

OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C.552(B)(6)

From: [DataQuality, DataQuality \(NHTSA\)](#)
To: [EVOQ \(NHTSA\)](#)
Subject: FW: Response to Vehicle Owners Questionnaire from [REDACTED] reference #11478268
Date: Tuesday, January 3, 2023 9:12:00 AM
Attachments: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, December 30, 2022 5:55 PM
To: DataQuality, DataQuality (NHTSA) <DataQuality@dot.gov>
Subject: Response to Vehicle Owners Questionnaire from [REDACTED] reference #11478268

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Department of Transportation (DOT). Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern,

Please find attached the revised questionnaire you sent on December 28th. I have also included a copy of the letter I sent to the manufacturer about this issue, although their reply was via phone. I sent that letter to you in both txt and docx format as I do not have a PDF generator. I hope you can read one of them.

Thanks so much for your time. Please let me know if you need anything else from me.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

U.S. Department
of TransportationNational Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

**DOT Auto Safety Hotline
Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire**
To Report Vehicle Safety Defects
1-888-DASH-2-DOT
(1-888-327-4236)
INTERNET:www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 100148

Date Received

08-AUG-2022

Repository Reference No.
11478268**OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)**

Name			Daytime Telephone Number		E-mail Address	
Address						
City		State	ZIP Code		Evening Telephone Number	
Wellston		OH				

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).

VEHICLE INFORMATION

17 digit Vehicle Identification Number Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side 4T1BF1FKXL				MAKE TOYOTA	Model CAMRY	Model Year 2014
Date Purchased 4/19/2014		Dealer's Name and Telephone Number Toyota Direct 614-476-1979			Engine: No: Cylinders 2.5L 4cyl	
Original Owner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Dealer's City Columbus		STATE OH	ZIP Code 43230	
Transmission Type Automatic		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Antilock Brakes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cruise Control	Powertrain Front Wheel Drive		Multiple Failure: Incident Date(s) 08-JAN-2022	

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Vehicle Components Codes: 103700 POWER TRAIN:AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION:TORQUE CONVERTER		Failure Mileage 149000.0	Failure Speed 35
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ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A TIRE FAILURE

Tire Make		Tire Model (Name or Number)		Tire Size (Example P215/65R15)	
DOT No. (Example: DOTMAL 9ABC036)		<input type="checkbox"/> Original Requirement <input type="checkbox"/> Prior Repair		Failure Location:	
Tire Component Code				Tire Failure Type:	

ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO BE COMPLETED WHEN REPORTING A CHILD SEAT FAILURE

Make:		Date Manufactured:	Model No./Name:
Seat Type:		Installation System:	
Child Seat Component Code:		Failed Part:	

APPLICABLE INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the Incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), Injury(ies).)

Crash <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Fire <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	Number of Persons Injured 0	Number of Deaths 0	Reported to Police N
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Narrative Description of Incident(s), Crash(es), 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).

The contact owns a 2014 Toyota Camry. The contact stated while driving 35-40 MPH, the vehicle started shuddering. There was no warning light illuminated. The contact was able to continue driving; however, the failure reoccurred several times. The vehicle was taken to the local dealer where it diagnosed that the torque converter needed to be replaced. The vehicle was not repaired. The manufacturer was not notified of the failure. The failure mileage was approximately 149,000.

The shuddering started earlier in 2021, but it felt like it was rough pavement, like rumble strips along the highway, but lighter, so I never questioned it. After it became more pronounced, I decided to take it in to Nourse Toyota in Chillicothe, Ohio and they told me, "these cars are notorious for this issue". While waiting in their lobby for an official evaluation, I looked up the problem online and found out there was a recall for this issue. When I brought this up, they told me that I did not qualify for it because I was 2 months late.
On July 7th, 2022 I tendered a letter to the Toyota corporate office asking them to reconsider since I was so close to the date. (I have included that letter with this questionnaire) They responded via phone call and told me they would not honor the claim.
Since that time, the car has become steadily worse. While the shudder is much more pronounced, the larger problem is that the car does not downshift when the accelerator is lightly depressed at any speed to maintain that speed, even on cruise control. It v brakes terribly and the car doesn't speed up. Rather than continually slowing down, it has become necessary to "floor it" each time so it will downshift and then bring it back to speed before it shifts into overdrive and starts the process again. Even the cruise control has "floored it". With that dramatic increase in engine rpms, the moment the car downshifts, the car lunges forward.
This lunging has brought me quite close to accidents on several occasions and is particularly terrifying in snowy road conditions. The lunging in slippery conditions translates into a loss of traction and steering, to devastating effect during the recent Christmas snow storm along with any other winter events likely to occur in the Midwest into the future.
As of December 30th, 2022, nothing has been done to correct this failure and it continues to worsen.

Include, if available: Police/Fire Department Report, Photos, and Repair Invoice.

ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF NECESSARY

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 to 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.

Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.
P.O. Box 259001
Plano, TX 75025-9001

July 7th, 2022

[REDACTED]
Wellston, Ohio [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

To Whom It May Concern:

Back in 1999 I purchased my first Toyota Corolla and despite a rough start with the dealer (with which you helped me right the situation) I have truly loved every one of the 7 different Toyota's I have purchased and have even converted a few others to your vehicles. I simply believe in your product and cannot imagine buying a different brand.

Over the years of owning my latest, a 2014 Camry, I have asked my mechanic a number of times about having the transmission serviced and was told that my car had a no maintenance system. Honestly, in my experience with the longevity of these vehicles, I thought simply that you produced such a long lasting transmission that it just didn't need service. Until recently, it never crossed my mind that the service was made so complex that only a dealership would work on them.

Unfortunately for me, the idea of going to a dealership makes me shudder. In times past, I have paid over \$175 each, for nothing but a piece of paper with a dauntingly high price for the real repair on it. While I certainly understand the need to pay for the service tech and the facility, for just two estimates from a Toyota dealer I can almost buy four new tires with four free oil changes and my mechanic will diagnose the car for free, but they would do that even without buying the tires. It's very frustrating to pay such a high price for news, let alone bad news and even more so with having nothing to show for it.

Still, on July 5th I took my car into Nourse Toyota in Chillicothe, Ohio to get my transmission fluid changed. My goal was to pay for the quoted \$250 transmission fluid flush so I could at least get the feeling that my money went towards something. That quickly changed as I was confronted for my reasons about why I wanted to do something I always considered standard maintenance.

A little over a year ago I noticed a slight vibration in the car that wasn't there before. For months I thought it was simply bad pavement in places as it felt kind of like a mild version of the rumble strips on the side of the road. Later I thought it might be something in the suspension or perhaps the tires that only showed up in certain instances. I tried to duplicate the issue, but never could put my finger on it. The problem became more apparent and a few months back I came to the conclusion that the shudder had to do with the transmission not shifting down from 6th gear during light acceleration and decided to get the fluid changed.

After my explanation I was told that the shudder sounded like a problem they knew all too well and that it was likely a bad torque converter. We agreed that they would look into that before going through with the service.

While waiting for the inevitable result, I looked into the torque converter issue online and found out why they were considered 'notorious'. What I cannot understand is why this recall issue has only now come to my attention.

Apparently it has been known about for many years now and among the plethora of mailings, emails and the various \$175 'recommendation' services, neither the issue nor the fix were ever mentioned. And now, even after being extended to 8 years and 150,000 miles, I find myself outside the time limitation by a little over 2 months.

Now I will not say that I am angry about this, nor do I feel slighted by your company. The people at Nourse were very polite, professional and courteous. I cannot fault them for following their procedural guidelines, nor can I fault you for placing a time limit on this repair. I'm simply frustrated by the fact that I missed out on the resolution of this particular defect in the car that I have taken on so many wonderful journeys. I even built a car bed that allowed me to take trips to our beautiful National Parks on three separate trips, two of which lasted over 28 days and 6000 miles. I love my car, we've been through a lot together.. and it pains me to think of her as a slowly dying friend.

What I'm hoping for here is that there is some way to bend the rules just a little. I am dedicated to your vehicles and wait anxiously for the chance to buy a plug in hybrid when my finances dictate, but for now I need to nurse the old girl along and was hoping you might be able to help me.

Please let me know if there is anything at all you can do and I thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Wellston, Ohio [REDACTED]

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P.O. Box 259001
Plano, TX 75025-9001

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