



State of Wisconsin
Scott McCallum, Governor

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
James E. Harsdorf, Secretary

COPIED

May 16, 2002

DAIMLERCHRYSLER MOTORS CORP
PO BOX 21-8004
AUBURN HILLS MI 48231-8004

566130

RE: File [REDACTED] (Refer to this number when contacting our agency)

[REDACTED]
RHINELANDER WI [REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madam:

I received a complaint from [REDACTED] regarding an unsatisfactory transaction with your business.

I am forwarding a copy of this complaint to you. After reviewing the complaint, please send your written response to [REDACTED] and to our office within two weeks.

Your written response is important so your position can be included in the Bureau's permanent record.

Thank you for your cooperation and prompt response. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Karl A. Lawrenz
Consumer Specialist

BUREAU OF CONSUMER PROTECTION
Voice Mail: 608-224-4995/Fax: 608-224-4939
E-Mail: Karl.Lawrenz@datcp.state.wi.us

OFFICE
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

02 JUN 18 PM 4:17

RECEIVED

Enc.:

C: Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Center for Auto Safety
National Highway Transportation Safety Administration

APR 22 2002

Rhineland, WI

April 19, 2002

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection
2811 Agriculture Drive,
P.O. Box 8911,
Madison, WI 53708-8911

Dear Sir or Madam:

Over the last few years we been having trouble with the vehicle we purchased in 1998. I am not satisfied with the service we received from the dealer or the manufacturer. I am curious if your department maybe able to help us. I have included a copy of the letter I sent to the DiamlerChrysler corp. that explains the whole problem. I really don't know what the next step should be, I am hoping you could give us some help, or at least give us an idea, or information as to our options. Thank you for your time and consideration of our situation.

Sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

[Click here and type slogan]

Rhineland, WI

April 19, 2002

DaimlerChrysler Customer Service Center
DCCAC
P.O. Box 21-8004
Auburn Hills, MI 48321-8004

Dear Sir or Madam:

I would like to start out by saying I have been a fan of Dodge products in the past. In addition to the '97 Grand Caravan I'm writing about, I have a '91 Dakota 4X4 with 180,000 miles, which I still enjoy. I know that the Caravan is the most popular minivan. I have many friends who are very satisfied with their vehicles, and we have been happy with ours with the exception of the transmission problem which has plagued us over the last four years. I am also very disappointed with the customer service I have received in dealing with our latest problem.

Here is the story from the beginning. In the early spring of 1998 my wife and I purchased a '97 Dodge Grand Caravan from a dealer. It was a "program" car with 18,000 miles and the remainder of its factory warranty. We were very satisfied with the vehicle; it was much better than our previous Mitsubishi Van. In January of the next year (1999), our transmission broke down on a trip to Madison, Wisconsin. It was due to a failure of the differential pin. We had only 36,820 miles on the car. The van was just over 800 miles out of warranty; we were very frustrated with that. Through "Don Miller Dodge" in Madison, we worked out a deal in which Chrysler provided the new transmission, and we paid for the labor. While not the most ideal situation, we were satisfied.

In September of 1999, only eight months and 11,000 miles later, the transmission went out again. This again was caused by a differential pin that broke. We had it repaired at "Shoeder's" in Rhineland. Since it was still well within the warranty period we were not charged for parts or labor. Again we were frustrated with the inconvenience, but satisfied with the outcome. Now in March of 2002, the transmission broke again, and again it was the differential pin. The car has 88,000 miles on it, but only 40,000 miles on the THIRD transmission. We had it repaired, again at "Shoeder's". After many discussions with Diane at the DaimlerChrysler customer service center and Cal at the dealership the best deal I was able to negotiate was to pay the "warranty" rate for parts and all of the labor. This is NOT satisfactory! The cost to us is still over \$1600.00. While this is better than the original \$2300.00 we feel strongly that we deserve better treatment.

I realize that our car is not a low mileage vehicle. If this was the first transmission, I would be upset about replacing it, but I would understand that it was my responsibility, and I wouldn't be writing you. However, this is not the first transmission for this car it is its FOURTH! Something is not right! At only 88,000 miles, that works out to be less than an average of 30,000 miles per transmission. I know you don't design cars to need a new transmission every 30,000 miles. We feel that there is something wrong with the car or the design of the transmission. From my discussions with several different mechanics, I have been told that there have been modifications, to the design of the transmission that would help prevent problems with the differential pin and damage their breakage can cause.

I strongly believe that our transmission problems are due to a defect in our car, design problem in the transmission or possibly an installation problem. I find it hard to believe that it could just be coincidence that the same differential pin failure happened three times in the same car. I would like DaimlerChrysler

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to pay for replacing the transmission and extend the warranty on it to more than 40,000 miles. If there have been modifications to the transmission design, then we should not have any further problem with the transmission. From talking to Diane (ext. 7122), I understand it isn't policy to cover parts on a car with 88,000 miles, but I am asking you to cover a part with only 40,000 miles. I don't see this as an unreasonable request in light of our transmission history. I really hope you would like to keep my family and I as valued Dodge customers. I would truly like to resolve this issue just between DaimlerChrysler and me, without bringing in a third party.

Finally, I would like to complain about the service I have received during this process. When I called the customer service center, I was assigned to an agent named Diane, I wasn't able to catch her last name, but her extension is #7122. She was very professional; she listened to my situation, and answered most of my questions. I didn't agree with her assessment, but I felt she did what she thought she could do. I was frustrated when she refused to tell me the name of, or let me talk to, her supervisor. I don't think it was an unreasonable request. She told me that the only person who could adjust her decision was the factory/field representative for the dealership. However when I asked for his/her name, phone number, or even address, she again refused to give me that information. If this person has the power to make decisions that may affect my dispute I feel I should be able to present my case to him directly. She told me to have the dealership contact this factory/field representative. I felt like I was getting the runaround.

Cal at the dealership said at first he did not want to contact the factory/field representative because he said "wouldn't do any good". He further told me that if we pursued it with the factory/field representative, we may lose the warranty rate on the new parts and have to pay the full amount. With further pushing he agreed to contact the factory/field representative. in regards to our case. After several days, Cal informed me that the factory/field representative had looked into the matter and decided not to change the deal. I asked Cal for the name, phone number, or address for the factory/field representative and he refused to give me that information. I then requested Cal ask the representative to call me to discuss the matter with me and to explain his decision. My request was made on March 28th, 2002 almost 2 weeks ago, I have not heard from anyone from DaimlerChrysler. Is this what you would call "Five Star Service"?

I would hope you would be able to review my situation and my requests in a timely manner. I further hope that you would have the courtesy to contact me with your decision, along with a detailed explanation and a person I can contact if I have any further questions.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Vin. # 1B4GP54L5VB [REDACTED]