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By Recall Management Division at 8:56 am, Nov 24, 2009

TOYOTA

TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.

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November 16, 2009

**09V-444
(5 Pages)**

Mr. Daniel C. Smith
Associate Administrator for Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: 2000 – 2003 MY Toyota Tundra Rear Cross Member Assembly Corrosion
Part 573, Defect Information Report

Dear Mr. Smith:

In accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 and 49 CFR Part 573, on behalf of Toyota Motor Corporation ["TMC"], we hereby submit the attached Defect Information Report concerning a voluntary safety recall of certain 2000 through 2003 Toyota Tundra vehicles to address an issue with corrosion of the rear cross member assembly. This recall is being conducted in the regions of the United States where road salts are frequently used.

Please note that while Toyota has not determined a defect exists in 2004 through 2006 MY Tundra vehicles, Toyota plans on initiating a field action in the near future to prevent future corrosion on those vehicles originally sold or currently registered in the affected region at no cost to the owner.

Should you have any questions about this report, please contact me at (202) 775-1707.

Sincerely,

TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.



Chris Santucci
Assistant Manager
Technical & Regulatory Affairs

DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT

1. Vehicle Manufacturer Name:
 Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Indiana, Inc. ["TMMI"]
 4000 South Tulip Tree Drive, Princeton, IN 47670-4000

Affiliated U.S. Sales Company
 Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Inc. ["TMS"]
 19001 South Western Avenue, Torrance, CA 90509

Component Containing Defect
 Rear Cross Member Assembly
 Dana Corporation
 Reading, PA

2. Identification of Affected Vehicles:
 Based on production records, we have determined the possible affected vehicle population as in the table below.

Make/ Car Line	Model Year	Manufac- turer	VIN		Production Period
			VDS	VIS	
Tundra	2000	TMMI	BN441*	S001001~S125840	
			BN481*	S001001~S001001	
			BT441*	S001001~S125901	
			BT481*	S001001~S125894	
			JN321*	S001001~S125878	
			KN421*	S001001~S123980	
			KN441*	S001001~S051314	
			KT441*	S001001~S125833	
			RN341*	S001001~S125859	
			RN381*	S001001~S001003	
			RT341*	S001001~S125904	
			RT381*	S001001~S125897	
Tundra	2001	TMMI	BN441*	S125937~S220312	1999/1/13~ 2003/9/13
			BT441*	S125905~S220327	
			BT481*	S064334~S220350	
			JN321*	S126112~S220343	
			KN441*	S064852~S064852	
			KT421*	S090565~S217964	
			KT441*	S125921~S220297	
			RN341*	S125909~S220341	
			RT341*	S125907~S220347	
			RT381*	S064333~S220345	

Tundra	2002	TMMI	BN441*	S220394~S332707
			BT441*	S219294~S332720
			BT481*	S219295~S332685
			JN321*	S220351~S332714
			KT421*	S220380~S328382
			KT441*	S220392~S332706
			RN341*	S220353~S332719
			RT341*	S220360~S332721
			RT381*	S220365~S332666
Tundra	2003	TMMI	BN441*	S332744~S434010
			BT441*	S316368~S439612
			BT481*	S306031~S439613
			JN321*	S332745~S436914
			KT421*	S332818~S414089
			KT441*	S330788~S439601
			RN341*	S307943~S436915
			RT341*	S306032~S439732
			RT381*	S308386~S439716

Note:

- (1) Only vehicles originally sold or currently registered in the following cold climate states with high road salt usage are affected: Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin and the District of Columbia. Only portions of the listed states may exhibit the cold climate and high road salt usage which can cause this condition. To simplify the administration of this campaign and avoid confusion, Toyota has elected to include the entire states listed above rather than a portion. Therefore contiguous states not identified above are not involved.
- (2) Although the involved vehicles are within the above VIN ranges, not all vehicles within these ranges were sold in the U.S.

3. Total Number of Vehicles Potentially Affected:

2000-2003 MY Tundra: Approximately 110,000 units.

4. Percentage of Vehicles Estimated to Actually Experience Malfunction:

Unknown

5. Description of Problem:

For vehicles operated in the cold climate regions of the United States where road salts are frequently used, excessive corrosion of the rear cross member may cause the separation of the spare tire stowed under the truck bed.

Eventually, excessive corrosion of the rear cross member may also affect the functionality of the rear brake line at the proportioning valve.

Owners of the affected vehicles can avoid the safety risks associated with spare tire separation by removing it from under the vehicle before driving. If placing the spare tire in the truck bed or other area of the vehicle, it should be secured when driving.

6. Chronology of Principal Events:

End of 2008 – Middle 2009

In late 2008, Toyota received a field technical report from the U.S. market which indicated the spare tire separated from the rear cross member of a 2000 MY Tundra. After receiving some similar field technical reports, Toyota conducted a field survey and confirmed that the rear cross member in some of the subject vehicles experienced excessive corrosion, especially at the mounting area of the spare tire carrier. Other vehicles did not experience excessive corrosion, even when operated in the areas where road salts are frequently used. In addition to the above, vehicles operated outside the areas where road salts are frequently used showed no excessive corrosion in the survey.

Based on the above, Toyota has tentatively concluded that the root cause is a combination of factors, including usage in areas where road salt is applied, inadequate vehicle maintenance (i.e., not following the recommendations in the Owner's Manual), the design of the rear cross member, and manufacturing issues. Toyota is continuing the investigation through a parts recovery and field survey effort. However, in consideration of the risk associated with the separation of the spare tire from the vehicle, Toyota decided to conduct a safety recall.

7. Description of Corrective Repair Action:

All known owners of the subject vehicles will be notified by first class mail to return their vehicles to a Toyota dealer for an initial inspection.

During this inspection, the rear cross member including the surrounding components such as, the brake line at the proportioning valve (which is mounted on the rear cross member assembly) will be also inspected.

Based on the inspection, one of the following actions will be taken, at no cost to the vehicle owner:

1. If there is no significant corrosion of the cross member assembly, the owner will be notified of that fact and told that he or she will subsequently be requested to bring the vehicle back to the dealership so that a corrosion-resistant compound can be applied to the rear cross member assembly when it is available.
2. If significant corrosion is detected such that the rear cross member assembly can no longer safely support the spare tire and parts are available, the cross member assembly will be replaced.
3. If significant corrosion is detected such that the rear cross member can no longer safely support the spare tire and parts are not available, a temporary solution, such as the removal of the spare tire and relocating it in the truck bed or other area, will be performed until replacement parts are available. The owner will be notified as soon as replacement parts are available.

4. In those relatively rare cases where the rear cross member is significantly corroded and can no longer safely support the spare tire, but the rear cross member assembly cannot be replaced due to excessive frame corrosion at the mounting location (e.g., if the side rails are too damaged), Toyota will develop an appropriate remedy for those vehicles.

In cases involving rear cross member replacement, the brake proportioning valve and rear brake lines will be inspected and replaced, if necessary. After the corrosion-resistant compound is available, a second mailing will be conducted notifying all owners and requesting them to return to the dealership to receive it at no cost.

Owners of 2000-2003 MY Tundra vehicles not covered by the recall will receive a notification including details on how to obtain an inspection if they desire. Toyota will perform the same inspection and repair for those vehicles at no cost as above.

Reimbursement Plan for pre-notification remedies for Toyota

The owner letter will instruct vehicle owners that have had the subject component and/or the rear brake proportioning valve/lines replaced for this condition prior to this campaign to seek reimbursement by mailing a copy of their repair order, proof-of-payment, and proof-of-ownership for reimbursement consideration.

8. Recall Schedule:

Toyota's mailing of the initial owner notification will commence December 11, 2009, with initial letters going to the oldest vehicles in the most severe areas of the affected region. The initial mailing will be completed in the middle of January 2010. The second mailing will be scheduled when the corrosion-resistant compound is available. Copies of the owner notification and dealer instructions will be submitted as soon as they are available.

9. Distributor/Dealer Notification Schedule:

Toyota's notifications to distributors/dealers will be sent in early December 2009.