



# LOTUS

Lotus Cars USA, Inc.

12 April 2001

**Via Express Mail and Certified Mail**

Office of Defect Investigations  
National Highway Traffic  
Safety Administration  
400 7th St. SW  
Washington DC 20590

Dear Sir or Madam:

In accordance with 49 USC 30118 and 49 CFR Part 573, this is a report under 49 CFR 573.5 informing you that Lotus Cars (LOTUS) has determined that a noncompliance may exist in some Lotus Esprit vehicles manufactured by Lotus Cars and sold in the United States.

Pursuant to 49 CFR 573.5(c), LOTUS provides the following information (per 49 CFR 573.5(b), new and/or updated information will be submitted as it is available):

1. **Manufacturer's name:** Lotus Cars, Hethel, Norwich, Great Britain.  
Contact person - Arnold Johnson, CEO Lotus Cars USA. 1-770 822 4566

**Agent under 49 USC 30164:** Arnold Johnson at 500 Marathon Parkway, Lawrenceville, GA 30045.

2. **Identification of vehicles potentially containing the noncompliance:** MY 1997 through 2001 Lotus Esprit vehicles that could have had the passenger seat belt replaced. VIN numbers: See attached. Vehicle Mfg. Dates are from September 1995 through March 2001.

**Description of basis of determination of recall population:** LOTUS has determined that certain replacement USA passenger seat belt assemblies have been sold that do not comply with FMVSS 208 S 7.1.1.5 in that they do not have a lap portion that is lockable so as to secure a child safety seat. LOTUS determined that the above US VIN numbers are affected in



that they are the VINs that could use the affected part. Note -- the seat belts fitted to all potentially affected cars as original equipment were correct and did meet S 7.1.1.5

3. **Total number of US vehicles potentially containing the defect:** The number of Esprit vehicles sold in the USA that could use the replacement part identified as incorrect totals 520.
4. **The percentage of vehicles specified in #3 above estimated to contain the defect:** 5% (i.e. about 25 cars)
5. **Description of the defect:** LOTUS has determined that certain replacement USA passenger seat belt assemblies have been sold that do not comply with FMVSS 208 S 7.1.1.5 in that they do not have a lap portion that is lockable so as to secure a child safety seat. Note -- the seat belts fitted to all potentially affected cars as original equipment were correct and did meet S 7.1.1.5
6. **Data on which determination of defect was made:** Information from factory that the USA replacement passenger seat belt for the affected VIN numbers was incorrect and that the replacement part in fact did not comply with FMVSS 208 S7.1.1.5.
7. **N/A.**
8. **Description of program for remedying the defect:** LOTUS will conduct a recall in order to:
  - Seek to ascertain which Esprit vehicles in fact used the improper replacement seat belt;
  - Having any vehicles so identified brought to a Lotus dealer for the correct seat belt to be installed free of charge.

Dealers are being notified (see attached). LOTUS will contact the owners to effect the recall.

**Estimated date on which LOTUS will begin sending notifications to owners:** Owners letters will be mailed by May 15, 2001. Dealers will be sent the attached Bulletin on or before April 30, 2001.

**Estimated date on which LOTUS will complete such notification:**  
May 15, 2001.



9. **Copies of all notices, bulletins, and other communications that relate to the noncompliance and sent to more than one dealer or purchaser.  
The draft dealer letter is attached.**
10. **Draft Owner notification letter is attached.**
11. **Manufacturer's campaign number: LOTUS will use the number assigned by NHTSA.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arnold Johnson", is written over the typed name.

Arnold Johnson  
CEO  
Lotus Cars USA, Inc.



# LOTUS

Lotus Cars USA, Inc.

Date: April 2, 2001

**CERTIFIED MAIL**  
**RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED**

Owner Name  
Address line 1  
Address line 2  
City, State  
Country Zip

**RE: Passenger Side Safety Belt / Replacement part for Lotus Esprit V-8**

Dear Lotus Owner:

This notice is sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act. Lotus Cars Ltd. has decided that a defect that relates to motor vehicle safety may exist in Lotus Esprit vehicles built after September 1995 which have had the passenger safety belt assembly replaced.

Any passenger-side seatbelt assemblies installed as a service replacement part (warranty or customer pay) after September 1995 may be the incorrect part. Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208 requires that any front seat passenger belt be of the ratcheting type, appropriate to secure a forward facing child seat.

Due to replacement part numbering confusion at the Lotus factory, incorrect passenger-side belts may have been installed in certain vehicles having the passenger-side seat belt replaced. If an incorrect belt was installed, the seat belt will not be capable of securing a child seat, and there is the risk of death or serious injury to a child placed in such an improperly secured child seat.

Note this recall only affects seat belts that were replaced after a vehicle left the Lotus factory, and such replacement could have been done by the vehicle's current owner, or a prior owner, including a dealer while he had the vehicle in stock as a new or used car.

To check the ratcheting operation of the belt, pull the belt out to its fullest extent before latching. Let the belt retract, and as the retract mechanism operates, a ratcheting sound can be heard, and the belt reel mechanism becomes locked with each ratchet so as to allow retraction only. After the belt is allowed to fully retract, it will revert to normal operation.



The correct part number for a USA Esprit passenger safety belt is A082V6222F. The cloth tag near the lower mounting point beside the seat can easily identify this belt.

**CONFORMS TO  
UNITED STATES  
FEDERAL STANDARD  
FMVSS209  
MODEL 530055800A**

if a vehicle has a passenger side belt with a red tag and/or is labeled as MODEL 530055800A, the incorrect belt has been installed, and must be replaced.

Lotus is taking the following measures to remedy the defect:

- Lotus is remedying the defect without charge.
- The defect is being remedied by your bringing your car to a Lotus dealer for inspection and, if necessary, replacement of the passenger side seat belt at no charge.
- The earliest date that the dealer will do the work will be upon your receipt of this letter. Call your dealer for an appointment. Your dealer will need approximately 60 minutes to inspect and replace the seat belt assembly.

Please note that you may submit a complaint to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh St. S.W. Washington, DC 205980, or you may call the toll free Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888- 327-4236, if you believe that:

- Lotus or your dealer has failed to or is unable to remedy the defect without charge.
- Lotus or your dealer has failed to or is unable to remedy the defect without charge within a reasonable time, which is not longer than 60 days after you tender the vehicle to the dealer.

If you have any questions, please contact Arnold Johnson, CEO at 1-800-245-6687.

Sincerely,

Lotus Cars USA, Inc.

Arnold A. Johnson  
CEO

## **SAFETY RECALL NOTICE**



**LOTUS**

Lotus Cars USA, Inc.

500 Marathon Parkway  
Lawrenceville, Georgia 30045

Owner Name  
Address line 2  
City, State  
Country Zip

**SAFETY RECALL NOTICE**



# LOTUS

Lotus Cars USA, Inc.

**Date:** April 2, 2001

**To:** All LOTUS Dealers

**Attn:** Service Manager / Warranty Administrator

**Subject:** Passenger Side Seatbelt Campaign

### **Recall**

This notice is sent under the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act. Lotus Cars Ltd. has decided that a defect that relates to motor vehicle safety may exist in Lotus Esprit vehicles built after September 1995 which have had the passenger safety belt assembly replaced.

Due to replacement part numbering confusion at the Lotus factory, incorrect passenger-side belts may have been installed in certain vehicles having the passenger-side seat belt replaced. If an incorrect belt was installed, the seat belt will not be capable of securing a child seat, and there is the risk of death or serious injury to a child placed in such an improperly secured child seat.

Note this recall only affects seat belts that were replaced after the vehicle left the Lotus factory, and such replacement could have been done by the vehicle's current owner, or a prior owner, including a dealer while he had the vehicle in stock as a new or used car.

Any passenger side seatbelt assemblies installed as a service replacement part (warranty or customer pay) after September 1995 may be the incorrect part. Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 208 requires that any front seat passenger belt be of the ratcheting type, appropriate to secure a forward facing child seat. If the incorrect part was installed, the seat belt is not capable of securing a child seat, and there is the risk of death or serious injury to child placed in such an improperly secured child seat.

### **Inspection**

To check the ratcheting operation of the belt, pull the belt out to its fullest extent before latching. To check the ratcheting operation of the belt, pull the belt out to its fullest extent before latching. Let the belt retract, and as the retract mechanism operates, a ratcheting sound can be heard, and the belt reel mechanism becomes locked with each ratchet so as to, allow retraction only.



After the belt is allowed to fully retract, it will revert to normal operation. The correct part number for a USA Esprit passenger safety belt is A082V6222F. The cloth tag near the lower mounting point beside the seat can easily identify this belt.

**CONFORMS TO  
UNITED STATES  
FEDERAL STANDARD  
FMVSS209  
MODEL 530055800A**

**Remedy**

If a vehicle has a passenger side belt with a red tag and/or is labeled as MODEL 530055800A, the incorrect belt has been installed, and must be replaced. Lotus warranty will pay to replace any incorrect passenger side belt assembly on any Esprit with a manufacture date on or after September 1985. A notice of this is being sent certified mail to all Lotus Esprit owners for the years specified. Parts should be ordered in the normal manner, and a warranty claim submitted. All parts replaced under this campaign must be returned for the manufacturer's inspection.

**Lotus Cars USA**