



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

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590

March 17, 2011

[REDACTED]

Houghton, MI [REDACTED]

NVS-216 nam
Ref. No. 10323193

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence concerning your model year (MY) 1996 Toyota Land Cruiser. Your correspondence was received by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation. Due to the unprecedented amount of correspondence received by this office last year, we are now just getting to your letter. Please accept our apologies for this delay.

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 motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. We also monitor the adequacy of manufacturers' recall campaigns. 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. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. In your letter you indicated experiencing unintended acceleration in your MY 1996 Toyota Land Cruiser. Your MY 1996 Toyota Land Cruiser is not included in Toyota recalls that address unintended acceleration caused by pedals that get stuck in the open position and trapped by an unsecured driver's floor mat.

In February 2011, the U.S. Department of Transportation released results from an unprecedented 10-month study of potential causes of unintended acceleration in Toyota vehicles. NHTSA launched the study last spring at the request of Congress, and enlisted National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) engineers with expertise in areas such as computer controlled electronic systems, electromagnetic interference and software integrity to conduct research into whether electronic systems or electromagnetic interference played a role in incidents of unintended acceleration.

NASA engineers found no electronic flaws in Toyota vehicles capable of producing the large throttle openings required to create dangerous high-speed unintended acceleration incidents. The two mechanical safety defects identified by NHTSA more than a year ago - "sticking" accelerator pedals and design flaws that enable accelerator pedals to become trapped - remain the only known causes for these kinds of unsafe unintended acceleration incidents. Since 2009, Toyota has recalled slightly more than 10 million vehicles in the United States for these two safety defects. Toyota has also paid \$48.8 million in civil penalties as the result of NHTSA investigations into the timeliness of several safety recalls last year. Across the industry, automakers voluntarily initiated a record number of safety recalls in 2010.

In completing their report, NASA engineers evaluated the electronic circuitry in Toyota vehicles and analyzed more than 280,000 lines of software code for any potential flaws that could initiate an unintended acceleration incident. At the Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland, NASA hardware and systems engineers rigorously examined and tested mechanical components of Toyota vehicles that could result in an unwanted throttle opening. At a special facility in Michigan, NHTSA and NASA engineers bombarded vehicles with electromagnetic radiation to study whether such radiation could cause malfunctions resulting in unintended acceleration. NHTSA engineers and researchers also tested Toyota vehicles at NHTSA's Vehicle Research and Test Center in East Liberty, Ohio to determine whether there were any additional mechanical causes for unintended acceleration and whether any of the test scenarios developed during the NHTSA-NASA investigation could actually occur in real-world conditions.

Should you encounter a safety-related problem with a motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment in the future, we would appreciate it if you would complete an electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire online at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/ivoq or call the Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236.

Sincerely yours,



Randy Reid, Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Enforcement