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Date: 6 March 2007
Our Ref: **F0000674**

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

I refer to your e-mail of 20 February 2007, and my subsequent acknowledgement of 21 February 2007, concerning your request for answers to several questions relating to the bonnet catch mechanism for Renault Clio's, manufactured between 1998 and 2002. Please see below for responses to these questions.

1. I would like to know whether VOSA have tested the bonnet catch mechanism of any Renault Clio's manufactured between 1998 and 2002, to see whether they are susceptible to opening when the car is in motion?

Yes.

2. If the answer to the above if yes, how many have VOSA tested and what were the findings?

Seven undamaged vehicles selected at random and two vehicles where the bonnet opened inadvertently.

3. In relation to the above, can you state the age and model of each car you have tested.

Clio II with ages: 2004, 2002, 2002, 2002, 2000, 1999, 1999, 1999, 1998.

4. Were these cars random Renault Clios or cars that had experienced this fault directly?

See the answer to question 2.

5. Have VOSA reported their findings to Renault directly?

Yes.

6. What has Renault's response been to your findings?

VOSA's findings concur with theirs, that there is no evidence of a design or construction deficiency.

7. When was your latest correspondence with Renault and what did they say?

See response to question 10.

8. We understand you did random tests on three unprepared circa 1998/99 models from a local dealer. When were these tests performed and what were your findings?

28 April 2006. No faults found.

9. Are you continuing to monitor this situation?

Yes, VOSA engineers are joining Renault engineers on inspections of vehicles where the bonnet has opened inadvertently.

10. I would be interested in any information held by your organisation regarding my request. I understand that I do not have to specify particular files or documents and that it is the department's responsibility to provide the information I require.

Please find attached a copy of a report completed by * * * * *, Vehicle Safety Branch, dated 28 April 2006.

This response is also in answer to the e-mail sent to ***** , VOSA Communications Officer, by your colleague ***** , on 26 February 2007. In her correspondence * * * * * requested similar information, in addition to an answer to the following question:

- Q. I have been informed that every European country must report to all the other countries any fault or dysfunction that may have been observed on a vehicle. Therefore, please can you tell me whether any fault has been reported by any other European vehicle inspectorate on the Renault Clio and their bonnet catch.

- A. It is not correct that every European country must report to all the other countries any fault or dysfunction that may have been observed on a vehicle. It is a requirement that a producer informs the relevant Member State Enforcement Authority if that producer knows that they have placed on the market a product which is unsafe.

In the case of Renault Clio bonnet catches neither the producer or VOSA (the UK Enforcement Authority) have evidence to indicate the product is unsafe by way of design or construction deficiency. VOSA is not aware of any reports from any other member state.

I trust this information is helpful. If you have any queries about the information you have received, please contact me, and I will be happy to assist you. My contact details are given at the head of this letter.

If you are unhappy with the information supplied, you may ask for an internal review. To request an internal review, please write to:

VOSA Corporate Office,
Berkeley House,
Croydon Street,
Bristol,
BS5 0DA

or email vosa.corporateoffice@vosa.gsi.gov.uk

giving the reasons for your dissatisfaction. It will help us if you quote the reference number for your case.

If you do not agree with the outcome of the internal review, you may lodge an appeal with the Information Commissioner (www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk). The Information Commissioner is an independent official appointed by the Crown to oversee the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

The Information Commissioner can consider complaints about any aspect of the way in which requests for information have been handled. Please note: the Information Commissioner would be unlikely to consider your complaint if you have not first requested an internal review.

You can write to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House,
Water Lane,
Wilmslow,
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us, quoting reference **F000674**.

Yours sincerely

VOSA Information Access