

Record airbag recall

22nd May, 2015



Authorities in the USA are recalling a record 34 million cars because of safety concerns over the airbags fitted in them. The manufacturer of the airbags has admitted that mechanisms inside the bags are defective and thus

need to be repaired or replaced. A spokesman from the company Takata said that the airbags open too quickly on impact, which can cause broken glass or shards of metal to be propelled into the face of the driver or passenger. The bags are fitted into 11 different models of car and the recall constitutes the biggest in US history. It follows a string of other recalls, from Japanese manufacturers Toyota and Honda. The faulty airbags have been linked to six deaths and more than 100 injuries.

The US Department for Transportation welcomed the airbag recall. A spokesman said: "Today is a major step forward for public safety.

The department...is taking the proactive steps necessary to ensure that defective inflators are replaced with safe ones as quickly as possible, and that the highest risks are addressed first." Meanwhile, Takata CEO Shigehisa Takada said: "We are pleased to have reached this agreement...which represents a clear path forward." The company will obviously take a huge financial hit. The recall will cost the company and its customers up to \$5 billion. Despite this, Mr Takada said he expects the company will still be able to make a profit this year.

Sources: Reuters / NY Times / BBC.com

Writing

Cars are the safest form of transport. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

authorities / safety concerns / manufacturer / mechanisms / impact / passenger / major / step forward / public safety / risks / agreement / financial hit / customers

True / False

- Japan has recalled a record 34 million cars over safety concerns. T / F
- The airbag maker has denied that anything was wrong with its airbags. T / F
- There are eleven different models of car affected by the recall. T / F
- Sixty deaths have been attributed to the airbags. T / F
- The US Department of Transportation is happy with the recall. T / F
- The CEO of the airbag company said he was pleased. T / F
- The recall will cost the airbag company and its customers up to \$5bn. T / F
- The airbag company will not be able to make any profit this year. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. concerns | a. broken |
| 2. admitted | b. greeted |
| 3. defective | c. connected |
| 4. propelled | d. course |
| 5. linked | e. worries |
| 6. welcomed | f. anticipates |
| 7. major | g. launched |
| 8. replaced | h. confessed |
| 9. path | i. exchanged |
| 10. expects | j. important |

Discussion – Student A

- How do airbags work?
- How are safety regulations in your country?
- Do you ever worry about safety in cars?
- In what other areas of life should there be airbags?
- How safe are cars and driving in them?
- If you bought a new car, would you ask questions about airbags?
- What risks and dangers are there in your daily life?
- What questions would you like to ask Takata's CEO?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. safety | a. or passenger |
| 2. mechanisms inside the bags | b. path forward |
| 3. the driver | c. of other recalls |
| 4. It follows a string | d. step forward |
| 5. linked to six deaths and | e. concerns |
| 6. a major | f. addressed first |
| 7. taking the proactive | g. more than 100 injuries |
| 8. the highest risks are | h. profit |
| 9. a clear | i. are defective |
| 10. make a | j. steps necessary |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you know about airbags?
- How good an invention are airbags?
- What do you think of the safety recall?
- Do you feel comforted if there are airbags in a car?
- What other safety features would you like to see in cars?
- How much damage do you think this recall will cause the maker?
- What do you think of Toyota and Honda?
- What compensation should the air bag company pay people?

Spelling

- tasrtoiehui in the USA
- fseaty concerns
- ecahssmimn inside the bags
- the driver or enpseasgr
- Japanese cteruaunfmasr
- six deaths and more than 100 sjrieiun
- a major step wdfraor
- taking the proactive steps ecreanyss
- the highest risks are esrdaedds first
- reached this nmtreegea
- rprsseteen a clear path forward
- take a huge aicfnlia hit

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. h	3. a	4. g	5. c
6. b	7. j	8. i	9. d	10. f

Role Play

Role A – Bicycle

You think a bicycle is the safest form of transport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so safe. Also, tell the others which is the most dangerous of these (and why): car, train or bus.

Role B – Car

You think a car is the safest form of transport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so safe. Also, tell the others which is the most dangerous of these (and why): bicycle, train or bus.

Role C – Train

You think a train is the safest form of transport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so safe. Also, tell the others which is the most dangerous of these (and why): car, bicycle or bus.

Role D – Bus

You think a bus is the safest form of transport. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so safe. Also, tell the others which is the most dangerous of these (and why): car, train or bicycle.

Speaking – Transport

Rank these with your partner. Put the safest at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------|
| • taxi | • bicycle |
| • motorbike | • car |
| • bus | • ship |
| • helicopter | • train |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.