



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

ODI RESUME

Investigation: EA 04-017
Prompted By: Consumer Complaints
Date Opened: 06/30/2004
Principal Investigator: Chris Lash
Subject: Stuck-Open Throttle

Manufacturer: Volkswagen Of America, Inc
Products: 1998-1999 Audi A4, A6, Volkswagen Passat
Population: 89,000 (estimated)

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:	27	54	79
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: an Engineering Analysis has been opened.

Engineer: Christopher Lash
Div. Chief: Jeffrey L. Quandt
Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

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Summary: On March 5, 2004, ODI opened PE04-023 to investigate complaints alleging that, in extreme cold weather, the throttles of 1998-99 Audi A6 vehicles 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 (-4°F), 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 and the scope has been expanded to include Audi A4 and Volkswagen Passat vehicles equipped with the same 2.8L V6 engine as the MY1998-99 A6 vehicles that were the subject of PE04-023.

VLT
7-2-04