



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

# ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 06-045  
Date Opened: 10/19/2006  
Principal Investigator: Michael Lee  
Subject: Side Curtain Air Bag Failure

Manufacturer: DaimlerChrysler Corporation  
Products: 2006 Dodge Durango  
Population: 8,300 (estimated)

Problem Description: The metal gas-distribution tube for the side curtain air bag may fracture during deployment resulting in failure of the air bag to inflate properly.

## FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	0		
Crashes/Fires:	0		
Injury Incidents:	0		
# Injuries:	0		
Fatality Incidents:	0		
# Fatalities:	0		
Other*:	3		

\*Description Of Other: Failures observed during ejection mitigation tests conducted by NHTSA R&D.

Action: A Preliminary Evaluation has been opened.

Engineer: Michael Lee MJL  
Div. Chief: Thomas Z. Cooper  
Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

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Summary: NHTSA R&D is currently conducting an ejection mitigation test program. More than a dozen vehicle models equipped with side curtain air bags, including the model year (MY) 2006 Dodge Durango, are included in the test program. As part of the test procedure, the headliner in the test vehicle is removed prior to testing and the side curtain air bag is deployed externally. In three out of 35 tests for the Durango, the metal gas-distribution tube (or diffuser tube) for the side curtain air bag fractured during deployment and the air bag failed to inflate properly. In addition, the broken diffuser tube ruptured the air bag as it dropped down. All three fractures occurred at the same location on the diffuser tube (between B-pillar and C-pillar) mounted along the headliner from the A-pillar to D-pillar. All of the air bags that were tested were new service parts for use on an estimated 8,300 MY 2006 Dodge Durango vehicles equipped with optional rollover side curtain air bags.

There have been no similar failures or any other catastrophic failures of side curtain air bags in seven other vehicle models that have been tested to date. ODI is not aware of any field incidents similar to the test failures on the subject vehicles; there are no NHTSA consumer complaints, EWR reports or SCI reports at this time.

MJL 10/20/06