

November 1, 2010

VIA E-MAIL & OVERNIGHT MAIL

Sean Kane
Safety Research & Strategies, Inc.
340 Anawan St., Ste. 200
Rehoboth, MA 02769

Re: Request for correction of inaccurate statement.

Dear Mr. Kane:

I write on behalf of Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. (“Toyota”) to inform you and your company, Safety Research & Strategies, Inc., of an inaccurate statement on the website www.safetyresearch.com relating to Toyota and to request its removal and a correction. We do not agree with, and dispute the accuracy of, many of the items you have on your website. However, your most recent post, cutting and pasting from the recent MDL filing, needs to be remedied immediately. As other news organizations, including the Associated Press, have modified their stories, we ask that you modify your post to reflect the actual facts surrounding the statement.

As of today, the website www.safetyresearch.net contained a post entitled “Toyota’s Quiet Buybacks Speak Up” dated October 28, 2010.¹ The post purports to provide a few “tidbits” from an amended complaint recently filed against Toyota in multidistrict litigation related to allegations of sudden acceleration. The relevant portion of the post is as follows:

Here’s a May 2007 note from a technical supervisor:

“(I) Have recently purchased a 2006 Avalon LTD and have experienced the hesitation problem. The situation is dangerous . . . not so much the hesitation as the lunge after the hesitation. Toyota had better get going quick as I predict this will result in numerous accidents and possible deaths. I have talked with my service manager and he said, “they all do it.”

Regards,
Mike
Mike Robinson
Technical Supervisor, Quality Assurance Powertrain Group
Toyota/Lexus Product Quality & Service Support

This information appears to be taken from portions of paragraph 208 of the amended complaint. However, as presented to readers of your website, the words in quotation are attributed to Mike Robinson, a Toyota employee. Indeed, the commentary immediately following the entry above clearly suggests that the referenced materials support the conclusion that “Toyota technicians were witnessing and documenting SUA events.”

In fact, Mr. Robinson of Toyota did not make the statement attributed to him by your website. Rather, as described in both the amended complaint and the e-mail in question,² Mr. Robinson was simply forwarding collected consumer complaints from various sources. As is clear from the original e-mail, the quote that your website has attributed to Mr. Robinson was in fact a post by an unidentified individual on edmunds.com.³

The truth is that Mr. Robinson, a Toyota employee, had collected and was forwarding customer complaints for evaluation—as one would expect a diligent company to do. However, the post on your website incorrectly represents that the words of a poster on edmunds.com are the words of Mr. Robinson, which creates the false impression that a Toyota Technical Supervisor had raised the concerns and was of the view that a defect exists in the Electronic Throttle Control System in Toyota vehicles.

An Associated Press story published on Thursday, October 29, 2010, contained a similarly inaccurate statement, but, upon being contacted by Toyota, the AP story was modified to reflect that Mr. Robinson was passing on the comments of a third party, not speaking for himself. The AP story now available on the internet states that Robinson “was relating the customer’s comments,” and further notes that “. . . the customer went on to say”

Other news organizations have also clarified (if their initial story had not done so) that the quote posted on your website was not a statement of Mr. Robinson, but of a third party. I request that you do the same and confirm that you have done so. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mike Michels
Vice President, Communications

Attachments

¹ A copy of the post in question is attached.

² A copy of the email in question is attached.

³ The original post on [www.edmunds.com](http://townhall-talk.edmunds.com/direct/view/.ef2150b/12326#MSG12326) is still available online at: <http://townhall-talk.edmunds.com/direct/view/.ef2150b/12326#MSG12326>.