

TOYOTA13V-337
(5 pages)**Toyota Motor Engineering &
Manufacturing North America, Inc.**Vehicle Safety & Compliance
Liaison Office
Mail Code: S-104
19001 South Western Avenue
Torrance, CA 90501

August 7, 2013

Ms. Nancy Lummen Lewis
Associate Administrator for Enforcement
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Attn: Recall Management Division (NVS-215)
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: Certain Toyota Tacoma Seatbelt Assemblies
Part 573, Defect Information Report

Dear Ms. Lewis:

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 Toyota Tacoma vehicles to address an issue with the seatbelt assemblies.

Should you have any questions about this report, please contact me at (310) 468- 8555.

Sincerely,



Abbas Saadat
Vice President
Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing
North America, Inc.

Enclosures
Part 573, Defect Information Report

DEFECT INFORMATION REPORT

1. Vehicle Manufacturer Name:

Toyota Motor Manufacturing California, Inc. [“TMMCA”]
45500 Fremont Blvd., Fremont, CA 94538

Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Texas, Inc. [“TMMTX”]
1 Lone Star Pass, San Antonio, Texas 78264-3413

Fabricating Manufacturer (Only TMMCA's Tacoma)

New United Motor Manufacturing, Inc. [“NUMMI”]
45500 Fremont Blvd., Fremont, CA, 94538

Affiliated U.S. Sales Company

Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Inc. [“TMS”]
19001 South Western Avenue, Torrance, CA 90501

Manufacturer of Seatbelt Assembly:

TRQSS, Inc.
255 Patillo Road, R.R.#1 Tecumseh, Ontario, N8N 2L9 Canada
Telephone: 519-973-7400
Country of Origin: Canada

2. Identification of Involved Vehicles:

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

Make/ Car Line	Model Year	Manufac- turer	VIN		Production Period
			VDS	VIS	
Toyota/ Tacoma	2005 - 2010	NUMMI	T****N, U****N	5Z001007 – AZ749134	September 14, 2004 through March 29, 2010
	2011	TMMTX		BX001005 – BX022657	July 1, 2010 through September 7, 2011

Note: Only Tacoma Access Cab models are involved, because the seatbelt assembly is mounted in a unique location compared to other Tacoma models (Regular Cab and Double Cab). No other Toyota models are involved.

3. Total Number of Vehicles Involved:

342,451 units

4. Percentage of Vehicles Estimated to Actually Contain the Defect:

Unknown

5. Description of Problem:

The seat belt assemblies for the driver and front passenger are mounted inside the access doors (rear doors) of the subject vehicles. The screws that attach the seat belt pre-tensioner to the seat belt retractor within the seat belt assembly can become loose over time due to repeatedly and forcefully closing the access door. If the screws loosen completely, the seat belt pre-tensioner and the retractor spring cover could detach from the seat belt retractor, which can affect retractor and pre-tensioner performance and increase the risk of injury to an occupant in the event of a crash.

6. Chronology of Principal Events:

November 2011 - December 2012

Toyota received one field technical report from the U.S. market in November 2011 and one in February 2012. Those parts could not be recovered. Toyota investigated the manufacturing history of these vehicles and found no abnormalities. These appeared to be isolated incidents. Toyota continued to monitor the field for additional reports.

January 2013 – July 2013

Toyota received a field technical report from the Canadian market in January 2013, and one from the U.S. market in February 2013. The parts were recovered and investigated by the supplier. The investigation indicated that the four screws that fasten the pre-tensioner to the retractor were completely unthreaded. The pre-tensioner and the retractor spring cover were detached from the retractor. The shape and dimensions of the pre-tensioner and retractor components were verified to meet specifications. Witness marks from the screws were observed to be present on the four seating surfaces of the pre-tensioner housing.

Toyota conducted an investigation into the manufacturing process of the seat belt assembly. The process for tightening the four pre-tensioner screws into the retractor was reviewed and determined to be within specification. Manufacturing inspection records were reviewed and

indicated that the screws were torqued to specification.

Toyota conducted testing through door cycling of the Access Cab model (opening and closing the access door) and vibration of the seatbelt assembly to determine if loosening of the pre-tensioner screws or detachment of the pre-tensioner itself could occur, but this could not be duplicated.

Toyota also investigated impact force to the seat belt assembly generated by closing the access door in the Access Cab model, and compared it to the impact forces associated with door closing on Regular Cab (2-door) and Double Cab (4-door) models. It was determined that the seat belt assembly mounted inside the access door for the Access Cab Tacoma is subjected to higher impact forces when the access door is forcefully closed compared to the other cab types in which the seat belt assembly is mounted inside the B-pillar. Toyota conducted testing with repeated forceful closing of the access door but still could not re-create loosening of the pre-tensioner screws or detachment of the pre-tensioner.

Toyota continued to investigate other possible causes of loosening and potential detachment of the seatbelt pre-tensioner and retractor spring cover from the retractor. After further analysis and investigation, Toyota determined that thermal creep in the zinc die-casting component of the pre-tensioner could contribute to reduced axial tension in three of the pre-tensioner screws. Toyota conducted testing and determined that, under high temperatures, thermal creep could lead to reduced torque of these pre-tensioner screws over time.

Toyota conducted further testing using seatbelt assembly components subjected to thermal creep along with repeated and forceful closing of the access door in the Access Cab model. Toyota determined that three of the pre-tensioner screws can loosen over time and the tightening torque of the other screw can be subsequently reduced as a result. If all four pre-tensioner screws loosen completely, the pre-tensioner and retractor spring cover could detach from the seat belt retractor in the Access Cab model. The locking function of the front seat belt assembly remains operational even if the retractor spring cover becomes detached. For Regular Cab and Double Cab models, it was confirmed that the pre-tensioner screws do not loosen under conditions of thermal creep and repeated, forceful closing of doors.

July 31, 2013

Toyota decided to conduct a voluntary safety recall campaign on the subject vehicles.

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 inspection of the seatbelt assembly. Based on the inspection, the seatbelt assembly will be replaced or new pre-tensioner screws will be installed with thread-locking sealant and a retractor spring cover with stopper ribs to prevent loosening of the screws.

Reimbursement Plan for pre-notification remedies

The owner letter will instruct vehicle owners who have paid to have this condition remedied prior to this campaign to seek reimbursement pursuant to Toyota's General Reimbursement Plan.

8. Recall Schedule:

TBD

9. Distributor/Dealer Notification Schedule:

TBD