

February 20, 2016

[Redacted]
Los Angeles, CA [Redacted]

MAR - 4 2016

NHTSA Headquarters
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

SUBJECT: Mini Cooper S 2005 Automatic Aisin Transmission (Complaint)

To Whom It May Concern:

Mini Cooper Aisin automatic transmissions designed and built for 1st-generation Mini Coopers are problematic and prone to failure after 30,000 miles of use. I am on my second such transmission after receiving a new one under BMW/Mini's original warranty at 48,000 miles. I now have 101,000 miles on my Cooper S, and after having received a new transmission in 2007, I can only say the following symptoms of new failure leave me in a bad position:

- 1.) The car is underpowered upon acceleration.
- 2.) The car experiences jerks, bucking, and wheel chirping when the transmission is warmed up.
- 3.) *I cannot control the car when the transmission does not respond properly because:*
 - a. *When the car bucks, I'm already depressing the gas pedal and I cannot tell what speed the car is going.*
 - b. *When the car is underpowered, the car does not move. This is problematic at intersections.*
- 4.) *I would like a safety investigation open into the Aisin transmissions.*

Volkswagen uses the same transmission, and it issued a service bulletin that the transmission fluid (oil) is not lifetime as BMW/Mini claims and should be changed by the dealer every 30,000 miles. BMW makes no admission like this. The valve body in the transmission begins to breakdown because the shavings from the transmission gears and other sediment begins to cloud the fluid and inhibit communication from the valve body solenoids to the mechanical components. I cannot continue to drive around in this vehicle much longer, particularly in warm weather (above 50 degrees Fahrenheit), when the transmission is stressed. I noticed the beginning of these problems as much as four years ago at the expiration of the new warranty on the transmission, particularly when I was going downhill and the car would jerk. I would like a new transmission from Mini Cooper or the repair of my current transmission where the valve body is replaced.

Humbly,

[Redacted Signature]

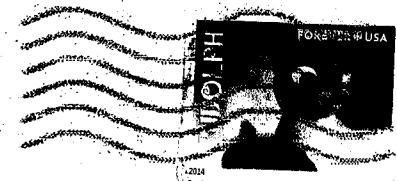
cc: BMW/Mini

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