**Toyota fined for accelerator pedal sticking, April 5, 2010**

Suzanne Deffree - April 05, 2019

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) announced a $16.375 million fine in April 2010 on Toyota for what it described as the company’s failure to notify the government in a timely manner about potential problems with its accelerator pedals.

The NHTSA believed that Toyota did not properly handle three separate but related recall issues that began at the end of 2009 and involved sticking of the accelerator pedal causing unintended acceleration. The recalls impacted popular lines Corolla and Camry.

Toyota believed, as many did, the problem had to do with the electronics involved in acceleration and braking, including the vehicles’ embedded software, brake-by-wire system, and engine controller, but in February 2011, the NHTSA, in collaboration with NASA, released findings from an investigation that found no electronic defect in Toyota vehicles that would have caused the incidents. Indeed, driver error or pedal misapplication were often found responsible. The report stated: “Our conclusion is Toyota’s problems were mechanical, not electrical.” This included sticking accelerator pedals and pedals caught under floor mats.

On December 26, 2012, Toyota announced a settlement agreement worth more than $1 billion to end a lawsuit involving unintended acceleration in some of its vehicles. In total, Toyota recalled...
approximately 2.3 million cars.

Although Toyota was taken to task in this instance, such mechanical issues are not exclusive to the automobile brand. In December 2009, Consumer Reports stated that based on its independent study of 2008 model year NHTSA data for sudden acceleration among Toyota, Ford, Chrysler, GM, Honda, and Nissan, each of these major car manufacturers was affected by such issues. The organization said that the media publicity around Toyota may have led to an increase in complaints for 2008 models.

In 2013, an Oklahoma court ruled against Toyota after a fatal unintended acceleration incident. The case brought to light further issues with Toyota's firmware. The company agreed to pay $1.2 billion to avoid prosecution for covering up the safety problems in 2014.

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