

HONDA

American Honda Motor Co., Inc.
1919 Torrance Boulevard
Torrance, CA 90501-2746
Phone (310) 783-2000

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NVS-210

2005 NOV 15 P 1:45

November 14, 2005

OFFICE OF DEFECTS
INVESTIGATION

NVS-214jry
PE05-047

Mr. Richard P. Boyd, Chief
M&HDT Division
Office of Defects Investigation
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Boyd:

In reply to your letter dated September 16, 2005, we are submitting a response regarding alleged overheating of an electrical connector in model year 2002-2004 Honda VFR800 motorcycle wire harnesses.

1. Separately, by model, model year, and month/year of production, state the number of subject vehicles sold in the United States. Separately, for each subject Honda vehicle manufactured to, state the following:
 - A. Model;
 - B. VIN;
 - C. Model Year;
 - D. Date of manufacture (mm/dd/yy);
 - E. Date warranty coverage commenced; and
 - F. The state where the vehicle was originally sold.

Provide the table in Microsoft Access 2000, or a compatible format, titled "PRODUCTION DATA."

Response:

The data elements "a" through "f" are filed on the enclosed CD.

Month/Year of Production	VRF800 Sales			
	Model Year			Total
	2002	2003	2004	
Sep. 2001	7	0	0	7
Oct. 2001	0	0	0	0
Nov. 2001	1,484	0	0	1,484
Dec. 2001	751	0	0	751
Jan. 2002	372	0	0	372
Feb. 2002	62	0	0	62
Mar. 2002	0	0	0	0
Apr. 2002	0	0	0	0
May 2002	0	0	0	0
Jun. 2002	0	0	0	0
Jul. 2002	0	1,025	0	1,025
Aug. 2002	0	0	0	0

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Month/Year of Production	VFR800 Sales			
	Model Year			Total
	2002	2003	2004	
Sep. 2001	7	0	0	7
Oct. 2001	0	0	0	0
Nov. 2001	1,484	0	0	1,484
Dec. 2001	751	0	0	751
Jan. 2002	372	0	0	372
Feb. 2002	62	0	0	62
Mar. 2002	0	0	0	0
Apr. 2002	0	0	0	0
May 2002	0	0	0	0
Jun. 2002	0	0	0	0
Jul. 2002	0	1,025	0	1,025
Aug. 2002	0	0	0	0

Month/Year of Production	VRF800 Sales			
	Model Year			
	2002	2003	2004	Total
Sep. 2002	0	994	0	994
Oct. 2002	0	0	0	0
Nov. 2002	0	0	0	0
Dec. 2002	0	0	0	0
Jan. 2003	0	0	0	0
Feb. 2003	0	0	0	0
Mar. 2003	0	0	0	0
Apr. 2003	0	0	0	0
May 2003	0	0	0	0
Jun. 2003	0	0	0	0
Jul. 2003	0	0	0	0
Aug. 2003	0	0	0	0
Sep. 2003	0	0	0	0
Oct. 2003	0	0	819	819
Nov. 2003	0	0	0	0
Dec. 2003	0	0	398	398
Totals	2,767	2,019	1,217	5,912

Source: Units file containing information on all vehicles received from the factories, including vehicles sold to dealers and Honda's company vehicle inventory.
As of: 09/30/2005

2. State the number of each of the following, received by Honda, or of which Honda is otherwise aware, which relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect:
 - A. Consumer complaints, including those from fleet operators;
 - B. Field reports, including dealer field reports;
 - C. Reports involving a crash, injury, or fatality, based on claims against Honda involving a death or injury, notices received by Honda alleging or proving that a death or injury was caused by a possible defect in a subject vehicle, property damage claims, consumer complaints, or field reports;
 - D. Property damage claims;
 - E. Third-party arbitration proceedings where Honda is or was a party to the arbitration; and
 - F. Lawsuits, both pending and closed, in which Honda is or was a defendant or codefendant.

For subparts "a" through "f," 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, including causal and contributing factors, and Honda's assessment of the problem, with a summary of the significant underlying facts and evidence. For items "e" and "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.

Response: See Attachment Q2

The total number of reports for items "a" through "f" are stated in the table below. The summary descriptions can be found in Attachment Q2.

Note: Honda does not have any motorcycle fleets.

Model	Model Year	A Owner/ Fleet Reports	B Field/ Dealer Reports	C Crash, Injury, Fatality Reports	D Property Damage	E Third-Party Arbitration	F Lawsuits
VFR800	2002	11	18	0	0	0	3
	2003	9	12	0	0	0	0
	2004	0	1	0	0	0	0

Items "c" to "e": Honda did not identify any relevant reports in its review.

Source(s): Customer Relations, Tech Line, Field Reports, Claims and Lawsuits.
As of: 09/30/2005

3. Separately, for each item (complaint, report, claim, notice, or matter) within the scope of your response to Request No. 2, state the following information:

- A. Honda's file number or other identifier used;
- B. The category of the item, as identified in Request No. 2 (i.e., consumer complaint, field report, etc.);
- C. Vehicle owner or fleet name (and fleet contact person), address, and telephone number;
- D. Vehicle's VIN;
- E. Vehicle's model and model year;
- F. Vehicle's mileage at time of incident;
- G. Incident date;
- H. Report or claim date;
- I. Whether a crash and/or fire is alleged;
- J. Whether property damage is alleged;
- K. Number of alleged injuries, if any; and
- L. Number of alleged fatalities, if any.

Provide this information in Microsoft Access 2000, or a compatible format, titled "OWNER COMPLAINT DATA."

Response:

The data elements "a" through "l" are filed on the enclosed CD.

Source(s): Customer Relations, Tech Line, Field Reports, Claims and Lawsuits.
As of: 09/30/2005

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 Honda used for organizing the documents.

Response: See Attachment # Q4.

The documents are organized by category and within each category by the last six digits of the VIN.

Source(s): Customer Relations, Tech Line, Field Reports, Claims and Lawsuits.
As of: 09/30/2005

5. State, by model and model year, a total count for all of the following categories of claims, collectively, that have been paid by Honda to date that relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect: warranty claims; extended warranty claims; claims for goodwill 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:

- A. Honda's claim number;
- B. Vehicle owner or fleet name (and fleet contact person) and telephone number;
- C. VIN;
- D. Repair date;
- E. Vehicle mileage at time of repair;
- F. Repairing dealer's or facility's name, telephone number, city and state or ZIP code;
- G. Labor operation number;
- H. Problem code;
- I. Replacement part number(s) and description(s);
- J. Concern stated by customer; and
- K. Comment, if any, by dealer/technician relating to claim and/or repair.

Provide this information in Microsoft Access 2000, or a compatible format, titled "WARRANTY DATA."

Response:

The data elements "a" through "k" are filed on the enclosed CD.

Model	Model Year	Warranty Claims	Goodwill Claims	Extended Warranty
VFR800	2002	13	5	0
	2003	7	3	0
	2004	4	1	0

Source(s): Warranty claim data for MY2002-2004 VFR800
As of: 09/30/2005

6. Describe in detail the search criteria used by Honda 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. State, by make and model year, the terms of the new vehicle warranty coverage offered by Honda 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) that Honda offered for the subject vehicles and state by option, model, and model year, the number of vehicles that are covered under each such extended warranty.

Response: *See Attachment Q6*

Search Criteria: Using 2002-2004 VFR800 warranty data, claims were pulled based on the main wire harness, front (headlight) subharness and battery subharness part numbers. The contention text description was reviewed for each claim to identify headlight failure and/or engine stalling.

Coding and Descriptions are listed in Attachment Q6

Warranty Coverage: The 2002-2004 VFR800s are covered by a new motorcycle limited warranty for three (3) years. There is no mileage limitation. The warranty coverage begins the date the motorcycle is sold to the first purchaser, or the date it is first used as a demonstrator, lease, or company motorcycle - whichever comes first. American Honda will repair or replace, at its option, any part that is found defective in material or workmanship under normal use. Parts repaired and replaced under this warranty are covered only for the remainder of the vehicle's warranty. Parts and labor will be of no charge. This warranty covers all systems except emission control systems, noise control systems, batteries/replacement parts, or tires, which have their own warranties. Honda has not issued extended warranty coverage related to the alleged defect in the subject vehicles.

7. Produce copies of all service, warranty, and other documents that relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect, that Honda 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 communication that manufacturer's short name is planning to issue within the next 120 days.

Response:

Honda has not issued any service information related to the alleged defect.

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 that have been conducted, are being conducted, are planned, or are being planned by, or for, Honda. For each such action, provide the following information:

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

Response:

Action #1:

- A. QIS# MV20050823131753
- B. Start date August 8, 2005
- C. End date October 21, 2005
- D. Investigate electrical circuit malfunction resulting in headlight failure or engine stalling.
- E. Motorcycle Quality Innovation division in Japan
- F. No countermeasure is taken because the cause of malfunctions were determined to be a wrong adaptation by user. Refer to response for request number 9.

Action #2:

- A. QIC# M4M109
- B. Start date September 16, 2005
- C. End date: Investigation on-going
- D. Report of unit stops running, inoperative headlight
- E. American Honda Motorcycle Product Support Group
- F. Suspected cause not determined. Wire harness shipped to Japan for further analysis.

9. 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 and organize them chronologically by action.

Response: *See Attachment Q9*

10. Furnish Honda's assessment of the failures alleged by the three owners prompting this inquiry, including:

- A. The causal or contributory factor(s);
- B. The failure mechanism(s);
- C. The failure mode(s);
- D. The risk to motor vehicle safety that each poses;
- E. What warnings, if any, the operator would have that the alleged defect was about to occur.

Response:

Based on the physical inspection of five motorcycles (see Q9 Result of Scrambling) and a review of all documents and analysis through the end of October 2005, we concluded the following.

- A. Modification or tampering.
- B. Modification to electrical system may exceed capacity of the (green) ground wire causing overheating and circuit failure.
- C. Fuse failure, wire harness failure and connector failure.
- D. Loss of headlight or engine stalling could be hazardous under certain conditions regardless of the cause.
- E. The headlight dims. The high beam goes off. A rapid clicking noise of the headlight relay occurs. The low beam goes off. Engine hesitation. Engine stall.

We have recently received two additional complaints that we have yet to confirm.

Sincerely,

AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO., INC.



William R. Willen
Managing Counsel
Product Regulatory Office

WRW:nis

Attachments