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Subject: *****ES350 NHTSA Investigation to be opened *****

Today TMA learned that NHTSA will be opening an investigation into the 2007 Lexus ES350, possibly as early as tomorrow. NHTSA has received a total of 10 reports of unintended acceleration, 4 of which reported that a crash had occurred. NHTSA has been looking at this issue closely, and have now come to the conclusion that they believe an improperly installed all weather floor mat may be causing the accelerator pedal to stick in the full or partially depressed position.

NHTSA does not know if dealers or customers are the cause of the situation, but nonetheless, believe it is an issue to investigate further, and will announce the opening of a PE.

It is possible that if an owner places an all weather floor mat over the carpeted floor mat (for a total of two floor mats in place at the same time) the all weather floor mat could slide forward, and cause the accelerator pedal to become stuck in a depressed position. Compounding the issue may be the push button start system, as NHTSA believes owners may not fully recognize how to properly shut the vehicle down in an emergency situation. Both the carpeted floor mat and the all weather floormat are to be used in conjunction with retaining clips (but only one at a time) to prevent the mat from moving about the footwell, and, as designed, the retaining clips cannot retain more than one mat at a time.

The all weather mat also includes an embossed warning, instructing owners not to install over the existing floormats.

TMA expects an opening resume to be released in the next day or so, with media coverage to soon follow.

Best Regards,
Chris

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