



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

1200 New Jersey Avenue SE.
Washington, DC 20590

November 17, 2017

[REDACTED]
Fulton, MO

NEF-109 am
Ref. No. 11029848

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence concerning the air bag in your model year MY 2005 Dodge Dakota vehicle. Your letter was forwarded to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Office of Defects Investigation. I am pleased to respond.

Our office received an unprecedented increase in the number of correspondence due to the Takata air bag recalls. Our limited resources were overwhelmed and we are now just getting to your letter. We regret any inconvenience this delay 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 motor vehicles or motor vehicle equipment when our investigations indicate that they contain 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 trend may exist.

We are aware of the delay for NHTSA Safety Recall Campaign No. 15V-313 and understand your frustration. The recall addresses a problem with Takata front driver-side air bag inflators in certain MY 2005 through MY 2011 Dodge Dakota vehicles. In the event of a crash necessitating deployment of the front air bags, these inflators may rupture due to propellant degradation occurring after long-term exposure to high absolute humidity and temperature cycling.

The recalls of defective Takata inflators have grown over the past few years to include 19 separate vehicle manufacturers and currently include approximately 34 million vehicles in the United States, making it the largest, most complex recall in NHTSA's history. In response to this recall, the agency has ordered affected vehicle manufacturers to accelerate recall repairs and prioritize vehicles to reduce the risk of rupture and protect the American public.

The most significant challenge presented by this recall has been the availability of remedy parts, which has been affected by numerous factors including, but not limited to, the need to obtain redesigned parts from alternative inflator suppliers, testing to ensure the safety of remedy parts, manufacturing and capacity constraints given the enormous global demand, and logistics in getting the parts out to the distribution networks and into the dealer's hands. In light of these

factors, the agency's guiding principle is to address those vehicles at the greatest risk for rupture first. With that goal in mind, the agency issued an amended Coordinated Remedy Order on December 9, 2016. The Order attaches a prioritization schedule for all vehicles currently affected by the recall, or that will become affected by future expansions, based upon known risk factors such as the age of the inflator, the geographic location of the inflator, and the location of the inflator in the vehicle.

When you receive a notification that parts are available, you should contact your dealer to schedule a service appointment and secure the necessary parts for the recall as soon as possible. If you are unable to schedule an appointment after receiving a notice that parts are available, you should notify the agency so that we may investigate whether the vehicle manufacturer has violated the Coordinated Remedy Order. You can file a complaint on our website at <https://www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/VehicleComplaint/> or via NHTSA's Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236.

For the most up-to-date information on the Takata recalls, we also encourage you to visit our Takata microsite at www.safercar.gov/rs/takata/index.html.

Should you encounter a safety-related problem with a motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment in the future, you can complete an electronic Vehicle Owner's Questionnaire online at www.nhtsa.gov or call the auto safety Hotline at 888-327-4236. Also, a summary listing of vehicle owners' complaints, safety recalls, manufacturers' service bulletins, etc. can be obtained on our website.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Reid". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Randy" and last name "Reid" clearly distinguishable.

Randy Reid, Chief
Correspondence Research Division
Office of Defects Investigation

Enforcement