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TOYOTA

TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.

WASHINGTON OFFICE

601 THIRTEENTH STREET, NW, SUITE 910 SOUTH, WASHINGTON, DC 20005

TEL: (202) 775-1700

FAX: (202) 463-8513

July 29, 2010

10V-346
(4 Pages)

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

Re: 2003 - 2007 MY Lexus LX470 Steering Shaft
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 Lexus LX vehicles to address an issue with the steering shaft.

Please note that the substantially similar Land Cruiser vehicles utilize a different construction for the steering shaft and are not included in this campaign. Please see Toyota's Foreign Recall Report (FRR) dated July 29, 2010 for more information.

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

Sincerely,

TOYOTA MOTOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.



Chris Santucci
Manager
Technical & Regulatory Affairs

DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT

1. Vehicle Manufacturer Name:

Toyota Motor Corporation ["TMC"]
1, Toyota-cho, Toyota-city, Aichi, 471-8571, Japan

Affiliated U.S. Sales Company

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

Component containing Defect

Steering shaft
JTEKT Corporation
15th Floor, Midland Square, 4-7-1 Meieki, Nakamura-ku, Nagoya, Aichi, 450-8515, Japan

2. Identification of Affected Vehicles:

Based on production records, we have determined the affected vehicle population as in the table below.

Make/ Car Line	Model Year	Manufac- turer	VIN		Production Period
			VDS	VIS	
Lexus/ LX470	2003- 2007	TMC	HT00W	33521286 – 74029735	June 13, 2002 – Aug 8, 2007

Note: Although the involved vehicles are within the above VIN range, not all vehicles in this range were sold in the U.S.

No other Toyota or Lexus vehicles sold in the United States use the same steering shaft construction.

3. Total Number of Vehicles Potentially Affected:

39,159

4. Percentage of Vehicles Estimated to Actually Experience Malfunction:

Unknown

5. Description of Problem:

In the steering system of the subject vehicles, the construction of the steering shaft is such that the snap ring on the shaft may disengage when the vehicle experiences an unusually severe impact to the front wheels (for example, striking a deep pothole in the roadway). If the snap ring becomes disengaged and the steering wheel is then repeatedly turned to the locked position, over time the steering shaft may become disconnected, which could result in a loss of steering control.

6. Chronology of Principal Events:

October 2009 – December 2009

Toyota received a field technical report from the German market which indicated that the vehicle did not turn when the steering wheel was being turned. The report described similar issues with two vehicles. One vehicle's odometer mileage was approximately 175,000 kilometers while the other was over 112,000 kilometers. The dealer found that the snap ring on the steering shaft was out of position and that the shaft was disconnected from the mating component of the steering system - the VGRS (Variable Gear Ratio Steering) actuator. Toyota confirmed what the dealer found from the returned shaft and that there was no abnormality on the shaft, other than the disconnection. There was no indication as to what caused the snap ring to become out of position or the steering shaft to become disengaged.

January 2010 – July 2010

Toyota received a field technical report from the Japan market which indicated a loss of steering control occurred when the driver tried to turn right at an intersection. The vehicle's odometer mileage was over 96,000 kilometers. Toyota confirmed from the dealer that the snap ring was out of position and investigated the recovered steering shaft from this vehicle. It was also found that the shaft was disconnected, and that there was no abnormality on the shaft other than the disconnection. Toyota also investigated the operating environment of this vehicle, and learned that the vehicle had been driven under harsh road conditions, but there was no indication of previous accident history. There was no indication what caused the snap ring to become out of position or the steering shaft to become disengaged. For this reason, Toyota initiated a field survey to collect more information about the vehicles.

In Toyota's field survey, it was found that the snap ring on the steering shaft was disengaged in some vehicles, but that the steering shaft was not disconnected. Toyota focused attention on the snap ring and conducted duplication tests. It was confirmed that running over a curb or driving into a deep pothole at a certain vehicle speeds caused the relative movement between the vehicle body and the frame to become large and could cause disengagement of the snap ring. Furthermore, it was confirmed that if the steering wheel is repeatedly turned to the locked position with the snap ring disengaged, the steering shaft may eventually become disconnected.

July 23, 2010

Toyota decided to conduct a voluntary safety recall of all vehicles within the affected range.

Due to the unique construction of the mechanical connection of the steering shaft in the VGRS actuator, this safety recall will only be conducted on LX470 and/or Land Cruiser

models equipped with VGRS in Japan, Canada, Australia, Europe and other countries. Land Cruiser models sold in the United States were not equipped with VGRS, and are therefore not included in this campaign. Please see Toyota's Foreign Recall Report dated July 29, 2010.

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 any Lexus dealer for the replacement of the snap ring with a newly designed one and the installation of an additional component which will prevent separation of the steering shaft. In addition, the thrust stopper will also be replaced with a newly designed one.

Reimbursement Plan for pre-notification remedies for Toyota

The owner letter will instruct vehicle owners who have had the steering shaft 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 owner notifications will commence in the middle of August and be completed in the end of September 2010

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 August 2010.