

NHTSA research shows that aftermarket items mounted in the passenger compartment can interfere with air bag deployment or can be propelled into occupants causing moderate to severe injuries

In fact, The National Center for Statistics and Analysis's Special Crash Investigations Program has recently discovered several situations in which laptop computers have caused injuries to police officers. These injuries are occurring due to communication terminals, warning devices, etc. being mounted in the deployment path of passenger side airbags. The deployment of the airbag causes objects in the deployment path to become flying projectiles.



Communications terminal mounted in the deployment path of a passenger side frontal air bag. *Note the frontal warning device mounted to the screen.*

Any piece of aftermarket equipment mounted to; in front of, or on top of the instrument panel of air bag equipped vehicle poses a risk of;

- Interfering with the normal deployment path of the air bag decreasing it's effectiveness or
- Becoming a projectile within the passenger compartment.



Post crash results of communications equipment mounted in the deployment path of a passenger side frontal air bag.
Photo courtesy of Dave Long

Because of these risks, it is imperative that the parties responsible for installing aftermarket equipment in;

- Emergency Services vehicles
- Public Utility vehicles
- Other service vehicles

Check with the appropriate manufacturers representatives to obtain guidance for safe mounting locations and practices. Directions for obtaining this information from three major suppliers of law enforcement / emergency services vehicles are outlined below.

Ford:

For information regarding mounting or locating equipment in the front seat/dashboard area for Ford Crown Victoria Police Interceptor vehicles to avoid air bag deployment zones:

- Consult the police/fleet owner guide supplement in the glove box

Or

- Via the internet, go to www.fleet.ford.com

- Point to "Products" tab and a drop down menu will offer: "State & Local Government"
- Point to "State & Local Government" and a drop down menu will offer "General Information"
- Click on "General Information" and a page will come up with multiple topic references
- Click on "Police Vehicles Equipment Installation Guide" on that page to bring up the information about mounting or locating equipment

Or

- Via phone, call the Ford Fleet Hotline at 1-800-34-FLEET

GM:

For information regarding mounting or locating equipment in the front seat/dashboard area for Chevrolet Impala, Camaro or Tahoe Police Interceptor vehicles and the Express Van and Hummer platforms to avoid air bag deployment zones:

- Consult the police/fleet owner guide supplement in the glove box

Or

- Via the internet, go to: www.gmfleet.com
 - Click on the "Site Map"
 - Scroll down to "Specialty Vehicles"
 - Click on "Law Enforcement"
 - Scroll down to "Safety Information"

Or

- Via phone, call GM's Fleet Operations at 1-800-FLEET –OP (353-3867)

Daimler Chrysler:

For information regarding mounting or locating equipment in the front seat/dashboard area for Dodge Intrepid Police Interceptor vehicles to avoid air bag deployment zones:

- Consult the police/fleet owner guide supplement in the glove box

Or

- Via the internet, go to: www.Chrysler.com
 - Click on "Vehicles"
 - Scroll down to "Fleet Vehicles"
 - This will take you to the Fleet Services Area

Or

- Via phone, call Chrysler's Fleet Services at 1-800-999- FLEET (3533)

For other manufacturers, contact the appropriate fleet services program.