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

York, Bruce <bruce.york@dot.gov>

DTN

1 message

[redacted] Mon, Sep 22, 2025 at 1:50 PM

To: "York, Bruce (NHTSA)" <bruce.york@dot.gov>

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Bruce—

The below is from one of my consulting experts, and I thought it might be helpful for your team to review our working theories so far:

[redacted]

I have spent time reviewing the material [redacted] sent and doing additional online research. The next step is up to you of course but here are my thoughts.

1. The counterfeit issue in your cases goes beyond the inflator as the entire module would have to be counterfeit not just the inflator. Replacement modules come with the inflator as do used modules bought on ebay and other used auto part sites. When your client's cars were repaired prior to their purchase the repairing shops installed the entire airbag module which consists of the inflator, airbag cushion and module housing.
2. Based on the available photos the inflators in the [redacted] cases are all DTN. It is also clear they are the same inflator in design. While the photos are not the clearest the designation appears to be DTN60DB (not sure on the "D"). Based on my initial findings at this time I can make the following conclusions:
    a. This inflator is not listed on their website
    b. The inflator cap is aluminum, not steel
    c. The inflator cap is threaded onto the base and uses an o-ring as a sealing mechanism
    d. The cap is crimped onto the base.
    e. The base also appears to be aluminum.
3. I believe there is another player involved that sources the DTN inflators for use in assembling the counterfeit modules. They source the cushions and module housings from other Chinese companies and at least for the Malibu and Hyundai applications represented in your cases they source the screw on cap DTN inflator – the DTN60DB.
4. I would suggest you offer our help to the Utah case authorities in identifying the components at issue, the inflator, module housing and cushion. We have specialized knowledge that will aid in their investigation. I would also suggest you allow us to inspect the [redacted] vehicles so we can properly document the inflators, module housings and airbag cushions.

[redacted]

[redacted]

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[redacted]