanlon said that after talking with Cassola, he decided to take two other cars the department bought from Ford at the same time off the road.

Scanlon said Beverly police officers are routinely tested for drugs, but he did not indicate whether that was done after the crash.

A woman reached at the Merry home said the officer is "not contactable right now." He was in fair condition at Beverly Hospital on Saturday, the last time his condition was made public.

Heather Swan, Burns's upstairs neighbor, said she is upset about the accident and its aftermath, which she witnessed.

"All the neighbors came out to help out, to try to get them out of the vehicles," Swan said.

She said Burns was friendly and confided in her about her bout with breast cancer. "She did a lot of those women's conferences," Swan said. "She was always involved in something to help other people."

Ed Sullivan -- a friend of Burns's from the Riverside Squares, a Danvers-based square dancing club -- described her as quiet and kind.

"What a waste," he said of the accident.

Sullivan said Burns square-danced less often in recent years, after her bout with cancer.

Richard Osterberg, Burns's lawyer, said her father was a Baptist minister who instilled a strong sense of faith in his only child. He said she volunteered regularly with her congregation at the Newton Baptist Church and visited nursing homes to perform

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 04, 2007 4:57 PM
To: ssmalley@globe.com
Subject: Bonney Burns Auto Fatality

Hello, Suzanne,

I read with interest via the internet your 1/23/07 Boston Globe article regarding the off-duty police officer's auto accident that killed Bonney Burns. Although I do not know the facts of this case, I have heard that the police department is alleging uncontrolled rapid acceleration.

Suzanne, I don't know if there is an underlying story here, but I know that I experienced a similar incident. Thankfully, for me however, there were no injuries or fatalities....

On 1/31/07 while slowly reversing up a sloped driveway at a daycare center, my 1992 Lexus SC400 suddenly accelerated rapidly and uncontrollably. It felt as if I was in a rocket ship! Although I slammed on the brakes, I could not stop in time to avoid a car parked in the driveway. Luckily, there were no injuries (2 year old grandson was in car). This is my first accident in 42 years. While I hear that some conclude that I mistook the accelerator for the brake, I KNOW that's not true. My foot was on the accelerator to begin with since I was slowing giving the car gas to climb the incline. Weather conditions were clear, no obstacles on the floor, and I was wearing normal shoes... no boots or heels. This accident was NOT my fault, but I don't know how to prove this since the problem is intermittent. I have filed an incident report with both the police department and NHTSA and have sent a certified letter to Lexus in CA. However, there is strength in numbers and need to hear from others who have experienced this frightening experience. If you research this further on the web, you will find that many drivers have experienced this throughout the years, not only with Lexus and Toyota, but with other manufacturers, as well, including Lincoln/Ford. Some "experts" refer to the problem as a defective electronic throttle control system. However, I don't know what caused my particular problem. Unfortunately, car manufacturers are not up front with this situation.

Again, Suzanne, I do not know what happened in the officer's case; however, I just want you to know that there IS a problem with uncontrolled rapid acceleration in certain autos, and I am pursuing this in my particular scenario. Your paper and the Beverly Police Department may want to explore this further on behalf of their officer.

Thank you for "listening".

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

02/05/2007