

[REDACTED]  
Dallas, Texas [REDACTED]

3/6/2020

NHTSA Headquarters  
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.  
West Building  
Washington, D.C. 20590

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

Dear NHTSA Administration

Recently a close friend of mine shared and Old article from the Dallas Morning News titled "**Air Bag control inquiry grows to 12.3M vehicles.**" To my surprise the Toyota Camry was not mentioned in the article. A year ago almost to this date my wife was injured and could have been killed in a collision in our 2014 Toyota Camry. I contacted Toyota and I am attaching a copy of their final response to us. It seems according to **Mr. Ronald I. Inton** that the front bumper has to hit in a certain location in order for the air bag to deploy. We were very disappointed with Mr. Inton's response. Had we had been aware of this article we would have written this letter sooner.

We have no intentions of filing a lawsuit against Toyota. We wanted your agency to be aware of the default in Toyota's air bag system. However we are telling all of friends not to purchase a Toyota based on our experience with the airbag. So far most of them decided on American made products. We always thought that Toyota was one cut above the other automobiles, not any more!

We hope that this letter will motivate NHTSA to focus it's attention on the Toyota air bag system.

Sincerely  
[REDACTED]

CC: Mr. Ronald I. Inton (Attachments)

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03/23/20

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AUTO SAFETY

# Air bag control inquiry grows to 12.3M vehicles

Failure to inflate in crash could be responsible for up to 8 deaths

By TOM KRISHER  
The Associated Press

DETROIT — U.S. auto safety regulators have expanded an investigation into malfunctioning air bag controls to include 12.3 million vehicles because the bags may not inflate in a crash. The problem could be responsible for as many as eight deaths.

Vehicles made by Toyota, Honda, Kia, Hyundai, Mitsubishi and Fiat Chrysler from the 2010 through 2019 model years are included in the probe, which was revealed Tuesday in documents posted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. It involves air bag control units made by ZF-TRW that were installed in the vehicles.

The control units can fail in a crash, possibly because of unwanted electrical signals produced by the crash itself that can disable an air bag control circuit housed in the passenger compartment, according to NHTSA documents. The electrical signals can damage the control circuit, the documents say.

ZF, a German auto parts maker that acquired TRW Automotive in 2015, said that it is committed to safety and is cooperating with NHTSA and automakers in the inves-

tigation.

The case is another in a long list of problems with auto industry air bags, including faulty and potentially deadly Takata air bag inflators. At least 24 people have been killed worldwide and more than 200 injured by the inflators, which can explode with too much force and hurl dangerous shrapnel into the passenger cabin. The inflators touched off the largest series of automotive recalls in U.S. history involving with as many as 70 million inflators to be recalled by the end of next year. About 100 million inflators are to be recalled worldwide.

On April 19, NHTSA upgraded the ZF-TRW probe from a preliminary evaluation to an engineering analysis, which is a step closer toward seeking recalls. So far, only Hyundai and Kia and Fiat Chrysler have issued recalls in the case. Four deaths that may have been caused by the problem were reported in Hyundai-Kia vehicles and three in Fiat Chrysler automobiles.

The upgrade came after investigators found two recent serious crashes involving 2018 and 2019 Toyota Corollas in which the air bags did not inflate. One person was killed. Toyota said it was cooperating in the probe, as well as doing its own investigation, and would take "any appropriate action."

# TOYOTA

Ronald I. Inton  
Direct Phone (469)292-6504

Toyota Motor North America, Inc.  
6565 Headquarters Drive  
Plano, TX 75024

April 25, 2019

Via Email at [REDACTED] and U.S. Mail

[REDACTED]  
Dallas, TX [REDACTED]

RE: Date of Incident: February 15, 2019  
Vehicle: 2014 Toyota Camry  
VIN: 4T4BF1FK1E[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

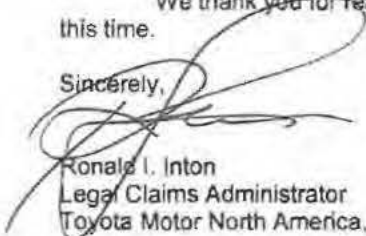
We are in receipt of your letter dated April 11, 2019 advising that you did not agree with the inspection findings of your vehicle and still believe that the front airbags should have deployed when the above-referenced incident occurred. You also inquired as why there was enough damage sustained by your vehicle to be considered a total loss by your insurance company, but the airbags did not deploy.

Unfortunately, we reiterate our position in that there was insufficient longitudinal deceleration in the crash to require the deployment of the front airbag based on the inspection of the vehicle and the event data recorder (EDR) readout information. The inspection and photos of the vehicle do confirm that the front bumper support bar and side members reveal a lack of significant or severe rearward deformation.

Please note that the decision of your insurance company to total your vehicle or deem it unrepairable is most likely based on economics and your insurance contract taking in consideration of how much the repair cost of your vehicle would be in comparison to what the market value of your vehicle may be. Such decision by insurance companies to total a vehicle normally has no bearing or consideration towards why a vehicle's airbags may or may not have deployed.

We thank you for reaching out to us once again and we hope we have addressed your concerns at this time.

Sincerely,

  
Ronald I. Inton  
Legal Claims Administrator  
Toyota Motor North America, Inc.

[REDACTED]  
DALLAS, TEXAS [REDACTED]

4/11/2019

Mr. Ronald I Inton  
Toyota Motor North America, Inc.  
6565 Headquarters Drive  
Plano, TX 75024

Re: Toyota case # [REDACTED]  
2014 Toyota Camry  
VIN: 4T4BF1K1E [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Inton:

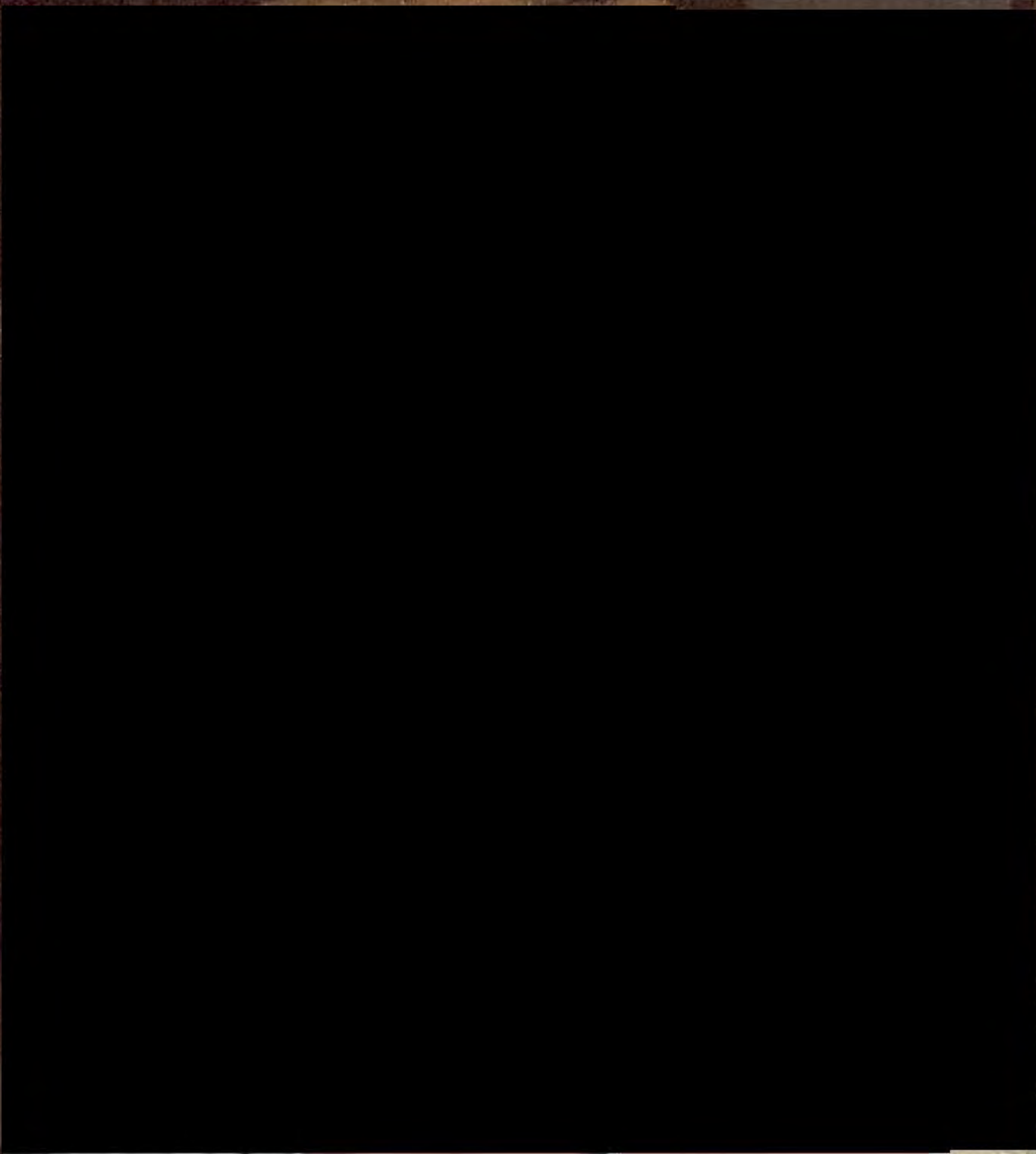
We are in receipt of your letter dated March 29, 2019, in which you shared the results of the inspection conducted by Engineering Analysis (EAA). We would first like to share that we have been Toyota owners since 2002 when we purchased our first Camry. Our second was the 2014 Camry. Moreover we would like to continue to be Toyota owners.

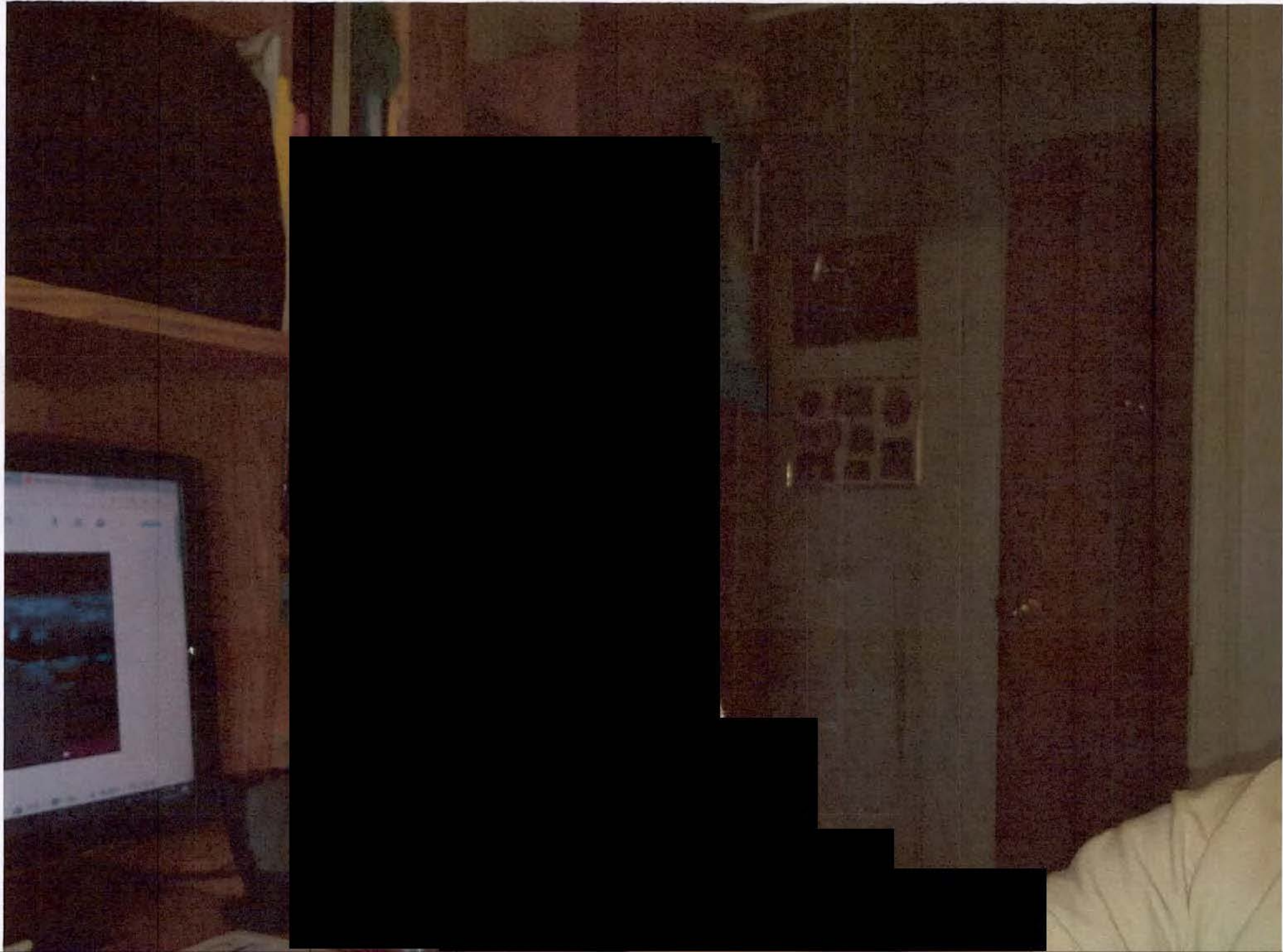
You indicate three significant things in your last paragraph; (1) the (SRS) frontal airbags are designed to deploy in response to abrupt deceleration from severe frontal impact and are designed to help prevent fatal injuries or reduce the extent of serious head or chest injuries; and (2) the EDR readout, was insufficient longitudinal deceleration in the crash to require the deployment of the front airbags; and three **(3) Our inspection did not identify a defect with your vehicle's SRS airbags.**

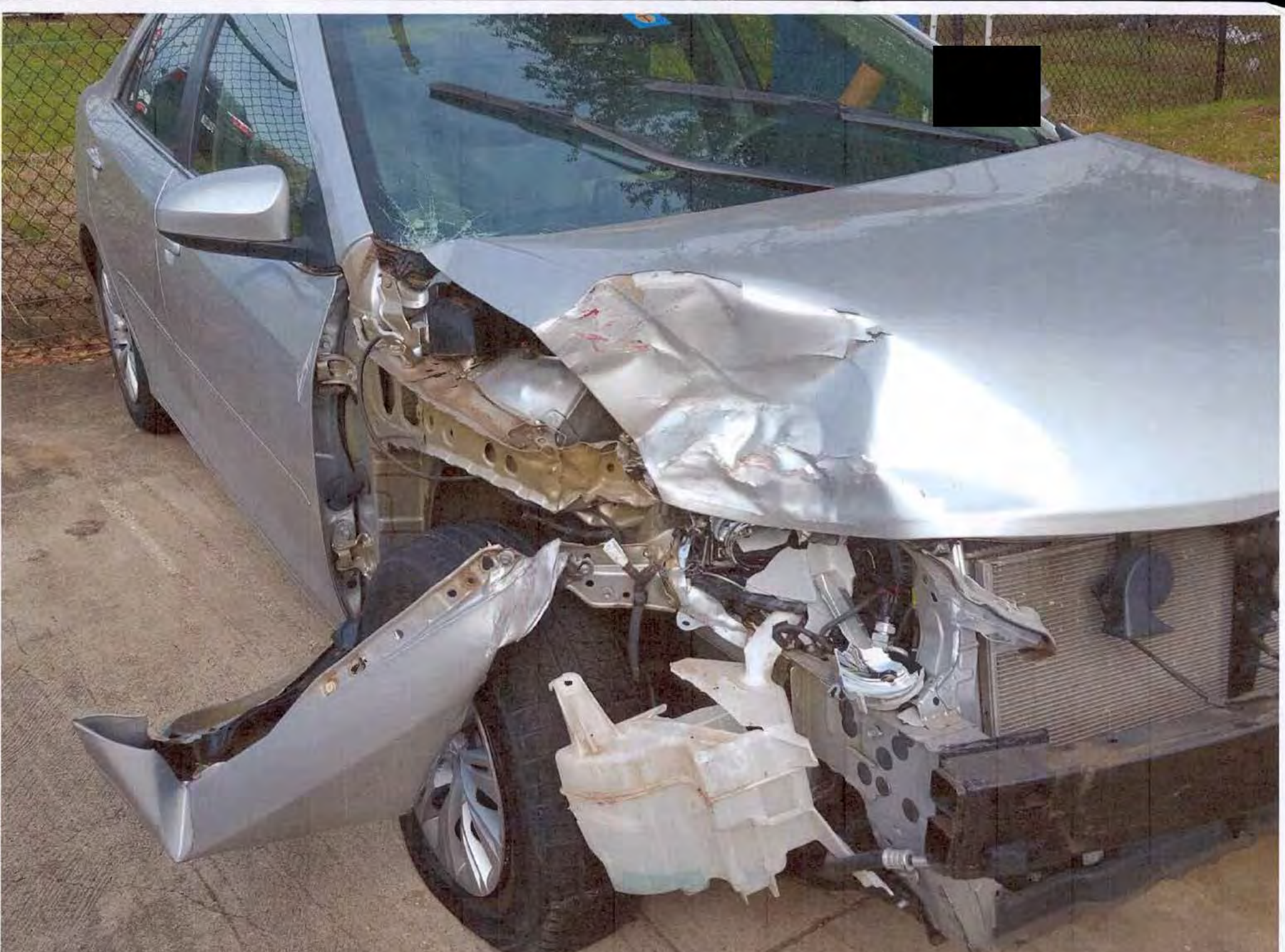
If the airbags are designed to deploy in response to abrupt deceleration, how much more abrupt deceleration is required than a rear-end collision? If the EDR was insufficient longitudinal deceleration in the crash to require the deployment of the front airbags but was sufficient enough for USAA to total out the vehicle. Please explain the discrepancy. If the airbags were designed to prevent injuries, my wife sustained a concussion, facial injuries a broken finger on her right hand and other injuries because the air bag did not deploy. Obviously something went seriously wrong with a system that "your inspection did not identify a defect with your vehicle's SRS airbags".

If your inspection report is true, then the air bags should have deployed as designed. We have photographs of the vehicle and my wife's face that clearly show that an abrupt deceleration from severe frontal impact occurred. **We are requesting that you explain away why the system failed! Too, is Toyota not assuming any responsibility for the failure of the air bag's installed by Toyota?**

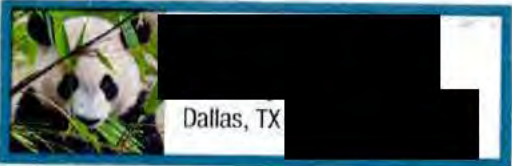
Sincerely,  
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