

From: Morgan, Tina <NHTSA> [REDACTED]
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Sent: Tuesday, March 6, 2007 10:39 AM
To: Magno, Gregory <NHTSA> [REDACTED] Demeter, Kathleen <NHTSA> [REDACTED]
Cc: Duckwitz, William <NHTSA> [REDACTED] Yon, Scott <NHTSA> [REDACTED]
Subject: EWR Referral 2005-2006 Cobalt
Attachments: ForBD.xls; CADILLAC CTS MORE.XLS; Cobalt cover memo.doc; 2005-SRX-14.pdf; 2005-EQUINOX-14.pdf; 2005-COBALT-14.pdf; 2005-9-5-14.pdf; 2005-CTS-14.pdf; Cobalt Spreadsheet.xls

Early Warning Division hereby presents a EWR referral concerning non-deploy air bags in frontal crashes involving 2005-2006 Chevrolet Cobalts. There are **15 VOQs and 28 Field Reports** that indicated front impact collisions where the airbag system allegedly did not deploy during the crash. There are **43 crashes** that yielded a total of **27 injuries and 4 fatalities**. Scott Yon's Time Series Method also ranked the **2005 Cobalt for air bags as the highest GM product for warranty claims on airbags on 2005 model year light vehicles**. The supporting memo and data are attached.

Bill Duckwitz developed this package. Please notify him and me concerning your decision on this package.

We request feedback within two weeks.

Thanks,

Tina

Tina Morgan

Chief, Early Warning Division



U.S. Department
of Transportation

Memorandum

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

Subject: EWR Referral
2005-06 Chevrolet Cobalt

Date: March 6, 2007

From: Christina Morgan
Chief, EW Division

Author: Bill Duckwitz

To: Greg Magno
Chief, Defect Assessment Division

Vehicle of Concern:

EWR Reporting Quarter: 2006Q2
Manufacturer: General Motors Corporation (GM)
Subject Vehicle: 2005-06 MY, Model: Chevrolet Cobalt
Crash Date(s): Multiple Crash Events 2/7/05 – 2/12/07
Reporting Category: L
Population: 280,000 (est.)
EWR Component Code: Air bags

Summary:

NHTSA/ODI sent a Death and Injury (DI) Inquiry to GM concerning a fatal crash involving a 2006 Chevrolet Cobalt that occurred on 1/21/06. GM submitted several documents that indicated the subject vehicle experienced the fatal crash as it spun out of control and struck multiple trees. The driver died a few days later in the week. The decedent's attorney did not present a specific defect claim, however, the vehicle was a rental, and the Enterprise rental car company alleged the vehicle's airbag system did not deploy during the crash. GM indicated that their investigation did not include an assessment of the alleged defect. Further details of the crash event were offered in the DI response package.

A search of Safety Recalls, VOQs, Field Reports, and ODI pursuits revealed 15 VOQs, 28 Field Reports that indicated front impact collisions where the airbag system allegedly did not deploy during the crash. There are 43 crashes that yielded a total of 27 injuries and 4 fatalities.

Other Notes:

There are no apparent Safety Recalls, or Pursuits related to these crash events. However, NHTSA/ODI was notified on January 16, 2007 of GM's Safety Recall Number 07V014 involving 2005 Model Year Cobalt vehicles that head impact protection may be inadequate



because the vehicle were not equipped with an optional roof-mounted side impact air bags. Additionally, NHTSA/ODI was notified of three GM TSBs published in January 2005 concerning airbag system issues, TSB numbers 10013542, 10019210, 10020881 (see attachments) which may have affected the warranty data.

The warranty claim rate for the cobalt is significantly higher than other GM products and other manufacturers' products. Attached are aggregate data for the Cobalt and some peer products and the warranty claims for the 2005 Cobalt and other 2005 GM products. Please let us know if you have any questions about this package.

Recommendation: IE Screening