



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

ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 05-042
Date Opened: 08/11/2005 Date Closed: 12/21/2005
Principal Investigator: Mark Swanson
Subject: Exterior Door Handle Malfunction

Manufacturer: Volkswagen Of America, Inc.
Products: 2004-2005 Volkswagen Touareg
Population: 56,774

Problem Description: Exterior door handle may stick in the opened position. Door may not latch.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	3	14	17
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	1	0	1
# Injuries:	1	0	1
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	762	762

*Description of Other: Warranty

Action: The Preliminary Evaluation is closed.

Engineer: Mark B. Swanson
Div. Chief: Thomas Z. Cooper
Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

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Summary: VW issued a technical service bulletin (TSB) dated June 10, 2005, describing a condition of "exterior door handle sticks in the opened position after the door is opened." VW described the cause of the problem to be "a potential for increased friction between the door handle and the lock cylinder housing . . . because some guide nubs that were molded into the plastic door handle . . . were slightly higher than specified." In addition to the TSB, VW has introduced production changes ("lubrication, deletion of the guide nubs, introduction of a low friction guide surface on the lock cylinder housing") to address the problem.

VW reports that the failure occurs "predominantly in the very early life stage of the vehicle." ODI examination of VW's warranty data shows fewer claims as the vehicle ages. The one injury resulted when the unlatched door hit the occupant's hand.

A safety defect trend has not been identified at this time and further use of agency resources does not appear to be warranted. The closing of this investigation does not constitute a finding by NHTSA that no safety-related defect exists. ODI will continue to monitor complaints and reserves the right to take further action if warranted by the circumstances.

12/22/05