



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

ODI RESUME

Investigation: EA08-001
 Prompted By: PE07-045
 Date Opened: 01/04/2008 Date Closed: 12/31/2008
 Principal Investigator: Peter Ong
 Subject: BMW Air Bag Light Illumination

Manufacturer: BMW of North America, LLC
 Products: 2004 – 2006 BMW 5, 7, X3 & Z4 and 2006 3, 6 & X5 Vehicles
 Population: 333,247

Problem Description: The occupant classification system for the passenger air bag may malfunction and render the passenger frontal air bag inoperative.

FAILURE REPORT SUMMARY

	ODI	Manufacturer	Total
Complaints:	29	729	758
Crashes/Fires:	0	0	0
Injury Incidents:	0	0	0
# Injuries:	0	0	0
Fatality Incidents:	0	0	0
# Fatalities:	0	0	0
Other:	0	23,739	23,739

Description of Other: Warranty claims related to air bag seat sensor issue.

Action: Close this Engineering Analysis (see Recall 08V-384).

Engineer: Peter C. Ong

Date: 01/02/2009

Div. Chief: Thomas Z. Cooper

Date: 01/02/2009

Office Dir.: Kathleen C. DeMeter

Date: 01/02/2009

Summary:

BMW is conducting a Safety Recall Campaign on approximately 200,000 MY04 through MY06 subject vehicles built through 11/30/05 to correct the front passenger seat air bag occupant detection mat. The specific vehicles included in the recall are MY04-06/ 5-series with standard and sport seats, MY04-06/ X3-series and MY06/ 3-series with sport seats.

In addition, BMW will extend the warranty coverage of the passenger seat air bag occupant detection mat to 10-year/unlimited mileage on approximately 120,000 remaining MY04-06 subject vehicles built through 11/30/05. The specific vehicles included in the extended warranty are MY06/ 6 series, MY06/ 3-series with standard seats, MY04-05/ Z4, MY04-06/ 7 series, MY06/ X5, and MY04-06/ 5-series with comfort seats. The average frequency of failures among the extended warranty groups was less than 1/7th of the recall vehicle groups. Please see BMW's 08V-384 Recall notification for further details.

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Depending on seat configuration and vehicle geometry, the occupant detection mat can fatigue during use depending on the manner and frequency of the front passenger's entry and exit. Specifically, over time, micro-cracks could develop in the side flanks of the mat causing a broken circuit. A broken circuit can lead to the deactivation of the passenger air bag and the illumination of both the air bag warning light and the passenger air bag light.