



Report on Troopers Called Unfair

# Isuzu Sues Consumers Union

By Michael White  
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Consumers Union drove the Trooper sport utility vehicle recklessly during road tests to cause it to tip, Isuzu Motors Ltd. said in announcing a lawsuit against the watchdog group.

**"Consumers Union drivers drove the Trooper recklessly and deliberately to force the Trooper up on two wheels."**  
—Richard A. Bowman, lawyer

Based on its tests, Consumers Union declared in its *Consumer Reports* magazine last summer that the Trooper was prone to roll over. It asked for an investigation by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

"The Trooper is a safe vehicle," Terry Maloney, senior vice president and general manager of American Isuzu Motors Inc., declared Thursday.

*Consumer Reports* magazine last summer branded the 1995-96 Isuzu Troopers and 1996 Acura SLXs, nearly identical sport utility vehicles, with its rare "not acceptable" rating.

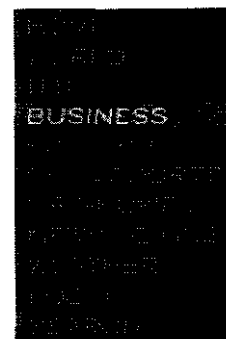
## Sales Plunged After Report

The lawsuit seeks unspecified compensatory and punitive damages. Maloney declined to say how much money the Japanese automaker has lost due to weakened Trooper sales. Sales figures reported by the company show that during the first half of 1997, Trooper sales plunged 53 percent to 4,313 vehicles.

At the news conference, Richard A. Bowman, an attorney specializing in product liability defenses, said Consumers Union drivers turned the steering wheel of the Trooper faster and farther than drivers normally would even in an emergency situation.

A videotape, which he said was taken from inside a Trooper during a Consumers Union test run, showed the driver quickly whipping the wheel as much as two full revolutions to produce sharp turns.

## Reckless Test Drivers?



**BUSINESS NEWS**

**GET QUOTE**

**MAIL E-mail ABCNEWS.com**

"Consumers Union drivers drove the Trooper recklessly and deliberately to force the Trooper up on two wheels," he said.

Consumers Union, based in Yonkers, N.Y., denied its drivers tried to tip the vehicle.

"We welcome an opportunity to place our data and reports before any court or jury and are confident that our tests and impartiality will be upheld in that form," it said.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration last week denied a Consumers Union request to launch a formal investigation of the Trooper's safety.

The highway safety agency made its decision after putting the Trooper through its own tests. The agency's report found that in key Consumers Union tests, the steering wheel was turned more sharply than "a driver is willing or able to make in response to an unexpected event."

Although the agency also was able to tip the vehicle onto two wheels, it concluded "dramatic differences in outcome can be generated by the test driver." ■

*Copyright 1997 Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.*

#### SECTOR NEWS

High Tech

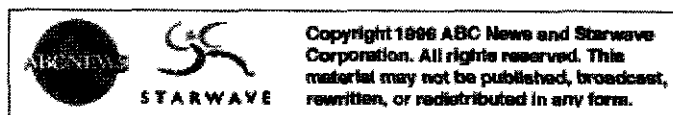
Industrial

Services

Commodities

Consumer Products

International



Your use of and/or access to this site signifies your agreement to the then-current [Terms of Use](#); please review them. Stock quotes from Standard & Poor's ComStock are delayed at least 20 minutes. Extended company profiles supplied by Media General Financial Services.

COMSTOCK