

**Jimenez, Alberto**

1011585

**From:** Jimenez, Alberto  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 19, 2005 10:34 AM  
**To:**  
**Subject:** The death of my twin brother.

2005 FEB -7 PM 8: 50

Thank you for your e-mail to NHTSA's Webmaster, which was received by NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation. We apologize for the delay in answering your e-mail; however, due to the number of e-mails received and limited resources were unable to answer you in a timely manner. We offer our sympathy and condolences to you and the Wright family.

With regard to your search on NHTSA's Web site, consumers sometimes have problem navigating through different areas of our Web site. Please log on as follows: [www.odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/complain](http://www.odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/complain). Follow the instructions provided, selecting the line item from the list that is provided on the menu. When selecting the component "air bag" select each one of titles given. Please note that there are duplicate records in the list of complaints you obtain.

The following is for your information:

Each manufacturer designs its vehicles so the air bags will deploy if the severity of a crash exceeds a certain threshold. However, there is no Federal requirement establishing a particular threshold. Most manufacturers design their air bags to deploy when the crash severity is in the range of an 8 to 14 mph crash into a fixed solid barrier. This severity is about the same as a crash into another vehicle of equivalent weight at 16 to 28 mph. In lower speed crashes, where the air bag does not deploy, occupant protection is provided by the design of the interior surfaces in the vehicle, as well as by the safety belts provided at each seating position.

A number of factors, other than crash severity, can affect whether an air bag will deploy in a given crash; e.g., the angle of impact, the speed of the other vehicle, and the amount of force absorbed by the other vehicle or object that is impacted. Only an expert in crash reconstruction can provide an educated opinion as to whether the air bag in a vehicle should have deployed in a specific crash.

I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

Alberto A. Jimenez, Chief  
Correspondence Research Division  
Office of Defects Investigation  
Enforcement

*Log in/out  
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2/10/05*

From:

Comments:

died in a car wreck on 12/29/04. The airbag in his 1996 Dodge Dakota should have saved his life, but it failed to deploy. There are no reported defects or recalls concerning the airbags and/or the control modules for the '96 Dakotas listed in your website or in the Office of Defects Investigations website; while both the NHTSA and ODI reported major defects and recalls for the airbags and it's control modules for the next four years from '97 to 2000 Dodge Dakotas. I don't understand how my brother lost his life from a defective airbag system that NHTSA and ODI list no report of. There is no way I'll ever believe this was a one time freak occurrence, there must have been some evidence in the testing phase that was overlooked. Please contact me at any time if you can find something that I missed.

thank you.

From NHTSA Web Site.