



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

ODI RESUME

Investigation: EA 12-001
Prompted by: PE11-035
Date Opened: 01/23/2012
Investigator: Peter Ong **Reviewer:** Scott Yon
Approver: Frank Borris
Subject: Inadvertent Air Bag Deployment

MANUFACTURER & PRODUCT INFORMATION

Manufacturer: CHRYSLER GROUP LLC
Products: 2002-2003 Jeep Liberty
Population: 386,873

Problem Description: The driver and/or passenger frontal air bags can inadvertently deploy (without a crash) while the vehicle is in operation (both at startup and while driving on road).

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	11	76	87
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	7	42	49
Number of Injuries:	7	43	50
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
Other*:	0	94	94

*Description of Other: Air bag light illumination reports/warranty claims that are, or may be related to the issue

ACTION / SUMMARY INFORMATION

Action: Open this Engineering Analysis

Summary:

Based on analysis of Chrysler's response, and including ODI's consumer complaints, ODI has identified 87 reports of air bag inadvertent deployment incidents resulting in 50 alleged injuries. The injuries consists of burns, cuts and bruises to the upper body region. Forty-two (42) of the 87 incidents involved the driver frontal air bag, and the remaining 45 incidents involved both the driver and passenger frontal air bags inadvertently deploying without a crash. These incidents occurred both at vehicle startup or while the vehicle is being operated on the roadway. Some owners noted that the air bag warning light had illuminated, or had intermittently illuminated, and that this occurred just prior to the air bag deployment, while others stated they did not observe any illumination of the air bag light.

Inspection of the Occupant Restraint Control (ORC) module conducted by Chrysler indicates that an internal electronic circuit (an ASIC chip) which controls air bag deployment fails due to an electrical over stress (EOS) condition possibly caused by a transient voltage spike. Chrysler is in the process of identifying potential root causes of the component failure and/or a source for electrical over stress. In addition, Chrysler noted that there have been no reports of inadvertent air bag deployment in vehicles manufactured after a March 19, 2003 production date. However Chrysler had not identified a component or other change that would explain why the inadvertent deployments ceased. Accordingly, this Engineering Analysis is being opened to further study the alleged defect and its consequences.

The ODI reports cited above can be reviewed at www-odi.nhtsa.dot.gov/complaints under the following identification (ODI) numbers: 10435710 10429579 10429306 10428411 10407276 10399551 10335637 10283484 10249231 10166706 10055405