

Consumers' guide to vehicle safety recalls



GUIDE

Who this guide is aimed at

Anyone who may be affected by a safety recall on an automotive product or any purchaser of a used vehicle/product who wants to know if it has outstanding safety recalls.

Introduction to the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA)

VOSA is an executive agency of the Department for Transport.

VOSA provides a range of licensing, testing and enforcement services with the aim of improving the roadworthiness standards of vehicles, ensuring the compliance of operators and drivers with road traffic legislation and supporting the independent Traffic Commissioners.

VOSA achieves this through a variety of means such as annual tests, targeted checks and enforcement activity and through the licensing of drivers of large goods and passenger carrying vehicles, as well as operator licensing.

Vehicle Safety Branch

VOSA is the Competent Authority for automotive safety issues in the UK and it has a specific team, the Vehicle Safety Branch (VSB), which is responsible for this work. If you have any queries about safety defects or recalls, you can contact VSB. Contact details for the team can be found at the end of this guide.

VSB looks at issues of design or construction and works to two Codes of Practice (details in the next section). They will request that the manufacturer, producer or supplier starts an enquiry if there is evidence that a design and construction defect exists which is present in a significant number of vehicles sold for use in the UK. This will be monitored by VSB.

VSB looks at the wider picture to identify safety issues that may be present in a large number of products. **Please note that VOSA is unable to assist in any claim for reimbursement of repair costs or any other form of compensation.**

VSB is responsible for the registration and monitoring of the UK Safety Recall Scheme.

Codes of Practice

Vehicle Safety Branch works to two Codes of Practice. These are:

- ▶ Code of Practice on vehicle safety defects - this covers passenger cars, commercial vehicles, passenger carrying vehicles, two and three wheeled motorcycles, quadricycles, commercial trailers, agricultural equipment, motor homes/caravans, trailer caravans, private trailers, components fitted as original equipment, parts and accessories supplied to the automotive market

- ▶ Code of Practice for safety defects on tyres, wheels and associated parts in the vehicle aftermarket

What is the safety recall scheme?

The safety recall scheme is the means by which manufacturers, producers and suppliers in the automotive sector recall products that may have a safety defect, as defined by the Codes of Practice.

What products does it cover?

VSB looks at a large range of products. These include;

- ▶ cars
- ▶ motorcycles, quadricycles or tricycles
- ▶ caravans, motor caravans or horse boxes
- ▶ agricultural equipment
- ▶ trucks
- ▶ coaches, buses or minibuses
- ▶ child car seats
- ▶ restraint systems
- ▶ component/ aftermarket parts
- ▶ tyres

What is a safety recall?

A defect that meets the criteria for a safety defect under one of the two Codes of Practice (detailed above).

If a safety defect is confirmed the manufacturer, producer or supplier will begin a recall and contact customers requesting the return of the product for repair or replacement.

A product that is repaired or replaced under a safety recall will be done so free of charge.

What happens in a safety recall?

All products of any make or model may have the potential to be affected by a safety recall.

Once a safety recall is registered, the manufacturer, producer or supplier must make every effort to notify the customers whose product is affected.

The notification the manufacturer will send you will include;

- ▶ details of the issue
- ▶ what the repair involves
- ▶ how long it may take
- ▶ what the customer needs to do
- ▶ contact details should a customer have any further questions

Please read this carefully and comply with the instructions given by the manufacturer/producer or supplier.

If a customer does not take action the manufacturer/producer or supplier will write again.

Please act swiftly and take action to enable the work to be undertaken.

What actions does a customer need to take?

Respond to the manufacturer, producer or suppliers safety recall notices quickly.

Other manufacturer, producer or supplier actions that are not related to safety recalls may occur from time to time. These actions may be described in various ways but are not normally safety related issues. Here are some of the standard descriptions for these actions;

- ▶ Service campaign
- ▶ Customer satisfaction programme
- ▶ Technical upgrade
- ▶ Quality improvement campaign

These are manufacturer, producer or supplier actions that are not monitored or reported to VSB. They are normally free of charge but may have a time limit on them.

How to check if a vehicle is subject to recall

VOSA has a database which shows all vehicles that are subject to a safety recall. Please check www.vosa.gov.uk/onlineservices/vehiclerecalls. It will indicate the make, model, build dates and VIN ranges that may be affected. Not all vehicles within the range are affected.

Please contact the vehicle manufacturer, producer or supplier's official dealership or call the customer service team (details of which will be in the handbook). Customers can request that the dealership confirm if the vehicle has any outstanding safety recalls. They will normally ask for the vehicle identification number (VIN) which is on the vehicle registration document.

When purchasing a used vehicle, customers should check if there are any outstanding safety recalls on the vehicle. This can be done easily by contacting the manufacturer, producer or suppliers local representatives.

Contact details

Vehicle and Operator Services Agency
Vehicle Safety Branch
Berkeley House
Croydon Street
Bristol
BS5 ODA

Email: VSB@vosa.gov.uk

VOSA website: www.dft.gov.uk/vosa

Visit our websites:

for commercial customers
www.businesslink.gov.uk/transport

for private motorists
www.direct.gov.uk

for corporate information
www.dft.gov.uk/vosa

Contact us:

E-mail
enquiries@vosa.gov.uk

National Number
0300 123 9000*

Monday to Friday - 7.30am until 6.00pm
(normal working hours)

