



Sunday, 26 January 2003

Audi Customer Services
PO Box 400
Walsall
WS5 4XX

Ref: - W4 KTT Audi TT 225 Coupe

To Leonne Hughes (Customer Services Manager)

Firstly I must say that I have received very good service from customer services and Audi Assist, I am very impressed with the speed efficiency my roadside issues have been dealt with.

However I am in need of some re-assurance as I am now driving in fear of completing journeys. Being a member of the TT owners club I am privy to information from a network of enthusiasts and am privileged to have had communication on a particular fault over the last year.

The information I learnt about, was that coil packs commonly failed. Initially feeling this to be the elevation of a problem affecting a minority of owners I had heard enough about it to purchase a spare coilpack in June/July to carry in the boot of the car. Psychologically I felt if I had the part I would never need it.

Well at just over 10000 miles my first Coil Pack failed at home on Dec 9th, Audi assist had it towed to HWM Audi and the diagnosis was correct and they said there were no coil packs to fit until January. Yes I felt smug at being able to tell them I carried a spare in the boot and my car was back the following day, 2 weeks later HWM replaced my spare and I have it in the boot although it appears to be a red A4 coilpack rather than a TT one. (they told me it's the same).

However my original spare was the older H type of coilpack deemed to be the problem one, so I still have 4 problem coil packs in the car.

Does lightning strike twice? Well it has, last Thursday the 23rd of Jan, only 1.5 months after the first failure I was leaving my office to go home for lunch, approached a roundabout and pulled off on to it and another coil failure occurred at the point I needed full power.

I can not stress how angry I was to A. have another failure so soon after the first B. to lose power at a critical moment was life threatening.

Audi Assist were very helpful and an Audi Dedicated Technician came along, unfortunately with another H Type coil pack but got me going within 2 hours. He also managed to crack an engine cover fixing the car.

I am moving offices this weekend, this was the last 2 days I would be able to visit my family during lunch for the foreseeable future. So Thursday my Lunch was lost waiting roadside, Friday, I had to visit the dealer to get a new engine cover ordered. That's it, last two chances buggered and this should not have happened.

I will also have to make a 3rd journey to pick up the engine cover when it arrives!

I am trying to stress the inconvenience this, stretches far beyond the time lost to Audi Assist, whilst I can accept maintenance issues, this is wholly caused by a very poor quality part which is why I am putting "pen to paper" so to speak!

Please appreciate that this is a sports car and although VAG may not condone enthusiastic driving....AND I am fully aware that mechanical breakdowns can occur to any component at any time in a machine as complex as a car.....this particular component is a replacement for old Coil/rotor/distributor arrangement that has run in cars for decades.

I still own a 146000 mile Audi 90 and 176000 mile VW Golf on their original ignition coils.

I have been VAG loyal for my entire driving career, some 18 years and have 18 years of VAG maintenance experience and Ignition systems can last longer than the cars themselves.

This quality of this component should live up to the reputation set by the older cars and is sadly very very poor in relation to the quality and expectations set by your previous models.

The other thing that makes this even more painful is I have spent the most I have ever spent on a car, close to £28000 and this part just should not fail like this for the money owners are investing.

I have now been in contact with other owners forums and have been told this is affecting all 1.8 turbo cars across the VAG range, Nov-Jan almost epidemic proportions, dealers quoting 10-30 cars waiting for coil packs....surely this must warrant a recall and replacement for owners.

What I am now feeling is paranoia caused by the problems and the fact that I am a long term owner who wants to maintain his vehicle into the 100000's of miles but is in fear of main components that should last 50000-100000 miles, needing changing every 5000-10000 which is frankly not on! There's very little point in developing spark plugs that can last 20000-40000 miles and having the coil packs that power them fail between 3000-20000 miles!

Since the 2 breakdowns I am now very concerned and am writing because I am feeling the following: -

1. Should I need to carry a spare part for my new car? No but it has been justified now!
2. Distress and paranoia whenever I drive the car.
3. Every time I start I spend a few minutes listening for noises and misfires!
4. Will I make the end of a journey?
5. I am hesitant to overtake or pull off on roundabouts expecting a coil pack to fail.
6. I have even started to drive the car with the stereo low so I can hear if a misfire is occurring
7. When the car is idling a slight fluctuation is occurring more-so since the last failure and I feel it's a sign of another one about to go.
8. The car is a joke amongst my colleagues, In an office of 1000 people any potential buyers are put right off and I am now being told to buy a "proper car" as the target of jibes and humour in the office. This is by far the most damaging to my integrity in buying a prestige car and its now considered completely unreliable by people that potentially could have been buyers.
9. My first day at a new office is Tomorrow, Guess what I am leaving the TT at home and using my old Golf as I can not afford the risk of breaking down with the importance of needing to be there for inductions and unpacking. Should I feel this way about the car? I don't think I should. But until I have 4 reliable coil packs in the engine I will not be able to drive this care confidently.

Do you think I should have any of the above trying to enjoy my 28k pride and joy?

The above points are not uncommon, most owners who are now aware that there is a quality issue and have had these parts fail are now feeling as I do and its only through their enthusiasm love of the TT that they continue to persevere with it. I am also aware of a few owners who feel this is a final straw for them and are now no longer looking at Audi for their next cars.

What I feel is missing and should be addressed by Audi is: -

1. Returning confidence to its customers
2. Doing the right thing for the existing ones will ensure their public image and confidence is restored.

What the customers, certainly on the TT/A3 owners forums, want to see is: -

1. Public announcement that Audi recognise a problem with this part.
2. Recall of all coil packs to be replaced by a proper quality part, its no secret that owners of cars running the original BERU manufactured part have suffered a lot less than the current component.

Public confidence would be restored and considering this would cost about £150 per car this is not an unreasonable amount after the money that each owner has spent on their car.

Please let me know what the situation is with this issue and what Audi is doing, myself and many owners feel that some communication is needed to understand how Audi are approaching this. A lot of owners feel that the problem has gone on long enough and there is no information coming from Audi, Audi UK or the service centres.

The impression is its being ignored and simply the failure will be allowed to continue and coil packs replaced at point of failure. Owners out of warranty are also hard done by with failures if the original parts were poor quality.

If Audi have no plans to recall and replace all these coils then they should be honest so that owners can start to either consider the investment into a set of revised ones for themselves or move to other marques.

Yours sincerely

Waheed Khan