

### Loss of drive through a right hand turn

This first problem has been happening from new (brought to the attention of Wippells when the Yeti went in on it's first (15000km) service). In this problem the Yeti randomly loses power when trying to accelerate quickly out of a right hand turn after a period of time at speed on cruise control. To clarify what is happening when this occurs I have included a diagram of where the loss of drive most frequently occurs (because I drive through this intersection most often) along with a table comparing the Yeti's operation both normally and when the loss of drive occurs.



Stage	Normal Operation	Loss of Drive Scenario
1 (green)	Travelling along at 100km/h with cruise control <b>ON</b>	Travelling along at 100km/h with cruise control <b>ON</b>
2 (blue)	Foot on brake pedal for a rapid deceleration to prepare to enter the crossover between the lanes on the highway.	Foot on brake pedal for a rapid deceleration to prepare to enter the crossover between the lanes on the highway.
3 (orange)	Foot still on brake into and through a right hand turn with Yeti still slowly rolling at approximately 10 - 15 km/h.	Foot still on brake into and through a right hand turn with Yeti still slowly rolling at approximately 10 - 15 km/h.
4 (magenta)	Press the accelerator quickly to the floor for a break in the traffic. After an extremely brief pause (turbo lag) the Yeti quickly accelerates across the highway. A corresponding rapid increase in RPM and normal gear change indications are displayed on the instrument panel.	Press the accelerator quickly to the floor for a break in the traffic, the Yeti continues to roll across the road without accelerating. D2 and around 1200rpm are indicated on the instrument panel.
5 (yellow)	Yeti continues to drive normally.	After several seconds the Yeti quickly accelerates with a corresponding rapid increase in RPM and normal gear change indications displayed on the instrument panel. The Yeti behaves normally thereafter.

Some key things to note are:

1. The loss of drive seems to happen approximately 1 in 20 - 30 right hand turns (although sometimes it happens two or three times in a day and may not recur for several weeks).
2. I don't know exactly how many times it has lost drive in the 2 years since new; the only answer I can give is "a lot of times".
3. The loss of drive seems to be random and despite attempting to deliberately re-create the fault several times I have been unable to do so.
4. It has happened ONCE with a left hand turn, EVERY other time it has been during a right hand turn.
5. When I have been able to note it, the transmission has been in D2 (indicated) with the engine at approximately 1200rpm.
6. The loss of drive happens without warning. There are no indications of failure on the instrument panel. Wippells report that there have never been any failure codes reported after examination of our Yeti.
7. I have had several DSG equipped loan vehicles from Wippells (while they have been trying to fix ours) and NONE of them have exhibited this loss of drive while I have been driving them through the same intersections and in the same conditions where our Yeti has lost drive.
8. Wippells have been unable to reproduce the fault and it leaves no fault codes in the ECU however this loss of drive has been experienced by multiple drivers driving the Yeti and the effects have been witnessed by multiple passengers.
9. Most of the time oncoming traffic flash their headlights as the Yeti slowly rolls in front of them, however on one occasion a petrol tanker has had to veer onto the shoulder of the road to avoid a collision.
10. The loss of power has occurred in multiple locations. The scenario given above is the most common as I drive through this intersection every day on the way to work.

### **Loss of drive on an incline (rollback)**

To give a typical scenario for the rollback (loss of drive on an incline):

- Leaving a shopping centre car park in a line of traffic.
- Exiting the car park by going up a ramp with the traffic flow; the instrument panel indicates D1.
- Travelling up the ramp with the accelerator gently pressed to provide positive drive up the ramp.
- Without warning the car stops driving forwards and immediately begins to roll backwards unchecked.
- Immediate reaction is to press the accelerator harder – vehicle continues to accelerate backwards.
- Press the brake or apply the handbrake – vehicle comes to a halt.
- After coming to a halt the vehicle can be driven as normal up the slope without further incident.

Throughout this event D1 has been indicated on the instrument panel and no visual or aural devices have activated to alert the driver of what has occurred.

The manual for the vehicle does list a “clutch overheat” warning light and recommends that the vehicle not be driven until after it has gone out. Advice from VW Australia is that the light activates on a “warning level 2” event and will be accompanied by a “hot clutch” smell. They have stated that I am experiencing a “warning level 1” clutch disengagement. They have also stated that this is a deliberate software change by VW to extend the life of the clutch assembly and that, by design, there are no warnings that the disengagement is about to occur or is occurring. Our vehicle has also had rollback events occur when on the road in traffic.

Since replacement of the mechatronics unit in 2016 we have counted 21 in near misses (our vehicle losing drive and rolling backwards with another vehicle behind us). When this occurs there are no warnings provided to the driver and the accelerator input is cut-out, meaning that preventing further vehicle motion down the slope can only be achieved by applying the brake.

### **Loss of drive from a standing start**

This has occurred 7 times since initial replacement of the mechatronics unit in 2016 with the first instance being on the 5<sup>th</sup> January this year.

Our son Jack was driving my wife Angela up to Toowoomba. They had driven up the Toowoomba range and as they neared the intersection at the top of the range they slowed from 60km/h down to a walking pace before stopping at a stop sign. A gap appeared in the traffic (coming from the left) and Jack pushed the accelerator firmly to cross the road and head down to the right into Tourist Road.

When they were part way across the road the car lost drive and rolled slower and slower, blocking both lanes of oncoming traffic. By this time the entry lane into the intersection had filled with traffic behind them leaving them nowhere to go but forward. Jack completely stopped the Yeti with the brake, released the brake and pressed the accelerator to drive forwards through the right hand turn into Tourist Road without further incident. While this was happening the oncoming traffic from the left (to head down the range) had to stop to allow Jack to regain control of the Yeti and clear the intersection. Jack said that there were no failure lights on the dash throughout the incident but he was unsure about what gear or engine RPM were indicated on the instrument panel.

This scenario has repeated 6 more times since then (including after replacement of the gearbox) with both Angela and I driving the car.

### **Delayed throttle response**

This has started occurring since replacement of the transmission on 06 March this year. To give a typical scenario for the “delayed throttle response”:

- Stationary waiting for a break in the oncoming traffic to perform a right hand turn into a driveway (across the line of oncoming traffic).
  
- A break in the traffic occurs:
  - (a) Normal operation: Press the accelerator and the vehicle smartly accelerates across the road.
  
  - (b) When the “delayed throttle response” occurs: Press the accelerator, after a second or so the tachometer winds up to indicate approximately 4000rpm, a couple of seconds later the engine begins to accelerate and the vehicle begins moving into the path of the traffic that would normally have been clear of conflict.

This “delayed throttle response” is not consistent and sometimes doesn’t happen at all. When it does occur the delay can vary between approximately 2 and 5 seconds. It is the unpredictability of this operation that creates a safety hazard as the driver can’t allow for it when picking a gap in the traffic to drive through.

### **Shuddering in 1<sup>st</sup> gear**

since initial replacement of the mechatronics unit in 2016 there has been significant shuddering in the transmission when it automatically deselected from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> gear in traffic. It is intermittent but is more prevalent on hotter days.

This shuddering has continued to occur since replacement of the gearbox in March of this year.

When the vehicle is starting off in first (from a standing start) there is no shuddering; it only occurs after an automatic 2<sup>nd</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> deselection.

### **Degraded brake performance**

Prior to replacement of the ABS module the brakes were “firm” providing positive resistance to the foot when the pedal was pressed. Since replacement the brakes are excessively spongy and only begin to effectively operate when the brake pedal is at or slightly below the level of the accelerator pedal.

Additionally the brakes now often unexpectedly “grab” when applied at low speed. Wippells have attempted to re-bleed the brakes several times and while they are better, they are still significantly less effective than prior to the module change out.

I made measurements of the brake pedal effectiveness (resistance force vs. pedal displacement) (refer attached file).

## Overall

Some of the above faults leave messages in the ECU while others don't however just because the incidents don't report a fault code doesn't mean that there is nothing wrong. The lack of reporting could be because the problem is occurring in an area that is not monitored or the car thinks it is doing the right thing and there is no failure to report. The typical scenario when taking the Yeti to Wippells goes something like this:

put it on the computer – no fault.

check service bulletins – nothing pertinent to our situation,

take it for a test drive – doesn't fault

final result: there is nothing wrong with the car and we can't change anything because there is nothing at fault, call again if it happens again.

I know this because it has happened time after time after time. They do exactly the same thing every time and, unsurprisingly, get the same result every time. I assume they are simply following the standard procedure and don't have the resources (both equipment and manpower) or authority for any additional "in depth" investigation or fault-finding.

Even the brief report from the Technical Specialist is frustrating (He had the Yeti for a couple of weeks late last year). I have stated over and over again that the loss of drive occurs when performing a right hand turn and accelerating after a period of speed on cruise control. To the best of my knowledge he was supplied with copies of all correspondence about the faults. Given this I would have expected him to concentrate on driving to this condition and then expand into other scenarios after replicating the fault under the same conditions as I experience. Therefore I would have expected a report along the lines of:

"The vehicle was driven 100% highway on cruise in an attempt to have the vehicle fault. Over 100 braking then foot to the floor acceleration with right turning....."

Instead the report (in part) read:

"The vehicle was driven, 50% highway on/off cruise and 50% performing manoeuvres in an attempt to have the vehicle fault. Over 100 rapid braking then foot to the floor acceleration with straight, left and right turning...."

When distributed out this would give 17 attempts at accelerating through a right hand turn after a period on cruise control. Given that it only occurs once in every 20 to 30 times it potentially may not have occurred.