



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

# ODI RESUME

Investigation: PE 08-017  
Date Opened: 03/10/2008  
Principal Investigator: Peter Ong  
Subject: Air Bag Light Illumination

Manufacturer: Hyundai Motor Company  
Products: 2001 -2003 Hyundai Elantra vehicles  
Population: 340,000 (estimated)

Problem Description: Air bag light illumination from loose wiring and/or from liquid spills from the cup holder.

## FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	35		
Crashes/Fires:	0		
Injury Incidents:	0		
# Injuries:	0		
Fatality Incidents:	0		
# Fatalities:	0		
Other*:	2		

\*Description of Other: Two fatal crashes in which the air bag light had illuminated prior to the crash.

Action: Open this Preliminary Evaluation.

Engineer: Peter Ong *PO*

Date: 03/10/2008

Div. Chief: Thomas Z. Cooper

Date: 03/10/2008

Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 03/10/2008

Summary: ODI has received 35 consumer reports of air bag light illumination in model year (MY) 2001 through 2003 Elantra vehicles. Ten of the reports allege that the air bag control module and/or main connector were soaked or corroded from liquid spills. Five reports allege loose wiring due to seat movement. The remaining 20 reports allege the air bag light turned on, but those reports did not provide further information regarding a possible cause.

Of the 35 reports, three allege that the air bag light was on and the air bag inadvertently deployed without a crash event.

The two MY 2001 Elantra fatal crashes were the subject of an on-site crash analysis conducted by NHTSA's Office of Special Crash Investigations (SCI). Both vehicles experienced severe frontal impact and the air bags did not deploy. Post inspection and analysis indicate that the air bag light had illuminated prior to the crash on both vehicles. The center console covering the air bag control module was removed in case #CA08-003 and the module and the main connector were covered with a sticky brown substance, possibly spilled liquid since the cup holders are positioned above the control module. The recovered fault codes indicate a prior short circuit condition that most likely would shut down the air bag control module. In the other SCI case, #CA03-046, the spouse of the deceased reported that the air bag light had illuminated periodically one to two months prior to the crash.