



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: EA 09-017
Prompted by: PE09-034, consumer complaints
Date Opened: 11/19/2009 **Date Closed:** 09/26/2011
Investigator: Peter Ong **Reviewer:** Scott Yon
Approver: Frank Borris
Subject: Air Bag Occupant Classification System

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: KIA MOTORS CORPORATION
Products: MY 2007-2008 Kia Sorento manufactured prior to 11/27/2007
Population: 57,228
Problem Description: The improper deactivation of the passenger side frontal air bag resulting in illumination of the "PASSENGER AIR BAG OFF" warning light.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	42	866	908
Crashes/Fires:	0	1	1
Injury Incidents:	0	1	1
Number of Injuries:	0	1	1
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	927	927

*Description of Other: Warranty claims related to issue

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: Closed this Engineering Analysis, see Recall Campaign No. 11V-473

Summary:

The Sorento's front passenger air bag may be turned off when an adult is seated in the passenger seat. The front passenger air bag is designed to be turned off in limited circumstances including when children and small adults are seated in the front passenger seat, there is a child restraint in that seat, or the seat is not occupied. But the Sorento has misclassified adults sitting in the passenger seat. This causes the passenger side frontal air bag to deactivate and the "PASSENGER AIR BAG OFF" light to illuminate. On May 12, 2009, Kia launched a Technical Service Bulletin campaign (SC076) to address this problem, installing upgraded occupant classification system (OCS) software in vehicles built prior to the 11/27/2007 production date.

ODI and Kia identified 908 owner reports and 927 warranty claims related to this OCS issue. Kia also reported one crash where the passenger frontal air bag did not deploy in a frontal crash due to misclassification. Testing of Sorento vehicles built prior to December 2007 shows that misclassification can occur. As of April 2011, Kia reports that approx. 46,000 of the 57,228 vehicles have been upgraded with the revised software.

On September 6, 2011, Kia submitted a defect notice and will recall the affected vehicles that have not been upgraded. Owner notification is scheduled to start in late-September 2011. The recall will upgrade the OCS software. Accordingly the investigation is closed.