

U.S. Department
of TransportationNational Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

DOT Auto Safety Hotline

Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire (VOQ)

NATIONWIDE 1-888-DASH-2-DOT

1-888-327-4236

www.nhtsa.dot.gov/hotline

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY 241

Date Received

15-MAR-2000

 Od_or _____
 Rt_dt _____
 od_rt _____
 up_ltr _____

Reference No.

858600

 Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of report to the manufacturer of your vehicle? ☐ YES ☐ NO
 In the absence of an authorization, NHTSA WILL NOT provide your name and address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner _____ Date ____/____/____

VEHICLE INFORMATION

Vehicle Ident. No. (VIN) (located at front of windshield on drivers side) JT8BH28F1W0127448	Vehicle Make LEXUS	Vehicle Model LS400	Vehicle Year 1998	Current Odometer Reading
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Purchase Date	Dealer's Name _____	Engine Size (CID/CC/L) _____	☐ Turbo ☐ Diesel ☐ Gas ☐ Fuel Injection
☒ New ☐ Used	City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____	No Cylinders _____	

Transmission Type ☐ Manual ☐ Automatic	Antilock Brakes ☒ Yes ☐ No	Restraint System ☒ 3-Point Belt ☐ Motorbell ☐ Driverside Airbag ☐ 2-Point Belt ☐ Passengerside Airbag	Cruise Control ☐ Yes ☒ No	Drive Train ☐ Front ☐ Rear ☐ 4-Wheel	Vehicle Type ☐ Car ☐ Sport Ult ☐ Van ☐ Truck ☐ Minivan ☐ Motorcycle ☐ Other _____	Body Style ☐ 2-Door ☐ 4-Door ☐ Stationwagon ☐ Pick Up Truck ☐ Other _____
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FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Component 06420000	Part Name(s) FUEL:THROTTLE LINKAGES:ACCELERATOR:RIGID	Location ☐ Left ☐ Right ☐ Front ☐ Rear	Failed Part(s) ☐ Original ☐ Replacement
No of Failures	Date(s) of Failure(s) 13-MAR-2000 Mileage at Failure(s) 16000 Vehicle Speed at Failure(s) _____	Failed Part(s) Available? ☐ Yes ☐ No	NHTSA Previously Contacted? ☐ Yes ☐ No

APPLICATION INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and injury(ies) on the back of this form)

Crash ☒ Yes ☐ No	Fire ☐ Yes ☒ No	Number of Persons Injured 1	Number of Fatalities	Estimated Property Damage	Reported to Police ☐ Yes ☒ No
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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE(S), INCIDENT(S), INJURY(IES)

SUDDEN ACCELERATION WHEN APPLYING BRAKES TO BRING VEHICLE TO A STOP, CAUSING VEHICLE TO REAR END ANOTHER VEHICLE IN FRONT OF CONSUMER. DRIVER RECEIVED A SPRAINED WAIST. DEALER NOTIFIED. *AK

CONTINUED ON BACK (REVERSE)

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.



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APR -1, AM 3:19
15-MAR-2000

OFFICE

DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

Od. or
rt. dt
od. rt
up. ltr

Reference No.

858600

OWNER INFORMATION (Type or Print)

Work Number

Home Number

Do you authorize NHTSA to provide a copy of report to the manufacturer of your vehicle?

☒ YES☐ NO

In the absence of an authorized agent, please provide name and address to the vehicle manufacturer.

Signature of Owner

Date 03/27/2000

VEHICLE INFORMATION

Vehicle Ident. No. (VIN.) (Located at bottom of windshield on driver's side) JT8BH28F1W0127448
Vehicle Make LEXUS
Vehicle Model LS400
Vehicle Year 1998
Current Odometer Reading 18,000 miles

Purchase Date
☒ New ☐ Used
Dealer's Name
City State Zip Code
Engine Size (CID/CC/L) ☐ Turbo ☐ Diesel ☐ Gas ☐ Fuel Injection
No Cylinders

Transmission Type ☐ Manual ☒ Automatic
Antilock Brakes ☒ Yes ☐ No
Restraint System ☒ 3-Point Belt ☐ Motorbelt ☐ Driveside Airbag ☐ 2-Point Belt ☐ Passengerside Airbag
Cruise Control ☐ Yes ☒ No
Drive Train ☐ Front ☒ Rear ☐ 4-Wheel
Vehicle Type ☒ Car ☐ Sport Utl ☐ Van ☐ Truck ☐ Minivan ☐ Motorcycle ☐ Other
Body Style ☐ 2-Door ☒ 4-Door ☐ Stationwagon ☐ Pick Up Truck ☐ Other

FAILED COMPONENT(S)/PART(S) INFORMATION

Component 08420000 Part Name(s) FUEL THROTTLE LINKAGES; ACCELERATOR; RIGID
Location ☐ Left ☐ Right ☐ Front ☐ Rear
Failed Part(s) ☐ Original ☐ Replacement

No of Failures Date(s) of Failure(s) 13-MAR-2000
Mileage at Failure(s) 18,000
Vehicle Speed at Failure(s) 15 mph
Failed Part(s) Available? ☐ Yes ☐ No
NHTSA Previously Contacted? ☐ Yes ☒ No

APPLICATION INCIDENT INFORMATION

(Please describe in detail the incident(s), Failure(s), Crash(es), and Injury(ies) on the back of this form)

Crash ☒ Yes ☐ No
Fire ☐ Yes ☒ No
Number of Persons Injured 1
Number of Fatalities
Estimated Property Damage
Reported to Police ☐ Yes ☒ No

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF FAILURE(S), INCIDENT(S), INJURY(IES)

SUDDEN ACCELERATION WHEN APPLYING BRAKES TO BRING VEHICLE TO A STOP, CAUSING VEHICLE TO REAR END ANOTHER VEHICLE IN FRONT OF CONSUMER. DRIVER RECEIVED A SPRAINED WAIST. DEALER NOTIFIED. *AK

CONTINUE ON BACK IF NEEDED

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INFORMATION ON TIRE FAILURE(S) (IF APPLICABLE)

DOT

SIZE

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (CONTINUED)

I have been a loyal Lexus customer and have had 5 Lexus LS-400 cars through the Santa Monica Lexus dealer. (6 cars if you count the one I had for a week in May, 1998, which car exhibited similar accelerator surge performance.)

Detailed descriptions of both incidents are enclosed.

LOS ANGELES, CA 90012
PM
28 MAR
2000

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

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POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY NATL HWY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMIN

U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Auto Safety Hotline, NEF-11 HL
400 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590



March 17, 2000

TWO "EXPERIENCES" WITH TWO DIFFERENT LEXUS LS400 1998 CARS

I have been a loyal Lexus customer for more than fifteen years. I have owned or leased five Lexus LS400's during that time. These cars have all performed well with minimal mechanical problems with the exception of the LS400 1998 model.

I first took possession of my first LS400 in May 1998 as a two- year lease. During the second week I had the car, I was backing into a parking space in front of my barber's shop in Pacific Palisades, when an unusual event occurred. As I applied pressure to the gas pedal to pull the car forward to straighten it out and position it in the space, the car lurched forward and was difficult to stop with maximum application of the brakes. It stopped abruptly a fraction of an inch behind a BMW. Fortunately there was a red buffer zone between the two parking spaces or I would have surely collided with the BMW. Needless to say, I was quite shaken by the "experience" and after regaining my composure in the barber shop after describing the incident, I phoned the dealer, Lexus of Santa Monica.

I cautiously restarted the car and drove it to the dealer. They assured me that this was an isolated, previously unreported event and eventually replaced the car with an identical one, since I would not drive that vehicle again.

I have driven this second LS400 since that time with only one minor difficulty, until Monday, March 13, 2000. The car had been serviced with replacement of front brake pads and front tires about ten day previously. Since the lease was ending April 2, 2000 and Lexus was offering a month-to-month lease extension for up to six months when the new LS430 would be available, I had already submitted the paper work for the extension.

After parking in front of my accountant's office on the South side of Wilshire Blvd., two thirds of a block West of Bundy, in West Los Angeles, I returned to the car. I carefully pulled out of the parking space, easing into the turn lane in preparation for turning South on Bundy. As I drove up the turn lane along the parked cars, one began pulling out. I sounded my horn and applied a little pressure to the gas pedal to clear him. As I did this, the car surged forward after I stopped applying pressure to the gas pedal, since I was shifting to the brake to stop at the corner where the light had turned red and a car was stopping ahead of me, also to make a right turn on Bundy.

When I applied the brakes, the car continued to surge ahead. The brakes locked and white smoke enveloped the car from all sides as it skidded and swerved, finally striking the car ahead of me (an LS 400 1996). At that time I put the gear in "park" and turned off the ignition, saying aloud that the car was having a mechanical failure. At first I thought this was a car fire that had started and could only think of getting out quickly.

My right wrist hurt where I had sprained it fighting the unresponsive steering wheel. I was badly shaken by the "experience". The other car's occupant appeared uninjured and actually came to my aid, noting the smoke. He helped me exchange information with him. On cursory examination his back bumper did not appear damaged. He said his car was scheduled, coincidentally, for service at Lexus, Santa Monica and he would have the undercarriage checked at that time. He phoned me, yesterday, to tell me that Lexus had estimated his damages at \$587.

On the NHTSA website, in the complaints database, I found several similar complaints concerning acceleration problems, some of which preceded my first "experience" in May 1998. Lexus must have had knowledge of these events but denied this in May 1998. I would have not driven another LS400 if I had known that my May 1998 "experience" was not an isolated event!

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]