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EQ-10486731-3230

From: [Wells, Cynthia CTR \(NHTSA\)](#)
To: [Johnson, Lajuan CTR \(NHTSA\)](#)
Subject: FW: Upload
Date: Monday, July 29, 2013 9:24:58 AM

From: Chan, Steve (NHTSA)
Sent: Thursday, July 25, 2013 1:55 PM
To: Wells, Cynthia CTR (NHTSA)
Subject: Upload

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, July 25, 2013 11:15 AM
To: Chan, Steve (NHTSA)
Subject: Re: Your report to NHTSA; ref: 2007 Toyota Camry Hybrid Brake Failure

Dear Mr. Chan:

Attached are the following documents:

Attachment #1: Invoice #227594 (3/9/12)-This invoice is in direct reference to the first major issue we had with our '07 Camry Hybrid which took place while my wife, [REDACTED], was driving the car.

Summary of events: After dropping our children off at school she pulled out of the school parking lot onto the street and was approaching a stop sign when the brakes suddenly failed (in a "school zone" and in residential neighborhood). She was unable to get the car to stop at the stop sign and therefore rolled right through it. Fortunately she managed to avoid colliding with another car or striking any school children or pedestrians that were in the immediate area. She maneuvered the Camry to the curb on the side street and coasted to a stop. The entire Camry dashboard was lit up, the main display screen read "Check VSC System" and every other dash warning indicator light was illuminated. Additionally, the car had no power at all, she realized it had completely lost power prior to her approaching the stop sign. [REDACTED] took a picture of the dashboard, sent it to me then called to tell me what had happened. I told her I would call AAA and to stay with the vehicle. After about 15 minutes she called me back and told me she was able to restart the car and to call off AAA. She stated that the Camry seemed to "reboot" itself and appeared to be operating normally. She contacted Legacy Toyota to let them know what had happened and that she was en route to them. She then proceeded to slowly drive the car straight to Legacy Toyota (approximately 4 miles from where the Camry had failed and ran the stop sign). As stated in this invoice, Toyota ran diagnostic tests and determined that there were no problems with the car.

Dumbfounded with this diagnosis, I questioned the Service Advisor as to the accuracy of this diagnosis and he informed me that he was going to send "the diagnosis and codes" to the Toyota Engineers in Jacksonville, Florida for further analysis. About a week later, I contacted the Service Advisor and he informed me the analysis by the Engineers could not find any problems with the vehicle. This was a very scary and potentially disastrous incident, but based on the diagnosis from our local Legacy Toyota dealership and its Jacksonville,

Florida Toyota engineers whom determined that the car was safe, we continued to operate the Camry.

Attachment #2: Invoice #254580 (10/30/12)-This invoice is in direct reference to the second major incident, again encountered by [REDACTED], while driving the car. Again the incident occurred while she was driving our children to school.

Summary of events: [REDACTED] was driving South on Thomasville Road (a three lane main thoroughfare road), traveling roughly 40mph when again she lost power and the brake system failed, again the "Check VSC System" and entire dashboard lit up. She was in morning rush hour traffic when the power failure occurred, fortunately, she happened to be in the far left hand lane and while coasting at about 30 mph she muscled the car into the left turn lane and was lucky enough to catch a "left" turn green arrow. [REDACTED], without any power, managed to coast and steer the car to safety into the Books-A-Million parking lot. Frantically, and clearly shaken up, she called me to tell me about the incident. I immediately left work to come to her and while on my way to her, I called AAA to have the car towed to Legacy Toyota. I put her and my kids into my car and they continued onto school. AAA towed the car to Legacy Toyota. My NHTSA reports describes the events that took place at Legacy Toyota. This invoice provides the specific information in reference to Legacy Toyota's diagnostic and repair estimate.

Knowing that this was not an isolated incident and based on the type of failure that had occurred, I declined to pay for the repairs and demanded that Toyota take responsibility for this defect. After ten days pleading my case to Legacy Toyota, which the Service Advisor was seemingly in agreement with my request, I came to the conclusion that neither the local dealership or Toyota National were going to assist me in getting my Camry repaired. I attribute this decision by Toyota largely on the fact that Toyota is very aware of these failures occurring in the Camry Hybrids and any assistance to anyone would be an admission of acknowledging these failures and thus creating an enormous liability. Which, honestly I can't understand how they think they are going to avoid taking responsibility for this defective part. Anyhow, with the "ABS Brake Actuator" defective and unable to "reboot" itself anymore, deeming the car too dangerous to operate, I had AAA tow my Camry from the dealership to my home where it has been garaged since November 2012 nearly 8 months now.

A few weeks afterwards, I filed a formal report with Toyota National. Toyota National Complaint Reference #: 130 515 0069. After receiving all of my information to file the complaint, the Toyota customer service representative asked me what assistance I am requesting Toyota provide. I told her, I wanted Toyota to repair my vehicle at no charge and to guarantee it is safe to operate. I was placed on hold for about ten minutes, when the customer service representative returned, she told me Toyota would offer me zero assistance in getting my Camry repaired. She gave me a claim # and that was the end of our conversation.

As I stated earlier, my 2007 Camry Hybrid has been garaged since November 2012 and has not been driven since the incident that occurred on October 30, 2012. I purchased the vehicle new from Legacy Toyota in September 2006. I own the Camry outright and have the Title to the vehicle. It's registration is current and I still maintain a State Farm insurance policy. Regardless of the outcome of this or any other investigation, I, nor my wife, will ever drive

this vehicle again. There are numerous blogs of CH owners that have had multiple ABS BA failures. I feel these vehicles are extremely hazardous to not only their owners but any victim that may arise out of the failure of the Camry. Furthermore, a website had been created by a Camry Hybrid owner suffering the same experience as myself and others. The website is: www.checkvscsystem.com This site was solely created for the purpose of bringing awareness to the serious problem with the Camry Hybrid in hopes that Toyota will take responsibility. There are over 60 incidents recorded on the "Guestbook" section of this website.

I would be willing to assist the NHTSA in any way possible, including having the NHTSA take possession of my Camry for any testing or analysis the NHTSA engineers need to conduct. The reports I am reading from other Camry owners are equally or more as serious as my report as it relates to this defect.

I would also encourage the NHTSA to investigate any accident reports that document any fatalities that have occurred in 2007-2009 Camry Hybrids. My reason for making this suggestion, is that if for example, my wife was struck and killed during either of the "power/brake" failure incidents, her voice would no longer be around to explain what truly had happened and was the cause of the accident. I doubt in any police report or investigation there is any protocol for checking the ABS Brake Actuator system of a cars operating system. Most likely, the accident and fatality report would be attributed to "human error", texting, failed to yield, etc. It is reasonable for me to think, based on how the Camry completely loses power when the ABS Brake Actuator fails, that within the past 6 or 7 years there has been a fatality as a result of this defect, and it's possible that no one would have known to investigate this as a possibility to an accident until now.

2. *When the brake symptoms occurred, did the vehicle take longer to stop?*

Yes, it was nearly impossible to stop the vehicle. After the Camry would lose power, simply applying the brakes gave the sensation that there wasn't any brakes. The brake pedal would need to be pumped to the floor for any hope or feeling that the vehicle could slow down. In the last incident there was no feeling of any brakes at all.

Mr. Chan, Please feel free to contact me at any time regarding any questions or other that you may have as you conduct your investigation. This is a very unfortunate and serious problem, I greatly appreciate your attention to this complaint.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Tallahassee, FL [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: "Steve.Chan@dot.gov" <Steve.Chan@dot.gov>

To: [REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2013 5:27 PM

Subject: Your report to NHTSA; ref: 2007 Toyota Camry Hybrid Brake Failure

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for reporting to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) concerning:

"MY '07 CAMRY HYBRID(CH) HAS STARTED TO EXPERIENCE BRAKE FAILURE WHILE DRIVING. THE FIRST DOCUMENTED INCIDENT: 03/09/12. W/O WARNING, THE CH WILL SHUT DOWN AND THE "CHECK VSC" LIGHT APPEARS ON THE DASH. ALL OF THE DASH LIGHTS LIGHT UP AS WELL. WHEN THIS HAPPENED, THERE WERE NO BRAKES, NO WARNING, ETC. WHEN I PUT THE CAR IN "PARK", TURNED OFF THE VEHICLE AND RESTARTED IT, I WAS ABLE TO RESUME DRIVING. I TOOK IT TO DEALER TO HAVE THE CAR DIAGNOSED. THE DIAGNOSIS: NOTHING WRONG WITH THE CAR, BRAKES, ETC(INV.#227594). OVER THE PAST 9 MONTHS, IT HAS OCCURRED A FEW MORE TIMES, USUALLY WHEN THE VEHICLE IS PULLING OUT OF THE GARAGE. WHEN IT HAPPENS,I TURN OFF THE VEHICLE, RESTART AND GO ON. ON 10/30/12 WHILE MY WIFE WAS DRIVING 35MPH, THE CAR SHUT DOWN, THE "CHECK VSC" LIGHT CAME ON AND THE BRAKES COMPLETELY FAILED. SHE CAUGHT A LEFT TURN SIGNAL AND COASTED INTO A PARKING LOT. OBVIOUSLY THIS WAS HORRIFYING FOR HER AND OUR KIDS. I CALLED AAA AND HAD THE CAR TOWED TO TOYOTA. MY SERVICE ADVISOR(SA) TOLD ME THEY HAVE BEGUN TO SEE THIS HAPPENING A LOT AND HE PREDICTED THE ABS BRAKE ACTUATOR (BA) FAILED. I TOLD HIM ABOUT THE INCIDENT IN MARCH, WHICH HE ACKNOWLEDGED KNOWING OF. 2 HOURS LATER HE CALLED TO CONFIRM THAT IT WAS THE BA. WE SPOKE ABOUT IT BEING A DEFECTIVE PART, HE AGREED AND WOULD CALL AND SPEAK TO TOYOTA NATIONAL(TN)TO SEE IF THEY COULD HELP OUT WITH THE \$2200 REPAIR. THE NEXT DAY HE TOLD ME THAT TN WOULDN'T HELP, AND NEITHER WOULD THE DEALERSHIP. MY ONLINE RESEARCH DISCOVERED MANY CH HAVE HAD THIS PROBLEM. I DISCUSSED WITH THE SA THAT IF THE PART IS DEFECTIVE AND THEY ARE SEEING MORE AND MORE OF THIS, WHAT GUARANTEE IS THERE A NEW BA WOULDN'T REACT THE SAME WAY. HE COULDN'T GUARANTEE THAT IT WOULDN'T. I DECLINED TO HAVE THE REPAIR DONE, AAA TOWED VEHICLE TO MY HOME. THE SA SEEMED CERTAIN THAT A RECALL WAS COMING. THE CAR IS GARAGED, I HAVE THE REPAIR EST/DOCUMENT."

1. Please email me a copy of the repair invoice, or the diagnostic invoice if the brake problem has not yet been repaired.
2. When the brake symptoms occurred, did the vehicle take longer to stop?

Thank you.

Steve Chan
Safety Defects Engineer
Office of Defects Investigation /NHTSA