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

U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

October 2, 2014

[redacted]

Williamstown, NJ [redacted]

NVS-216 nam
Ref. No. 10608357

Dear [redacted]

Thank you for your correspondence that was received by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA), Office of Defects Investigation regarding your model year 1998 Toyota Tacoma. Due to the unprecedented amount of correspondence received by this office, 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 motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain safety-related 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 safety-related defect trend may exist. We do not have authority to act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

The information you provided will be reviewed and entered into our database. It will be considered with other reports to identify recall inadequacies or safety-related defect trends that require our attention. The NHTSA investigation and recall process can be located on our web site at www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/recalls/recallprocess.cfm.

If your letter is requesting motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment information, we recommend that you visit our Internet web site at www.safercar.gov. This site provides information concerning motor vehicle recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, complaints from vehicle owners, etc. You may also contact NHTSA via our toll-free DOT Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-DASH-2-DOT (1-888-327-4236).

On August 20, 2014, we added a new feature to our web site that will allow consumers to search for open recalls by using their vehicle identification number (VIN). The free VIN look-up tool (https://vinrcl.safercar.gov/vin/), searches for open recalls via a direct connection to the manufacturer's database. The VIN can be found on the door label, insurance card, or lower left corner of your windshield. Then enter VIN into the VIN search box on our web site above. If you have any open recalls, you will know immediately.

Please note that it is not unusual for some recalls to require additional time when the remedy involves manufacturing a new component for a huge population. Recall parts availability and recall remedies can be affected by numerous factors including, but not limited to, redesign, testing, manufacturing, and logistics. Furthermore, due to the volume of vehicles involved in a recall, manufacturers may conduct the recall in phases. We believe it is important that the manufacturer notify consumers as soon as possible about a recall – even if parts are not yet available to effect the recall – so that consumers can decide whether or not to continue to drive their vehicles while waiting for the recall remedy.

If your letter concerns a service problem, warranty or request for reimbursement, this type of complaint does not fall under our jurisdiction. If you have not done so, you may consider contacting your local Consumer Protection Agency, or the Office of Attorney General in your State regarding your problem(s) or request. You have certain rights under your State's lemon law. You may also ask our dealership for a meeting with the manufacturer's district manager regarding your problem or request.

In addition, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has jurisdiction over non-safety defects, paint, fraud or deception, warranty and dealership problems, remuneration matters, and fair trade practices. There are three ways to contact the FTC: by toll free telephone at 1-877-FTC-HELP (877) 382-4357; by mail at Federal Trade Commission, CRC-240, Washington, DC 20580; and by using the Internet complaint form at www.ftccomplaintassistant.gov/#crnt&panel1-1.

You may consider contacting the Better Business Bureau (BBB) Auto Line. The BBB offers free mediation/arbitration to resolve warranty disputes under guidelines established by the FTC. Remedies include repair, reimbursement, repurchase or replacement, depending on program eligibility. You can visit their web site at www.bbb.org to file a complaint and review eligibility information, or call the BBB Auto Line at (800) 955-5100.

Sincerely yours,

Randy Reid

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