
CENTER FOR AUTO SAFETY

1825 CONNECTICUT AVENUE NW SUITE 330 WASHINGTON DC 20009-5708
202-328-7700 ◆ www.autosafety.org

April 11, 2013

VIA FAX AND FIRST CLASS MAIL

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
Executive Secretariat
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
West Building
Washington, DC 20590

FOIA REQUEST

Dear FOIA Officer:

The Center for Auto Safety (“CAS”) files this request pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”). CAS is a nationwide nonprofit consumer advocacy organization established in 1970 by Consumers Union and Ralph Nader. CAS works toward improved safety, environmental responsibility, and fair dealing in the automotive industry and the marketplace.

CAS seeks the following information:

All records related to any investigations, meetings, and communications (via telephone, email, WebEx, or in person) involving NHTSA and Honda, the occurrence of which is indicated by the attached Part 573 for NHTSA Recall # 13V-132.

CAS believes that the requested records are likely to be located within the Office of Defects Investigation, the Office of Chief Counsel, and the Office of the Administrator. These documents may include electronic as well as paper records. Also, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A) and U.S. Department of Transportation regulations set forth at 49 C.F.R. § 7.44, CAS requests, and NHTSA should grant, a waiver and/or reduction of fees for processing this FOIA request, including search, review, and duplication charges, for the reasons given below.

49 C.F.R. § 7.44(a) and (c) provide that a fee is not to be charged for the first two hours of search time or the duplication of the first 100 pages, “unless the records are requested for commercial use.” In addition, 49 C.F.R. § 7.44(d) states that review fees for determining whether the requested records are exempt from mandatory disclosure may not be charged when records are not requested for a commercial use. The above information request is of a very limited and highly specific nature, and CAS believes that these records have no commercial value whatsoever. Even if the requested records had

some potential commercial value, CAS has no commercial purpose or interest in requesting them. See Attachment A. Therefore, NHTSA should fully apply the subsection (a), (c) and (d) allowances to this request.

Should NHTSA deny the waiver of fees, CAS asks that the Agency to obtain authorization from CAS before delivery of any materials. If the agency refuses access to any of the requested records, please describe the materials it wishes to withhold and specify the statutory justifications for the refusal. Also, please state separately NHTSA's reasons for failing to invoke its discretionary powers to release the materials in the public interest.

If you have any questions about the scope of this request, or if you believe there are any ambiguities in the way CAS has framed its request, please let me know as soon as possible.

CAS looks forward to a response within twenty working days, as required under the FOIA, and will interpret any delay in response as a denial of this request. Thank you for your very prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MB', is written over the typed name.

Michael Brooks
Staff Attorney

Attachment(s): 2



HONDA

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

April 10, 2013

Ms. Nancy Lewis
Associate Administrator for Enforcement
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADMINISTRATION
Attn: Recall Management Division (NVS-215)
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

**Re: Recall Notification
Honda: 2001-2003 Civic, 2002-2003 CR-V and 2002 Odyssey
Passenger Airbag Inflator**

Dear Ms. Lewis:

On April 4, 2013 Honda Motor Co., Ltd. (HMC) determined that a potential defect relating to motor vehicle safety exists in the passenger airbag inflator of certain 2001-2003 model year Honda Civic, 2002-2003 model year Honda CR-V, and 2002 model year Honda Odyssey automobiles, and is providing notification to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573 Defect and Noncompliance Reports.

573.6(c)(1)

Name of manufacturer: Honda Motor Co., Ltd. (HMC)
Honda of America Mfg., Inc. (HAM)
Honda of Canada Mfg. (HCM)
Honda of the UK Mfg. Ltd. (HUM)
Honda Mfg. of Alabama, LLC (HMA)

Manufacturer's agent: Jay Joseph
American Honda Motor Co., Inc. (AHM)
1919 Torrance Blvd.
Torrance, CA 90501-2746

573.6(c)(2)

Identification of potentially affected vehicles:
See ATTACHMENT 1

Description of the basis for the determination of the recall population:
The recall population was determined based on manufacturing records. The VIN range reflects all possible vehicles that could potentially experience the problem.

573.6(c)(2)(iv)

Identification of affected component:

Component: Front Passenger Airbag Inflator
Country of Origin: U.S.A.
Manufacturer: T.K. Holdings, Inc.
Contact Name: Kazuo Higuchi
Address: 888 16th Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20006
Telephone: (202) 729-6332

573.6(c)(3)

Total number of potentially affected vehicles: 561,422

573.6(c)(4)

Percentage of affected vehicles that contain the defect: Unknown

573.6(c)(5)

Defect description:

In certain vehicles, the passenger's (frontal) airbag inflator could produce excessive internal pressure. If an affected airbag deploys, the increased internal pressure may cause the inflator to rupture. In the event of an inflator rupture, metal fragments could be propelled upward toward the windshield, or downward toward the front passenger's foot well, potentially causing injury to a vehicle occupant.

573.6(c)(6)

Chronology:

- October 20, 2011 Alleged rupture of a passenger airbag inflator occurred in Puerto Rico.
- February 3, 2012 The vehicle from Puerto Rico was received by Honda for analysis. Investigation of the vehicle confirmed a ruptured passenger airbag inflator.
- March 14, 2012 Using the ongoing driver's airbag recall, Honda proposed to NHTSA the collection of healthy passenger airbag modules to study the condition. NHTSA did not object.
- November 21, 2012 Investigation of healthy parts indicated abnormal combustion was possible, though the cause could not be determined at that time.
- February 8, 2013 A meeting was held between NHTSA and Honda to discuss the ongoing investigation.

March 6, 2013 A recreation of propellant production using the same methods as were used during 2001-2002 production periods indicated that it was possible for propellant produced during 2001-2002 to be manufactured out of specification without the manufacturing processes correctly identifying and removing the out of specification propellant.

Separately, Honda was informed by the supplier of another potential concern related to airbag inflator production that could affect the performance of these airbag modules.

April 4, 2013 Honda completed the investigation and determined that a safety related defect exists and decided to conduct a recall.

As of April 4, 2013 Honda has not received any warranty claims, but has received one field report regarding a crash where the passenger airbag inflator ruptured upon deployment, without report of injury from the inflator.

573.6(c)(8)(i)

Program for remedying the defect:

The owners of all affected vehicles will be contacted by mail and asked to take their vehicle to a Honda automobile dealer. The dealer will replace the passenger airbag inflator, free of charge.

573.6(c)(8)(ii)

The estimated date to e-mail preliminary notification to dealers: April 11, 2013

The estimated date to provide service bulletin to dealers: April 11, 2013

The estimated date to begin sending notifications to owners: May 11, 2013

The estimated date of completion of the notification: July 2013

573.6(c)(9)

Representative copies of all notices, bulletins and other communications:

A copy of the dealer service bulletin, the final customer notification letter and other dealer communication will be submitted to your office as soon as possible.

573.6(c)(10)

Proposed owner notification letter submission:

A draft of the owner notification letter will be submitted to your office as soon as possible.

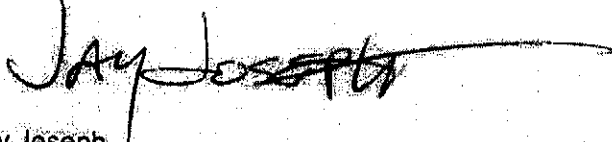
573.6(c)(11)

Manufacturer's campaign number:

S95

Sincerely,

AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR CO., INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jay Joseph". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jay Joseph
Senior Manager
Product Regulatory Office

JWJ:cm

Attachment 1

Honda Civic 2 Door	Certain 2001 model year	1HGEM22971L000001 4/13/2000	1HGEM21211L125029 9/10/2001
	Certain 2002 model year	1HGEM21392L000001 6/5/2001	1HGEM22042L110829 9/10/2002
	Certain 2003 model year	1HGEM22093L000280 9/12/2002	1HGEM21933L052262 4/10/2003

Honda Civic 4 Door	Certain 2001 model year	1HGEN26481L000001 6/14/2000	1HGEN26451L000803 7/26/2001
		1HGES16231L000011 3/30/2000	1HGES16561L078373 8/27/2001
		2HGES165X1H500108 8/29/2000	2HGES16531H620493 8/30/2001
		JHMES152X1S000012 8/1/2000	JHMES16561S012585 7/18/2001
		1HGES26791L000001 3/21/2000	1HGES26761L078073 8/27/2001
		2HGES267X1H500049 8/28/2000	2HGES26701H619891 8/29/2001
		JHMES267X1S000009 7/26/2000	JHMES26791S006318 7/16/2001
	Certain 2002 model year	1HGEN265X2L000001 6/21/2001	1HGEN26582L000241 12/19/2001
		1HGES15672L000003 6/21/2001	1HGES16592L082435 8/29/2002
		2HGES16592H500005 8/23/2001	2HGES16592H614005 9/4/2002
		JHMES16582S000004 8/8/2001	JHMES16582S006515 3/13/2002
		1HGES25812L000005 6/21/2001	1HGES25842L082859 9/3/2002
		2HGES25732H500395 8/30/2001	2HGES26772H613412 9/3/2002
		JHMES26752S000002 8/28/2001	JHMES26762S004141 2/28/2002
	Certain 2003 model year	1HGES15513L000040 8/22/2002	1HGES16533L018635 1/17/2003
		2HGES16553H500164 9/4/2002	2HGES16573H567526 4/3/2003
		JHMES16503S000645 8/27/2002	JHMES16503S002086 11/29/2002
		1HGES267X3L001807 9/11/2002	1HGES26703L018342 1/16/2003
		2HGES268X3H500886 9/6/2002	2HGES26783H607152 7/17/2003
		JHMES26763S000656 11/28/2002	JHMES26793S000750 11/29/2002

Honda Civic 4 Door	Certain 2003 model year (continued)	JHMES95633S000017 3/5/2002	JHMES96613S024203 4/18/2003
Honda CR-V	Certain 2002 model year	JHLRD68502C000003 6/13/2001	JHLRD68472C026606 9/7/2002
		JHLRD78412C000007 5/11/2001	JHLRD78822C095311 9/16/2002
		SHSRD68402U000115 4/8/2002	SHSRD68432U001680 7/23/2002
		SHSRD78822U000111 2/19/2002	SHSRD78482U011000 8/30/2002
	Certain 2003 model year	JHLRD68493C000722 9/25/2002	JHLRD68463C012231 5/12/2003
		JHLRD77853C000002 9/10/2002	JHLRD78423C032255 5/12/2003
		SHSRD68413U100113 10/1/2002	SHSRD68413U106848 5/21/2003
		SHSRD78883U100134 9/30/2002	SHSRD78833U160077 9/1/2003
Honda Odyssey	Certain 2002 model year	2HKRL18612H500039 6/19/2001	2HKRL18672H590930 8/20/2002
		5FNRL18672B000062 10/9/2001	5FNRL18002B057926 8/22/2002