

From: NHTSA Service Desk <noreply@telesishq.com>

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Request [REDACTED] 2019 Subaru Crosstrek

Date: 2019-09-20, 09:37:15

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[REDACTED]
Good Day [REDACTED]

Thank you for contacting the U.S. Department of Transportation's Vehicle Safety Hotline
Information Center.

To make complaints regarding the design of your vehicle 2019 Subaru Crosstrek, please send your
complaint to The Office of Defect Investigation Team directly. You may do so by mailing your
complaint to:

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation (NVS-210)
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

We hope that you find this information helpful. However, if you need additional information on our
services please feel free to contact us at 1-888-327-4236.

Thank you,

NHTSA.dot.gov Response Team

Disclaimer: This response is for information purposes only and does not constitute an official
communication of the U.S. Department of Transportation. For an official response, please write U.S.
Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Ave,
SE, West Building, Washington, DC 20590.

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U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation (NVS-210)
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

I recently purchased a 2019 Subaru Crosstrek. I had driven one earlier but not the one I purchased nor had I driven it extensively, only for a short drive at the dealer. Before going any further, I would like to share something I read which your office should be familiar with. The Subaru Crosstrek has the highest at fault accident rate of any car sold in the country. It also has a high ticket rate. If that is the case, the question for your office should be why do people who buy Crosstreks have high accident rates or more pertinent and likely, what is there about the car that results in high at fault accident rates?

I traded in a 2017 Crosstrek for the 2019. I felt the things I did not like about the 2017 were fixed in the 2019 models. The main thing I did not like was the instrument panel and the touch screen for the radio. I felt they were safety problems. The touch screen was the worst I ever used. The screen responded poorly taking one's attention away from the road. Subaru knew of the problem and fixed it in the 2018 model by adding buttons. While this item was fixed in the 2019 model, another safety problem appeared.

In the 2017 Crosstrek I could read the speedometer during the day. I cannot always do so in the 2019 Crosstrek and rarely can I read it at a glance. The speedometer is recessed in the dashboard. With the headlights off during the day, the speedometer is not lit. It can only be seen by ambient light, which changes while driving particularly in the Northwest with tall trees and curvy roads. For much of the time the speedometer is dark and cannot be seen. Most of the time, it is dimly lit and has to be looked at for one or two seconds to be read. Some of the time when the ambient light is just right, the speedometer is well lit and can be read at a glance. This is a known safety problem.

I took the car to the dealer thinking there was something wrong with the light for the speedometer. I was told that there is no daytime lighting for it except to drive at all times with the headlights on. Turning the headlights to full on or to running lights the speedometer is lit with red night illumination. The red is so dim even at maximum lighting it does not help seeing the speedometer during the day. I asked if the red light could be replaced with a brighter white light. I was told that the red light could not be changed. When I am talking with someone and am told an obvious lie, I do not get excited, I end the conversation. Was he telling me that if the red light failed during the warranty period that it could not be changed and I would have to be given a new car? I don't think so. Before that, the dealer told me that I could get a string of lights that can be put in the recessed area under the speedometer and plugged into the outlet under the radio. What he was telling me is that I can spend \$25,000 for a new car and then have to purchase something from a third party to be able to see the speedometer at a glance or see it at all 100% of the time during the day when most driving is done. He was also telling me that this problem is so well known that third parties are coming up with jerry-rigged fixes.

Another problem with the speedometer is that it goes up to 150 mph and is numbered in 20 mph increments. The highest highway speed I have seen is 80 mph. A speedometer that went up to 100 mph and incremented every 10 mph would be easier to read at a glance.

I will suggest a fix. The dim red light can be replaced with a bright white light. The light should be disconnected from the headlight switch and connected only to the dimmer switch that is mounted to the left of the steering wheel. The brightness of the speedometer lighting can then be adjusted day or night independent from the setting of the headlights and the speedometer can be seen at a glance in the daylight at all times. This can be a fix ordered from your office for those who want it. The other problem such as the speedometer going to 150 mph with incrementing every 20 mph would be poor engineering and design that could be lived with. It is not a safety problem. Not being able to read the speedometer at a glance or not at all is a safety problem.

Another safety problem with 2017 Crosstrek that I was told was fixed in the 2019 is the transmission. In the 2017 it takes one and a half to two seconds for the transmission to engage into drive. That is a long time in an emergency. I was backing out of a parking spot and saw out of the corner of my eye a car coming at high speed for the parking area down the row between parking spaces. By the time my car got into drive to move back forward the other car had just passed me. Luckily, I was not backed out very far. There could be other situations where one cannot wait for the transmission to engage into drive. The Crosstrek I drove at the dealers I checked to see how long it took to engage into drive. It was one-half second. I mentioned it to the dealer and was told that people complained about the overly long time it took to engage into drive and that was fixed in the newer models. I assumed that all the newer models had the newer transmission. I seem to have gotten a 2019 model with an older style transmission without having been told so. I would not have purchased the car if I had known that. I also would not have purchased the car if I realized that the speedometer was unfit during the day or lit by a red light that could not be seen in the day. The Crosstrek I drove had white lighting for the speedometer that I could see during the day. That was not a problem with the 2017 Crosstrek I traded in. I assumed that the Crosstrek I drove was the same as the one I purchased except for the color.

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U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Defects Investigation (NVS-210)
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

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