

# BLACK BOX DATA AVAILABILITY

Quite a few of our clients have expressed interest in the availability of “black box” data from motor vehicles. As a result, we have decided to publish a list of vehicle makes and models from which this data can presently be obtained (see the insert accompanying this newsletter). As will be apparent from the list, not all vehicle manufacturers make this data available. Even among those that do, it may be a hit or miss proposition as to whether your particular vehicle is represented.

Figure 6 shows a 2000 Chevrolet Malibu that was involved in a head-on collision with a Nissan Maxima that crossed the center line on an interstate highway. One of the issues involved was whether the Malibu driver made reasonable efforts to avoid the collision. Figure 7 is a summary of data downloaded from the Malibu. The data shows that the Malibu had been traveling at a speed of approximately 71 MPH (the speed limit was 70). The driver’s foot was off the gas and the throttle was almost fully closed for the entire 5 seconds leading up to the collision. At a time between 2 and 3 seconds before the collision, the driver braked, reducing his speed to 47 MPH one second before impact. Another part of the data output shows that his car lost about 35 MPH in the collision. From this data and from the impact location (on the shoulder of the highway), it was clear that the Malibu driver had made an effort to avoid the collision. Figure 7 also shows that the driver was not wearing his seat belt at the time of the collision.



Figure 6

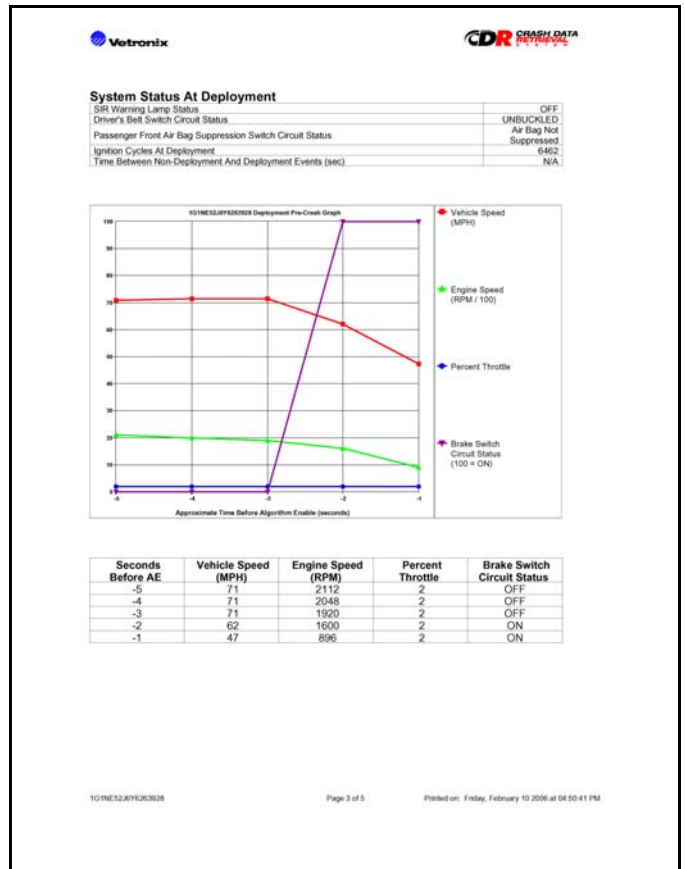


Figure 7

Black box data is also available for many late model commercial trucks. More often than not, however, obtaining this data requires cooperation from the vehicle manufacturer. By now, we have established contacts with many of the truck manufacturers and, with their cooperation, can often obtain such data for trucks.

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