

CL-10196362-1992

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

July 26, 2007

NOTED 8/22/07 11:15

RE: ODI complaint # 10196362: 2007 Toyota Prius Brakes.

I wish to bring to your attention some additional facts that are pertinent to this complaint.

- 1.) I have now been able to duplicate the problem with my car. It is intermittent; however there is a variable but noticeable delay between rapidly engaging the brakes and the car beginning to fully brake and engaging the ABS system.
- 2.) The brake pedal, when depressed, will reach a mechanical stop at the full range of the pedal movement. In other words there is not the sensation of reaching maximum pressure against a hydraulic system; rather there is a physical "thunk" when the pedal reaches its maximum range of movement.

On July 25, 2007, I took the car in for its first routine service and took the opportunity to discuss the issue with the service manager at the same dealer listed in the original complaint. He tested and acknowledged that the brake pedal reaches its full range and reaches a physical stop. When he brought this to the attention of one of his mechanics the mechanic explained that this is the way the Prius brakes are designed, that they are electronically assisted, that the computer will first attempt to use the electric motor for initial braking, then engage the hydraulic system and finally the ABS system based on feedback from various sensors. He described that he agrees that it is possible that while the computer is evaluating the braking efficiency a delay between the motor only braking and fully engaging the hydraulics and ABS is both possible and a part of the design.

I have not had the opportunity to test the brakes of other Prius' so I am unable to tell you if my pedal range and the delay are unique to my car, or if this is actually the design of the braking system on all the Prius cars. I was left with the impression from the mechanic and service manager that the delay and the pedal range are both a product of the way the car was designed.

Logic tells me that if I cannot reach full pressure against the hydraulic system because the pedal is stopped at its maximum range of motion, then I will never be able to apply 100% of my brakes in an emergency unless the computer correctly interprets the attempt.

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Glendale, AZ [REDACTED]
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