

Dear [REDACTED]:

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.

From: Test, Crash <NHTSA>
Sent: Monday, May 22, 2006 1:15 PM
To: Jimenez, Alberto <NHTSA>
Subject: RE : Air bag deployment speeds

Hello Alberto,

Could you please help answer this consumer's email question at your earliest convenience?

[REDACTED]

Thank you very much,
Dameko America

I was involved in a car accident. I drive a 2001 ford f-150 supercrew. I was traveling 30 miles an hour when I rear-ended another vehicle. My air bags did not deploy. I would like to know why I have airbags if in an accident at this speed and area of my vehicle they were not deployed. I was wearing my seatbelt. My question is at what speed should the airbag deploy.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Dublin OH, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

ack
5/22/06