

**INFORMATION Redacted PURSUANT TO THE FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION ACT (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552(B)(6)**



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590

APR 26 2010

[REDACTED]
Kinston, NC [REDACTED]

NVS-216 nlm
Ref. No.10318689

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence dated February 15, concerning your model year (MY) 2002 Toyota Avalon. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation received your correspondence on March 5. We regret any inconvenience our delay in responding may have caused you.

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 safety defects in their design, construction, or performance. However, we cannot act on isolated problems or resolve disputes between individual owners, dealers, or manufacturers.

We appreciate the report you provided. Reports from motorists are a very important source of information for us. We have reviewed our database in an effort to identify whether a safety defect trend exists with regard to non-deployment of side impact air bags in MY 2002 Toyota Avalon vehicles. At this time, there is insufficient evidence to warrant opening a safety defect investigation. A brochure explaining the investigation process is enclosed for your information; or you may visit our website at <http://www.wodi.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/recalls/recallprocess.cfm>. The information you provided has been entered into our database. It will be considered with future reports to identify any safety defect trends that may require our attention.

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.



If further assistance is needed, please contact Ms. Kathleen C. DeMeter, Director of NHTSA's Office of Defects Investigation, at (202) 366-4799.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Harris" or "C. Smith", written in a cursive style.

for

Daniel C. Smith
Associate Administrator
for Enforcement

Enclosure