



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590

February 17, 2009

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

NVS-216 mec
Ref. # 10257848

Dear Senator Murkowski:

Thank you for your correspondence dated January 14 on behalf of your constituent, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] wrote concerning the problems he encountered with his model year (MY) 2005 Volkswagen Passat TDI vehicle.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (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 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 appreciate the report you provided on behalf of [REDACTED]. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. In [REDACTED]'s October 24, 2008 email, he expressed concern about the failure of the oil pump chain and the balancer shaft, which could cause engine failure. We have reviewed our database in an effort to identify whether a safety defect trend exists with regard to engine problems, specifically the oil pump chain and balancer shaft, in MY 2005 Volkswagen Passat vehicles equipped with diesel engines. Although we are not opening a safety defect investigation at this time, we continually review all available data to determine whether an investigation may be warranted. The information you provided has been entered into our database and will be considered with future reports to identify any safety defect trends that may require our attention.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions, please have your staff contact me or Mr. Daniel C. Smith, NHTSA's Associate Administrator for Enforcement, at (202) 366-3217.

Sincerely,

Ronald L. Medford
Acting Deputy Administrator



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