



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

400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

**CERTIFIED MAIL**  
**RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

Mr. William Shapiro  
Regulatory and Environmental Affairs  
Volvo Cars of North America, LLC  
1 Volvo Drive, Building B  
Rockleigh, NY 07647

DEC 13 2005

NVS-212lhs  
PE05-064

Dear Mr. Shapiro:

This letter is to inform you that the Office of Defects Investigation (ODI) of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has opened a Preliminary Evaluation (PE05-064) to investigate concerns involving the windshield wiper system installed in certain Volvo vehicles. As a part of the investigation, this letter requests information from Volvo Cars of N.A., LLC.

This office has received two Early Warning Field Reports concerning loosening of the retaining nut that secures to windshield wiper arm to its drive shaft on Model Years (MY) 2004 and 2005 Volvo XC90 vehicles. In addition, this office has identified a "Tech-Net Note" issued by Volvo on May 24, 2005, concerning this matter. Copies of the two field reports are enclosed for your information.

Unless otherwise stated in the text of this letter, the following definitions apply to these information requests:

**Subject vehicles:** all MY 2004-2005 Volvo model XC90 manufactured for sale or lease in the United States.

**Subject Components:** the original equipment windshield wiper arm, drive shaft and retaining nut installed on the subject vehicles.

**Volvo:** Volvo Cars of N.A., LLC (Volvo), all of its past and present officers and employees, whether assigned to its principal offices or any of its field or other locations, including all of its divisions, subsidiaries (whether or not incorporated) and affiliated enterprises and all of their headquarters, regional, zone and other offices and their employees, and all agents, contractors, consultants, attorneys and law firms and other persons engaged directly or indirectly (e.g., employee of a consultant) by or under the control of Volvo (including all business units and



DOT AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE  
888-DASH-2-DOT  
888-327-4236

persons previously referred to), who are or, in or after 1996, were involved in any way with any of the following related to the alleged defect in the subject vehicles:

- a. Design, engineering, analysis, modification or production (e.g. quality control);
- b. Testing, assessment or evaluation;
- c. Consideration, or recognition of potential or actual defects, reporting, record-keeping and information management, (e.g., complaints, field reports, warranty information, part sales), analysis, claims, or lawsuits; or
- d. Communication to, from or intended for zone representatives, fleets, dealers, or other field locations, including but not limited to people who have the capacity to obtain information from dealers.

**Alleged defect:** Loosening of the retaining nut that secures the windshield wiper arm to its drive shaft, which may ultimately cause impairment of driver visibility in inclement weather conditions.

**Document:** "Document(s)" is used in the broadest sense of the word and shall mean all original written, printed, typed, recorded, or graphic matter whatsoever, however produced or reproduced, of every kind, nature, and description, and all non-identical copies of both sides thereof, including, but not limited to, papers, letters, memoranda, correspondence, communications, electronic mail (e-mail) messages (existing in hard copy and/or in electronic storage), faxes, mailgrams, telegrams, cables, telex messages, notes, annotations, working papers, drafts, minutes, records, audio and video recordings, data, databases, other information bases, summaries, charts, tables, graphics, other visual displays, photographs, statements, interviews, opinions, reports, newspaper articles, studies, analyses, evaluations, interpretations, contracts, agreements, jottings, agendas, bulletins, notices, announcements, instructions, blueprints, drawings, as-builts, changes, manuals, publications, work schedules, journals, statistical data, desk, portable and computer calendars, appointment books, diaries, travel reports, lists, tabulations, computer printouts, data processing program libraries, data processing inputs and outputs, microfilms, microfiches, statements for services, resolutions, financial statements, governmental records, business records, personnel records, work orders, pleadings, discovery in any form, affidavits, motions, responses to discovery, all transcripts, administrative filings and all mechanical, magnetic, photographic and electronic records or recordings of any kind, including any storage media associated with computers, including, but not limited to, information on hard drives, floppy disks, backup tapes, and zip drives, electronic communications, including but not limited to, the Internet and shall include any drafts or revisions pertaining to any of the foregoing, all other things similar to any of the foregoing, however denominated by Volvo, any other data compilations from which information can be obtained, translated if necessary, into a usable form and any other documents. For purposes of this request, any document, which contains any note, comment, addition, deletion, insertion, annotation, or otherwise comprises a non-identical copy of another document shall be treated as a separate document subject to production. In all cases where original and any non-identical copies are not available, "document(s)" also means any identical copies of the original and all non-identical copies thereof. Any document, record, graph, chart, film or photograph originally produced in color must be provided in color. Furnish all documents whether verified by the

manufacturer or not. If a document is not in the English language, provide both the original document and an English translation of the document.

**Other Terms:** To the extent that they are used in these information requests, the terms "claim," "consumer complaint," "dealer field report," "field report," "fleet," "good will," "make," "model," "model year," "notice," "property damage," "property damage claim," "rollover," "type," "warranty," "warranty adjustment," and "warranty claim," whether used in singular or in plural form, have the same meaning as found in 49 CFR 579.4.

In order for my staff to evaluate the alleged defect, certain information is required. Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30166, please provide numbered responses to the following information requests. Insofar as Volvo may have previously provided a document to ODI, Volvo may produce it again or identify the document, the document submission to ODI in which it was included and the precise location in that submission where the document is located. When documents are produced, the documents shall be produced in an identified, organized manner that corresponds with the organization of this information request letter (including all individual requests and subparts). When documents are produced and the documents would not, standing alone, be self-explanatory, the production of documents shall be supplemented and accompanied by explanation.

Please repeat the applicable request verbatim above each response. After Volvo's response to each request, identify the source of the information and indicate the last date the information was gathered.

1. State, by model year, the number of subject vehicles manufactured by Volvo for sale or lease in the United States.
2. State the number of each of the following, received by Volvo, or of which Volvo is otherwise aware, that relate to or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles:

Consumer complaints, including those from fleet operators;  
 Field reports, including dealer field reports;  
 Reports involving a crash, injury, or fatality, based on claims against the manufacturer involving an injury or death, notices received by Volvo alleging or proving that an injury or death was related to or resulted from the alleged defect in a subject vehicles;  
 Property damage claims, including claims of a loss of vehicle control and/or accident in which impaired driver visibility due to the alleged defect is alleged to have contributed to the occurrence;  
 Third-party arbitration proceedings where Volvo is or was a party to the arbitration; and,  
 Lawsuits, both pending and closed, in which Volvo is or was a defendant or codefendant.

For subparts "a" through "c," state the total number of each item (e.g., consumer complaints, field reports, etc.) separately. Multiple incidents involving the same vehicle are to be counted separately. Multiple reports of the same incident are also to be counted separately (i.e., a consumer complaint and a field report involving the same incident in which a crash occurred are to be counted as a crash report, a field report and a consumer complaint).

In addition, for items "c" through "f," provide a summary description of the alleged problem and causal and contributing factors and Volvo's assessment of the problem, with a summary of the significant underlying facts and evidence. For item "f," identify the parties to the action, as well as the caption, court, docket number, and date on which the complaint or other document initiating the action was filed.

3. For each item (complaint, field report, claim, notice, or matter) within the scope of Volvo's response to Request No. 2, state the following information:

- Volvo's file number or other identifier used;
- The category of the item, as identified in Request No. 2 (i.e., consumer complaint, field report, etc.);
- Vehicle owner or fleet name (and fleet contact person), address, and telephone number;
- Vehicle's VIN;
- Vehicle's make, model and model year;
- Vehicle's mileage at time of incident;
- Incident date;
- Report or claim date;
- Whether a crash is alleged;
- Whether property damage is alleged;
- Number, type, and severity of alleged injuries, if any; and,
- Number of alleged fatalities, if any.

Provide this information in Microsoft Access 2000, or a compatible format, entitled "REQUEST NUMBER TWO DATA."

4. Produce copies of all documents related to each item within the scope of Request No. 2. Organize the documents separately by category (i.e., consumer complaints, field reports, etc.) and describe the method Volvo used for organizing the documents.
5. State a total count for all of the following categories of claims, collectively, that have been paid by Volvo to date that relate, or may relate, to the alleged defect in the subject vehicles: warranty claims; extended warranty claims; claims for good will services that were provided; field, zone, or similar adjustments and reimbursements; and warranty claims or repairs made in accordance with a procedure specified in a technical service bulletin or customer satisfaction campaign.

Separately, for each such claim, state the following information:

- Volvo's claim number;
- Vehicle owner or fleet name (and fleet contact person) and telephone number;
- VIN;
- Repair date;
- Vehicle mileage at time of repair;
- Repairing dealer's or facility's name, telephone number, city and state or ZIP code;

Labor operation number;  
 Problem code;  
 Replacement part number(s) and description(s);  
 Concern stated by customer; and,  
 Comment, if any, by dealer/technician relating to claim and/or repair.

6. Describe in detail the search criteria used by Volvo to identify the claims identified in response to Request No. 5, including the labor operations, problem codes, part numbers and any other pertinent parameters used. Provide a list of all labor operations, labor operation descriptions, problem codes, and problem code descriptions applicable to the alleged defect in the subject vehicles. State the terms of the new vehicle warranty coverage offered by Volvo on the subject vehicles (i.e., the number of months and mileage for which coverage is provided and the vehicle systems that are covered). Describe any extended warranty coverage option(s) related to the alleged defect that Volvo offered for the subject vehicles and state the number of vehicles that are covered under each such extended warranty.
7. Produce copies of all service, warranty, and other documents that relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles, that Volvo has issued to any dealers, regional or zone offices, field offices, fleet purchasers, or other entities. This includes, but is not limited to, bulletins, advisories, informational documents, training documents, or other documents or communications, with the exception of standard shop manuals. Also include the latest draft copy of any such communication that Volvo may be planning to issue within the next 120 days.
8. Describe all assessments, analyses, tests, test results, studies, surveys, simulations, investigations, inquiries and/or evaluations (collectively, "actions") that relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles that have been conducted, are being conducted, are planned, or are being planned by, or for, Volvo. For each such action, provide the following information:

Action title or identifier;  
 The actual or planned start date;  
 The actual or expected end date;  
 Brief summary of the subject and objective of the action;  
 Engineering group(s)/supplier(s) responsible for designing and for conducting the action;  
 and,  
 A brief summary of the findings and/or conclusions resulting from the action.

For each action identified, provide copies of all documents related to the action, regardless of whether the documents are in interim, draft, or final form. Organize the documents chronologically by action.

9. Describe all modifications or changes made by, or on behalf of, Volvo in the design, material composition, manufacture, quality control, supply, or installation of the subject components, from the start of production to date, which relate, or may relate, to the alleged defect in the subject vehicles. For each such modification or change, provide the following information:

The date or approximate date on which the modification or change was incorporated into vehicle production;

A detailed description of the modification or change;

The reason(s) for the modification or change;

The part numbers (service and engineering) of the original component;

The part number (service and engineering) of the modified component;

Whether the original unmodified component was withdrawn from production and/or sale, and if so, when;

When the modified component was made available as a service component; and,

Whether the modified component can be interchanged with earlier production components.

Also, provide the above information for any modification or change that Volvo is aware of which may be incorporated into vehicle production within the next 120 days.

10. Provide a complete engineering description and appropriate engineering specifications of the subject components installed in the subject vehicles. For each component part number, provide the supplier's name, address, and appropriate point of contact (name, title, and telephone number). Also identify by make, model and model year, any other vehicles of which Volvo is aware, equipped with identical subject components as the subject vehicles, whether installed in production or in service, and state the applicable dates of production or service usage.
11. Provide Volvo's assessment of the alleged defect in the subject vehicle, including:

The causal or contributory factor(s);

The failure mechanism(s);

The failure mode(s);

The risk to motor vehicle safety that it poses;

What warnings, if any, the operator and the other persons both inside and outside the vehicle would have that the alleged defect was occurring or subject component was malfunctioning; and,

The reports included with this inquiry.

This letter is being sent to Volvo pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30166, which authorizes NHTSA to conduct any investigation that may be necessary to enforce Chapter 301 of Title 49 and to request reports and the production of things. It constitutes a new request for information. Volvo's failure to respond promptly and fully to this letter could subject Volvo to civil penalties pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30165 or lead to an action for injunctive relief pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 30163. (Other remedies and sanctions are available as well.) Please note that maximum civil penalties under 49 U.S.C. § 30165 have increased as a result of the recent enactment of the Transportation Recall Enhancement, Accountability, and Documentation (TREAD) Act, Public Law No. 106-414 (signed November 1, 2000). Section 5(a) of the TREAD Act, codified at 49 U.S.C. § 30165(b), provides for civil penalties of up to \$5,000 per day, with a maximum of \$15

million for a related series of violations, for failing or refusing to perform an act required under 49 U.S.C. § 30166. This includes failing to respond to ODI information requests.

If Volvo cannot respond to any specific request or subpart(s) thereof, please state the reason why it is unable to do so. If, on the basis of attorney-client, attorney work product, or other privilege, Volvo does not submit one or more requested documents or items of information in response to this information request, Volvo must provide a privilege log identifying each document or item withheld, and stating the date, subject or title, the name and position of the person(s) from, and the person(s) to whom it was sent, and the name and position of any other recipient (to include all carbon copies or blind carbon copies), the nature of that information or material, and the basis for the claim of privilege and why that privilege applies.

Volvo's response to this letter, in duplicate, together with a copy of any confidentiality request, must be submitted to the Office of Defects Investigation by February 10, 2006. Please refer to PE05-064 in Volvo's response to this letter. If Volvo finds that it is unable to provide all of the information requested within the time allotted, Volvo must request an extension from me at (202) 366-5218 no later than five business days before the response due date. If Volvo is unable to provide all of the information requested by the original deadline, it must submit a partial response by the original deadline with whatever information Volvo then has available, even if an extension has been granted.

If Volvo claims that any of the information or documents provided in response to this information request constitute confidential commercial material within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4), or are protected from disclosure pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1905, Volvo must also submit supporting information together with the materials that are the subject of the confidentiality request, in accordance with 49 CFR Part 512, to the Office of Chief Counsel (NCC-113), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5219, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590. Volvo is required to submit two copies of the documents containing allegedly confidential information (except only one copy of blueprints) and one copy of the documents from which information claimed to be confidential has been deleted.

If you have any technical questions concerning this matter, please call Mr. Lee Strickland of my staff at (202) 366-5201.

Sincerely,

Thomas Z. Cooper, Chief  
Vehicle Integrity Division  
Office of Defects Investigation

Enclosures: