

Jimenez, Alberto

10113453

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2005 11:13 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: 2001 Olds Alero

Dear [REDACTED]

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, we were unable to respond to you in a more timely manner.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is the Federal agency responsible for improving safety on our Nation's highways. We are authorized to order manufacturers to recall and repair vehicles or items of motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain serious safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. We also monitor the adequacy of manufacturers' recall campaigns. In order for the agency to initiate an investigation, we look carefully at the body of consumer complaints and other available data to determine whether a defect may exist. We cannot act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

We appreciate the report you provided on November 12, 2003. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. Each report is analyzed and entered into a database to determine whether an investigation into a possible safety defect is warranted. Information submitted by vehicle owners using Vehicle Owner's Questionnaires (VOQ) is automatically entered into our complaint database, and data is then available to NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation investigators for review and analysis to determine whether an investigation is warranted. Due to the volume of VOQs received and limited agency resources, NHTSA cannot respond to the submitters of these questionnaires. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused you.

We have reviewed our database in an effort to identify whether a safety defect trend exists with regard to non deployment of air bags during a crash in 2001 Oldsmobile Alero vehicles. At this time, there is insufficient evidence to warrant opening a safety defect investigation. The information you provided has been entered into our database. It will be considered with other reports to identify any safety defect trends that may require our attention.

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.

Sincerely,

11/11/05
448
3/1/05

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

[REDACTED]

Last Oct. 22 I sent in a complaint form and forwarded pictures from an accident my daughter was involved in. I have never receive more than the following email.

Webmaster
Auto Safety Hotline

10/19/04

It is very frustrating to have never received any response to my concern. Please advise as to what I can do to move this complaint forward. Thank You.

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: Webmaster [mailto:Webmaster@nhtsa.dot.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2003 8:49 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re:2001 Olds Alero

Dear Consumer,

You may want to call our hotline at 800-424-9393 and file a complaint or go to www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems and fill out a complaint form.