


INFORMATION Redacted PURSUANT TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(B)(6)

Form Approved: O.M.B. No. 2127-0008

 <p>U.S. Department of Transportation National Highway Traffic Safety Administration</p>		<p>DOT Auto Safety Hotline</p> <p>Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire To Report Vehicle Safety Defects 1-888-DASH-2-DOT (1-888-327-4236) INTERNET:www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline</p>		<p>FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 100148</p>	
<p>Date Received DEC 20 2011 06-DEC-2011</p>		<p>Repository <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Reference No. 10438793</p>			
<p>OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)</p>					
<p>Name [REDACTED]</p>		<p>Daytime Telephone Number [REDACTED]</p>		<p>E-mail Address [REDACTED]</p>	
<p>Address [REDACTED]</p>		<p>Evening Telephone Number [REDACTED]</p>			
<p>City SALINAS</p>	<p>State CA</p>	<p>Zip Code [REDACTED]</p>			
<p><i>The information you provide will be used to identify potential safety-related defects. We may share your information with the applicable vehicle manufacturer during an investigation or recall in accordance with the routine uses described in the agency's Privacy Act notice. See 49 FR 53971 (Sep. 3, 2004).</i></p>					
<p>VEHICLE INFORMATION</p>					
<p>17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side WMWRE33555 [REDACTED]</p>		<p>Make MINI</p>	<p>Model COOPER S</p>	<p>Model Year 2005</p>	
<p>Date Purchased 6-30-2005</p>	<p>Dealer's Name and Telephone Number Mini of Concord (925) 685-6464</p>		<p>Engine: No: Cylinders 4</p>	<p>Fuel Type: GAS</p>	
<p>Original Owner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Dealer's City CONCORD</p>	<p>State CA</p>	<p>Zip Code 94518</p>		
<p>Transmission Type 6 speed Manual</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Antilock Brakes</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cruise Control</p>	<p>Powertrain</p>	<p>Multiple Failure:</p>	<p>Incident Date(s) 04-DEC-2011</p>	
<p>FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION</p>					
<p>Vehicle Component Code: 010000 STEERING</p>			<p>Failure Mileage 63260</p>	<p>Failure Speed 30</p>	
<p>ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE</p>					
<p>Tire Make</p>	<p>Tire Model (Name or Number)</p>		<p>Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)</p>		
<p>DOT No. (Example: DOTM19ABC036)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Original Equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Prior Repair</p>	<p>Failure Location:</p>			
<p>Tire Component Code</p>			<p>Tire Failure Type:</p>		
<p>ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE</p>					
<p>Make:</p>	<p>Date Manufactured:</p>	<p>Model No./Name:</p>			
<p>Seat Type:</p>		<p>Installation System:</p>			
<p>Child Seat Component Code:</p>		<p>Failed Part:</p>			
<p>APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION (Please describe in detail the incident(s), failure(s), crash(es), and injury(ies).)</p>					
<p>Crash <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>Fire <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>Number of Persons Injured 0</p>	<p>Number of Deaths 0</p>	<p>Reported to Police N</p>	
<p>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).</p>					
<p>TL* THE CONTACT OWNS A 2005 MINI COOPER S. WHILE DRIVING 30 MPH, THE STEERING WHEEL BECAME DIFFICULT TO MOVE WHEN THE CONTACT NOTICED A BURNING ODOR. THE VEHICLE WAS TAKEN TO A PRIVATE MECHANIC WHERE HE WAS INFORMED THAT THE POWER STEERING COMPONENT HAD MELTED AND NEEDED TO BE REPAIRED. THE MANUFACTURER WAS CONTACTED AND INFORMED THE CONTACT THAT THERE WAS A CONCURRENT INVESTIGATION FOR THE FAILURE HOWEVER, THERE WERE NO RECALLS. THE MANUFACTURER OFFERED NO FURTHER ASSISTANCE. NO REPAIRS WERE PERFORMED. THE CURRENT AND THE FAILURE MILEAGES WERE 63,260.</p>					
<p><i>See Attached document</i></p>					
<p>Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice. ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY</p>					
<p>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 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.</p>					

Addendum to Incident Information:

While traveling, the vehicle's battery warning indicator light came on and attempting to steer the vehicle became dangerous. I located the first open repair shop and proceeded to park the vehicle and turn off all power. I noted a "burning" smell at that point and had the mechanic follow me to vehicle, open the hood and inspect. The mechanic noted the smell and also noted that the wiring harness was smoking and assumed that it had caught on fire which had gone out when power to the battery was terminated.

Upon a full inspection, it was noted that the Power Steering unit had suffered a complete melt down which spread to the power steering hose and wiring harness. The vehicle was left at this repair shop with instructions to fix all the issues. I notified the dealer that the vehicle was purchased from and the salesman stated that he knew of a known issue with the 2007 model and offered no further assistance. I called the Corporate Headquarters for MINI USA and was connected to a customer service representative who stated that there was an ongoing investigation into issues with the power steering system. She stated that the earlier models incorporated an "electric" power steering system and that they had documented a number of reports similar to mine.

The vehicle repair was completed on Friday, December 9, 2011 at a cost of approximately \$3,400. An itemized invoice detailing all parts replaced was received and a copy can be forwarded upon request. In addition, photos of the melted power steering box, wiring harness, negative battery cable and power steering hose were taken and can also be forwarded upon request. All of the burned components were returned to me with the exception of the power steering box as MINI required this to be returned to them in order to receive a discount on the new part.

The vehicle appears to be operating normally at this point, however, the mechanic stated that there was no guarantee that this would not happen again if the same type of component was used to replace the power steering system. The mechanic asked that I watch the vehicle closely for any dashboard warning lights and to return the vehicle immediately if any light up.

In conclusion, this catastrophic event could have resulted in serious injury, both to other drivers due to lack of control experienced when the system failed and to myself and passenger due to the small fire that erupted. We were very fortunate that the fire did not continue and get worse which could have resulted in serious injury or even death due to the faulty component. While the vehicle is past the warranty period, a complete failure of one of the primary systems in the vehicle resulting in a fire hazard must be addressed by the manufacturer. At a minimum, the manufacturer should reimburse for the cost of the repair. Had this event taken place on a high speed limit thoroughfare, multiple injuries or deaths could have occurred and the manufacturer would be facing very expensive litigation.

Please feel free to phone or communicate by other means if more information is required regarding this incident.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Salinas, CA

[REDACTED] (email)

TO: NHTSA Office of Defects Administration

FROM: [REDACTED]

RE: REF # 10438793

Please see completed Vehicle Owners Questionnaire and addendum to the applicable incident information to more thoroughly explain the incident and supplemental information regarding repair work completed following the initial report.

Please feel free to phone or email me with requests for additional information.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Salinas, CA

[REDACTED] (home)
[REDACTED] (work)
[REDACTED] (cell)

[REDACTED]