

TOYOTA
TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.

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Jeff
12/13/05

December 7, 2005

Mr. Jeffrey Quandt
Chief - Vehicle Controls Division
Office of Defects Investigation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh St., SW
Washington, DC 20590

Re: NVS-213dir; PE05-050

Dear Mr. Quandt:

This letter is being sent in response to your October 13th, 2005 letter regarding PE05-050, an investigation into the Nissan Murano. Per our agreement, Toyota is submitting the final portion of our response to your peer vehicle inquiry.

Enclosed you will find two copies of this response and two CD-ROM's containing electronic versions of the attachments. Should you have any questions about this response, please contact Mr. Chris Santucci at (202) 775-1707.

Sincerely,



Chris Tinto
Vice President
TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.

CT:cs
Attachment

1. State, by model and model year, the number of subject vehicles Toyota has manufactured for sale or lease in the United States. Separately, for each subject peer vehicle manufactured to date by Toyota, state the following:
 - a. Vehicle identification number (VIN);
 - b. Model
 - c. Model Year;
 - d. Date of manufacture;
 - e. Date warranty coverage commenced; and
 - f. The State in the United States where the vehicle was originally sold or leased (or delivered for sale or lease).

Provide this information in Microsoft Access 2003, or a compatible format, entitled "PE05-050 TOYOTA PRODUCTION DATA."

Response 1

The number of MY 2001-2005 (until August 31, 2005) Toyota Highlander and Lexus RX300/330 vehicles that Toyota has manufactured for sale or lease in the United States by model year is as follows:

Model	Model Year	Number of Vehicles	Total
Highlander	2001	69,797	562,387
	2002	110,532	
	2003	128,158	
	2004	123,746	
	2005	130,154	
RX300	2001	86,213	194,012
	2002	73,053	
	2003	34,746	
RX330	2004	148,389	244,547
	2005	96,158	
Total			1,000,946

In addition, detailed information for each vehicle is provided electronically on CD-ROM, in Microsoft Access 2000 format entitled "Attachment 1--PE05-050 TOYOTA PRODUCTION DATA".

2. State the number of each of the following, received by Toyota, or of which Toyota is otherwise aware, which relate to, or may relate to, the alleged defect in the subject vehicles:
 - 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 the manufacturer involving a death or injury, notices received by the manufacturer 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. Reports involving a fire, based on claims against the manufacturer involving a death or injury, notices received by the manufacturer 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;
- e. Property damage claims; and
- f. Third-party arbitration proceedings where Toyota is or was a party to the arbitration; and
- g. Lawsuits, both pending and closed, in which Toyota is or was a defendant or codefendant.

For subparts "a" through "d" 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 "g", provide a summary description of the alleged problem and causal and contributing factors and Toyota's assessment of the problem, with a summary of the significant underlying facts and evidence. For items "f" and "g" 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 2

- a. There are 18 consumer complaints that may relate to the subject condition.
- b. There are no field reports that may relate to the subject condition.
- c. Toyota has received no legal related claim (i.e., PL claim) involving a crash that may relate to the subject condition. There are no reports alleging that an injury and/or a fatality had occurred as well.
- d. Toyota has received no legal related claim (i.e., PL claim) involving a fire that may relate to the subject condition. There are no reports alleging that an injury and/or a fatality had occurred as well.
- e. Toyota has received no property damage claim that may relate to the subject condition.
- f. There is no buy-back arbitration claim in process that may relate to the subject condition.
- g. There are no lawsuits in which Toyota is or was a defendant or codefendant.

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. Toyota'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 make, model and model year;
 - f. Vehicle's mileage at time of incident;
 - g. Incident date;
 - h. Report or claim date;
 - i. Whether a crash is alleged;
 - j. Whether a fire is alleged;
 - k. Whether property damage is alleged;
 - l. Number of alleged injuries, if any; and
 - m. Number of alleged fatalities, if any.

Provide this information in Microsoft Access 2003, or a compatible format, entitled "PE05-050 TOYOTA REQUEST NUMBER TWO DATA."

Response 3

The information for the 18 complaints are provided electronically on CD-ROM, in Microsoft Access 2000 format entitled "PE05-050 TOYOTA REQUEST NUMBER TWO DATA."

4. Produce copies of all documents related to each of items "c" through "e" within the scope of Request Number Two. Organize the documents separately by category (i.e., crash/injury/fatality reports, property damage claims, etc.) and describe the method Toyota used for organizing the documents.

Response 4

There are no documents which may relate to the subject condition.

5. State, by model and model year, a total count for all of the following categories of claims, collectively, that have been paid by Toyota to date that relate to, 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:

- a. Toyota 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 2003, or a compatible format, entitled "PE05-050 TOYOTA WARRANTY DATA."

Response 5

The total count of the warranty claims paid by Toyota that may relate to the subject condition on the MY 2001-2005 Toyota Highlander and Lexus RX300/330 is listed in the table below. The counts include normal warranty claims, goodwill claims as well as extended warranty claims.

Model	Model Year	Normal Claims	Goodwill Claims	Extended Claims
Highlander	2001 through 2005	13	0	2
RX300/330	2001 through 2005	10	1	0
Total		26		

The information for each claim is provided electronically on CD-ROM, in Microsoft Access 2000 format entitled "Attachment 5-PE05-050 TOYOTA WARRANTY DATA".

6. Describe in detail the search criteria used by Toyota 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 in Microsoft Access 2003, or a compatible format. State, by make and model year, the terms of the new vehicle warranty coverage offered by Toyota on the subject vehicles (i.e., the number of months and mileage for which coverage is provided and the vehicle systems that are covered).

Response 6

The search criteria used by Toyota to identify the claims is the following:

Toyota searched the warranty database for those claims that replaced part numbers of 77001-480** or 77001-0E0** (tank assembly, fuel) on the all MY 2001-2005 Toyota Highlander and Lexus RX330/330.

Toyota reviewed the comments in the claims to determine if it may be related to the subject condition. Please note that excluded from these claims are fuel evaporation system problems (e.g., minor vapor leakage; Engine Malfunction Indicator Lamp on).

In the data, the following labor operation codes were found:

- 23701 (Fuel tank assembly remove and replace)
- 23799 (Fuel tank, others)

The new vehicle basic warranty coverage on the subject component for Toyota Highlander is 3 years or 36,000 miles, Lexus RX300/330 is 4 years or 50,000 miles whichever occurs first. In addition, California certified vehicles registered in certain States have emission warranty coverage of 7 years or 70,000 miles whichever occurs first.

7. Produce copies of all service, warranty, and other documents that relate to, or may relate to, the subject condition in the subject peer vehicles, that Toyota 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 Toyota is planning to issue within the next 120 days.

Response 7

Toyota has not issued to any dealers, regional or zone offices, field offices, fleet purchasers or other entities any service, warranty, or other documents that relate to, or may relate to, the subject condition in the subject peer vehicles. Also, Toyota is not planning to publish any communication relate to the subject condition in the subject peer vehicles within the next 120 days.

8. Provide the following information concerning the subject fuel tank assemblies:
 - a. Drawings showing the nominal and minimum (full jounce) design ground clearance of the subject fuel tank assembly and the corresponding location(s) on the tank assembly – state all assumptions (e.g., tire inflation pressure);
 - b. Identify all subject vehicle components that have lower ground clearances for each condition cited in “9.a” than the subject fuel tanks and state the location and ground clearance dimension of each;
 - c. State the minimum design ground clearance for each condition cited in “9.a” for the subject vehicles, the bases for that dimension, the associated component/structure, and the location;
 - d. Provide a bottom view drawing or picture showing the undercarriage of the vehicle in the fully built configuration with the fuel tank and the locations of all components identified in “9.b” and “9.c” clearly marked;

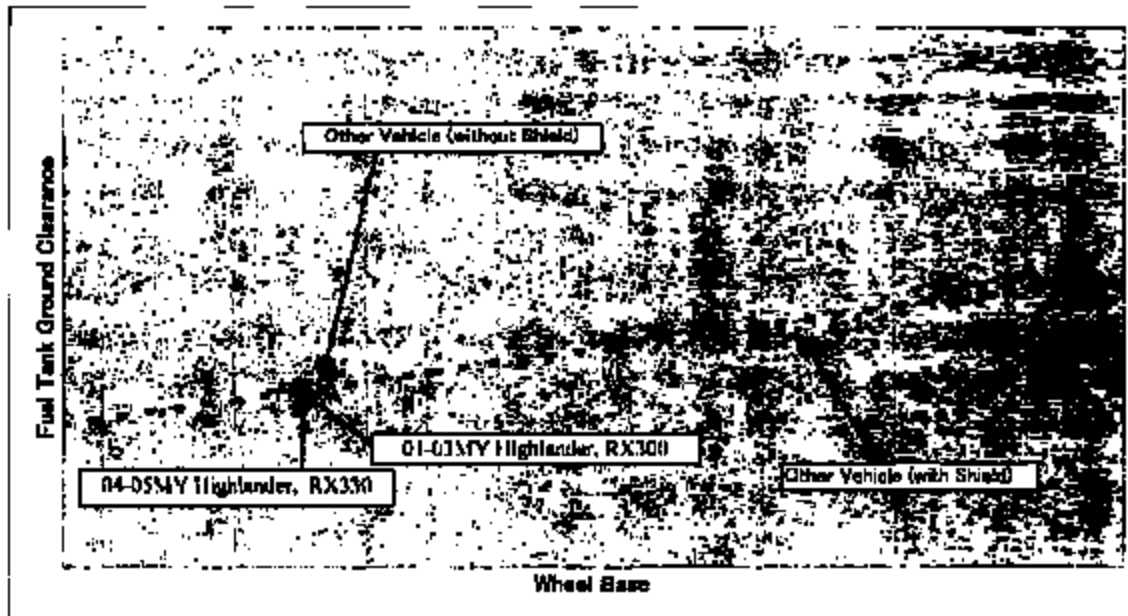
- e. Copies of all engineering specifications relating to the packaging, shielding, ground clearance, and/or puncture resistance of the subject fuel tanks;
- f. Copies of all engineering standards, design guides, or similar documents that relate in any way to the packaging, shielding, ground clearance, and/or puncture resistance of fuel tanks in passenger cars or light trucks (including vans and utility vehicles);

Response 8

Please refer to Attachment 8 for the fuel tank and other related component ground clearance and locations.

Toyota's fuel tank design guideline

- In general, Toyota ensures that the lowest ground clearance point is on the body or frame structure (something other than the fuel tank), in order to protect the fuel tank from damage due to interference between the road surface and the vehicle underside during driving. On the 01-05MY RX300/330 and Highlander vehicles, the lowest ground clearance point is on the front suspension member. No Toyota vehicles are produced with the fuel tank as the lowest point of ground clearance.
- When initially considering implementing a fuel tank shield, Toyota uses our historical database for reference. As shown in the chart below, if the vehicle's fuel tank ground clearance becomes lower than the dotted line on the graph below, the vehicle must have a shield. Because of this criterion, the 01-05MY RX300/330 and Highlander have a fuel tank shield.



- Finally, every vehicle must be evaluated for durability performance by being driven over a rough surface road test course and have damage evaluated during development. If a fuel tank receives functional damage (leak, crack, scuffing, etc.) during the evaluations, an appropriate shield(s) or other protective material(s) are adopted in order to confirm durability. The 01-05MY RX300/330 and Highlander have all passed these evaluations during the development stage.

As described above, Toyota develops the appropriate fuel tank location and protection method by using the design specification and durability evaluations for assuring safety and reliability. This design policy is applied to all passenger vehicles, SUVs, vans and trucks.

Data provided in this document is current as of the following dates:

- Response 1: Production Data (November 9, 2005)
- Response 3: Request Number Two Data (November 23 2005)
- Response 5: Warranty claims (November 12, 2005)
Goodwill & Extended warranty claims (November 21, 2005)
- Response 7: Dealer communications (November 8, 2005)
- Response 8: Engineering Data (November 25, 2005)

Plastic Shields



Fuel Tank
<RX300>
Nominal: 209.7mm
Full Bounce: 120.0mm

<Highlander>
Nominal: 210.3mm
Full Bounce: 118.1mm

Exhaust Pipe
<RX300>
Nominal: 183.5mm

<Highlander>
Nominal: 184.6mm

Front Suspension Member
<RX300>
Nominal: 179.9mm

<Highlander>
Nominal: 180.5mm

Tire Spec: P225/70R16 Tire Pressure: 30psi

Plastic Shield



Fuel Tank
<RX330>
Nominal: 199.9mm
Full Bounce: 108.7mm

<Highlander>
Nominal: 202.0mm
Full Bounce: 109.9mm

Exhaust Pipe
<RX330>
Nominal: 185.4mm

<Highlander>
Nominal: 187.4mm

Front Suspension Member
<RX330>
Nominal: 174.9mm

<Highlander>
Nominal: 179.9mm

<Highlander>
Tire Spec: P225/70R16 Tire Pressure: 30psi
<RX330>
Tire Spec: 235/55R18 Tire Pressure: 30psi
Suspension Type: Mechanical Coil Spring