U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 04-023
Prompted By: Consumer Complaints
Date Opened: 03/05/2004 Date Closed: 06/30/2004
Principal Investigator: Chris Lash
Subject: Stuck-Open Throttle

Manufacturer: Volkswagen Of America, Inc
Products: 1998-1999 Audi A6
Population: 40,006

Problem Description: the complaints allege that while driving in cold weather the throttle stuck open , resulting in a loss of vehicle control.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	22	54	74
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
# Injuries:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	29	29

*Description of Other: Warranty claims related to the alleged defect.

Action: this Preliminary Evaluation has been upgraded to an Engineering Analysis.

Engineer: *Christopher Lash* Date: *06/30/2004*
Div. Chief: *Jeffrey L. Quandt* Date: *06/30/2004*
Office Dir.: *Kathleen C. DeMeter* Date: *06/30/2004*

Summary: Complaints received by ODI and Audi allege that, in extreme cold weather, the throttle may unexpectedly fail to return to idle when the accelerator pedal is released, making it difficult to stop the vehicle. In March of 2004, Audi performed a series of tests to investigate the possible causes of throttle icing. Audi concluded that under certain driving conditions - only short distance trips over several weeks where coolant temperature remains below 70°c (158?f) - water may accumulate in the motor oil. Water that has accumulated in the motor oil will evaporate after the engine oil temperature exceeds 70°c (158?f) and could, within 15 to 20 minutes of driving at a constant speed with an outside temperature below -20°c (-4of), cause ice to form in the throttle body. According to audi, this condition occurs at relatively low throttle settings and results in throttle sticking at positions that can be controlled by braking. During typical vehicle usage (mixture of short and long distance driving) this phenomenon is not expected to occur. This investigation has been upgraded to an Engineering Analysis.

VRT 7-1-04