

Remote Not In Traffic Surveillance Hyperthermia Investigation
Dynamic Science, Inc. (DSI), Case Number DS08014
2007 Ford Focus
Utah
April 2008

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The crash investigation process is an inexact science which requires that physical evidence such as skid marks, vehicular damage measurements, and occupant contact points be coupled with the investigator's expert knowledge and experience of vehicle dynamics and occupant kinematics in order to determine the pre-crash, crash, and post-crash movements of involved vehicles and occupants.

Because each crash is a unique sequence of events, generalized conclusions cannot be made concerning the crashworthiness performance of the involved vehicle(s) or their safety systems.

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16. Abstract <p>This remote investigation focused on an 19-month-old male who was left in a closed vehicle for approximately three hours during April 2008 and expired due to hyperthermia. The driver had just returned to her residence at 1230 hours from a trip to the grocery store. As she began to unload the groceries, she noticed that the child had fallen asleep in the back of the vehicle. She decided to leave the child in the vehicle until she had finished unloading the groceries. At approximately 1540 hours, she remembered that the child was still in the vehicle. She returned to the vehicle and found the child still restrained in the Child Safety Seat (CSS). She removed the child from the vehicle, brought him into the residence, and called 911. The child was pronounced dead at approximately 1545 hours by the responding paramedics.</p> <p>This Not In Traffic Surveillance (NITS) hyperthermia case was initiated in response to an online news article reporting the death of the 19-month-old male child. DSI was notified of the article and assigned the case by the Crash Investigation Division (CID) of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) on May 12, 2008. Cooperation was obtained from the local police department who investigated this incident as a crime. The District Attorney evaluated the case and decided not to file criminal charges against the mother. The general offense report was retained at police headquarters and was not reported to the state crash database.</p>				
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**Dynamic Science, Inc.
Crash Investigation
Case Number: DS08014**

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BACKGROUND

This remote investigation focused on an 19-month-old male who was left in a closed vehicle for approximately three hours during April 2008 and expired due to hyperthermia. The driver had just returned to her residence at 1230 hours from a trip to the grocery store. As she began to unload the groceries, she noticed that the child had fallen asleep in the back of the vehicle. She decided to leave the child in the vehicle until she had finished unloading the groceries. At approximately 1540 hours, she remembered that the child was still in the vehicle. She returned to the vehicle and found the child still restrained in the Child Safety Seat (CSS). She removed the child from the vehicle, brought him into the residence, and called 911. The child was pronounced dead at approximately 1545 hours by the responding paramedics.

This Not In Traffic Surveillance (NITS) hyperthermia case was initiated in response to an online news article reporting the death of the 19-month-old male child. DSI was notified of the article and assigned the case by the Crash Investigation Division (CID) of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) on May 12, 2008. Cooperation was obtained from the local police department who investigated this incident as a crime. The District Attorney evaluated the case and decided not to file criminal charges against the mother. The general offense report was retained at police headquarters and was not reported to the state crash database. The following information was obtained from the police incident report, on-scene color prints, and several news articles. The Not In Traffic Surveillance data forms are included as Attachment 2 to this report.

SUMMARY

Incident Site

This hyperthermia related death occurred in a private driveway (**Figure 1**). The driveway was of concrete construction and was located to the west of the residence. The death occurred in April 2008 between 1230 and 1540 hours. According to the nearest reporting station, the temperature ranged from 23 degrees C (73 degrees F) at 1253 hours to 24 degrees C (76 degrees F) at 1553 hours. The driveway was exposed to the sun throughout this time period.

Vehicle Data

The subject vehicle was a gray-colored 2007 Ford Focus four-door sedan that was parked facing south in the driveway of the driver's residence (**Figure 2**). The vehicle was not equipped with a sunroof. The interior color was light gray. There were maroon colored seat covers on the front bucket seats. There appeared to be a blue colored



Figure 1. Parked 2007 Ford Focus

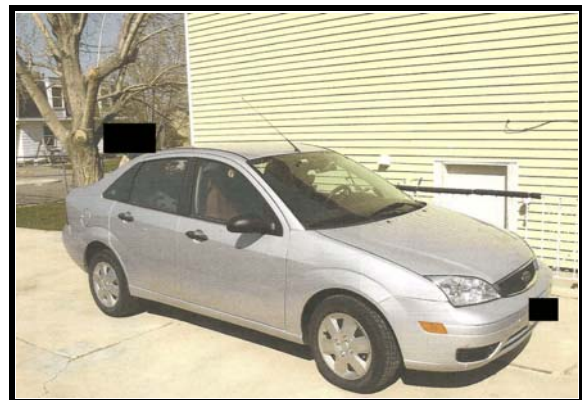


Figure 2. Front right, 2007 Ford Focus

seat cover on the rear seat. A forward facing CSS was located in the left rear seating position. The police reported that the front and rear door windows were fully closed throughout the duration of this incident.

Non-Motorist Data

The 19-month-old male child was the driver's son. The child was wearing a pair of pants, a T-shirt, a onsie¹, a light jacket, and sandals. He weighed 10 kg (22 lbs) and was 76 cm (30 in) tall. The child was seated in the left rear seat of the vehicle in a forward facing child safety seat (**Figures 3-4**).



Figure 3. Forward facing CSS, view from right

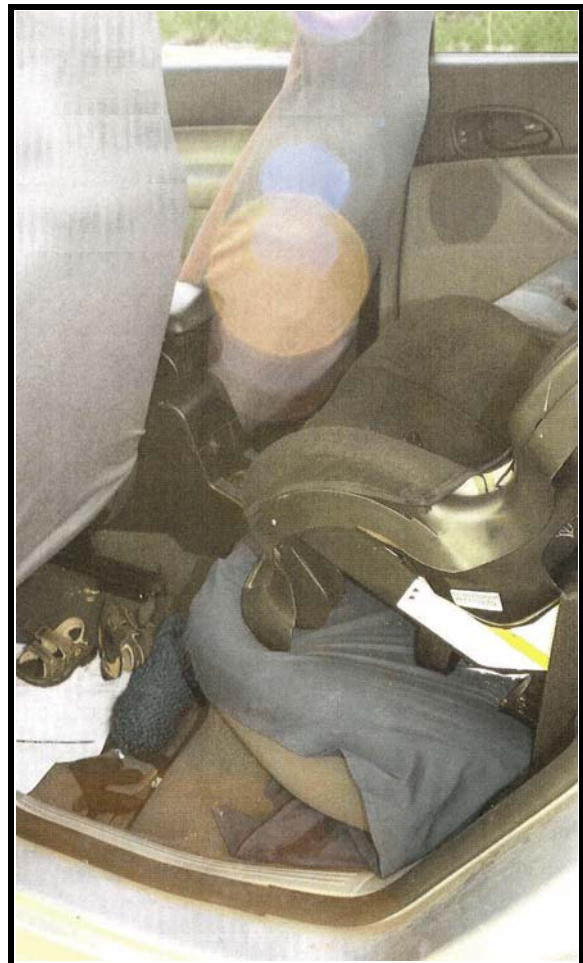


Figure 4. Forward facing CSS, view from left

Incident

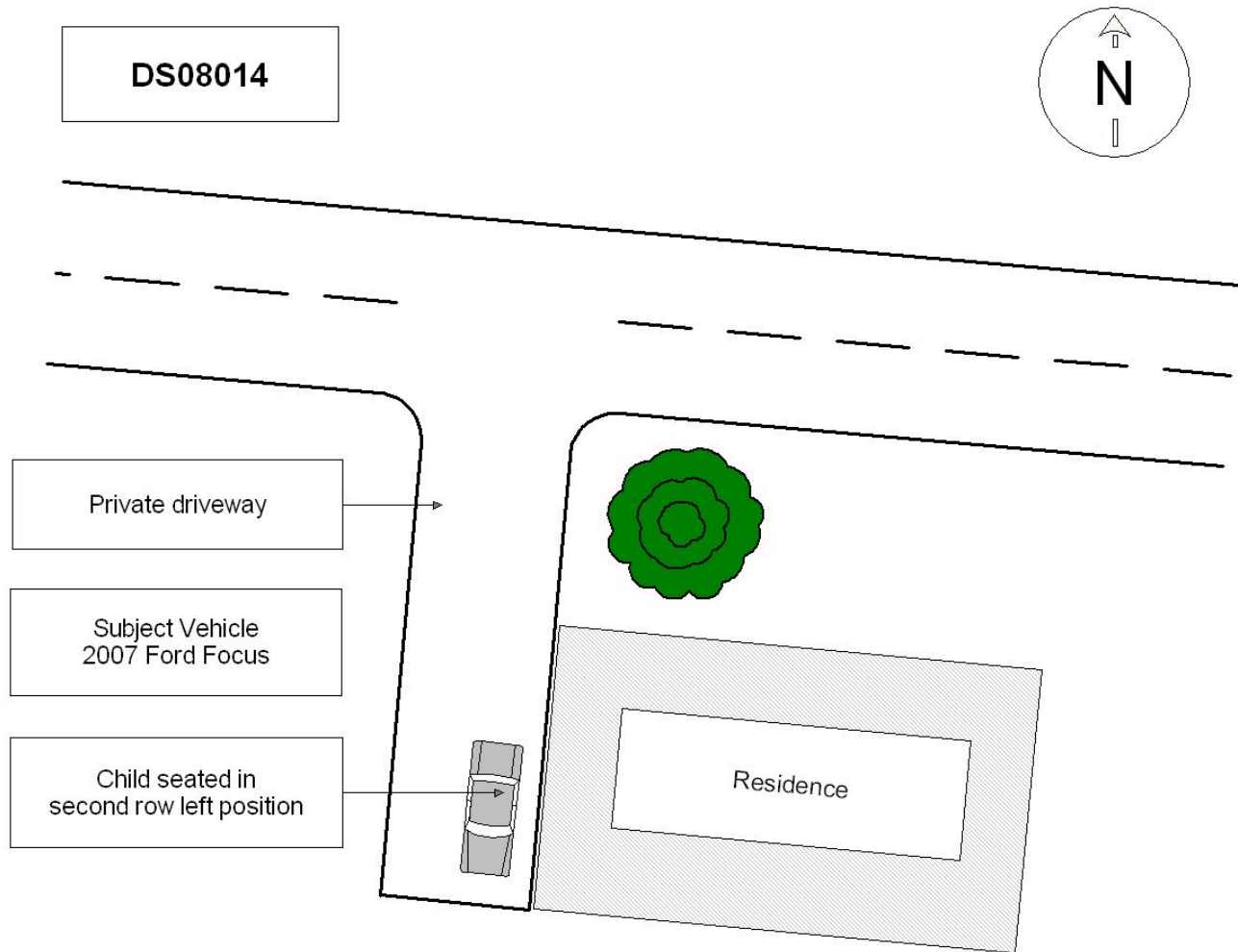
The driver of the Ford Focus was a 33-year-old female. The driver had just returned to her residence

¹A bodysuit for infants designed to conceal a diaper when worn. The shirt extends past the waist and has snaps or buttons that allow it to be closed over the crotch.

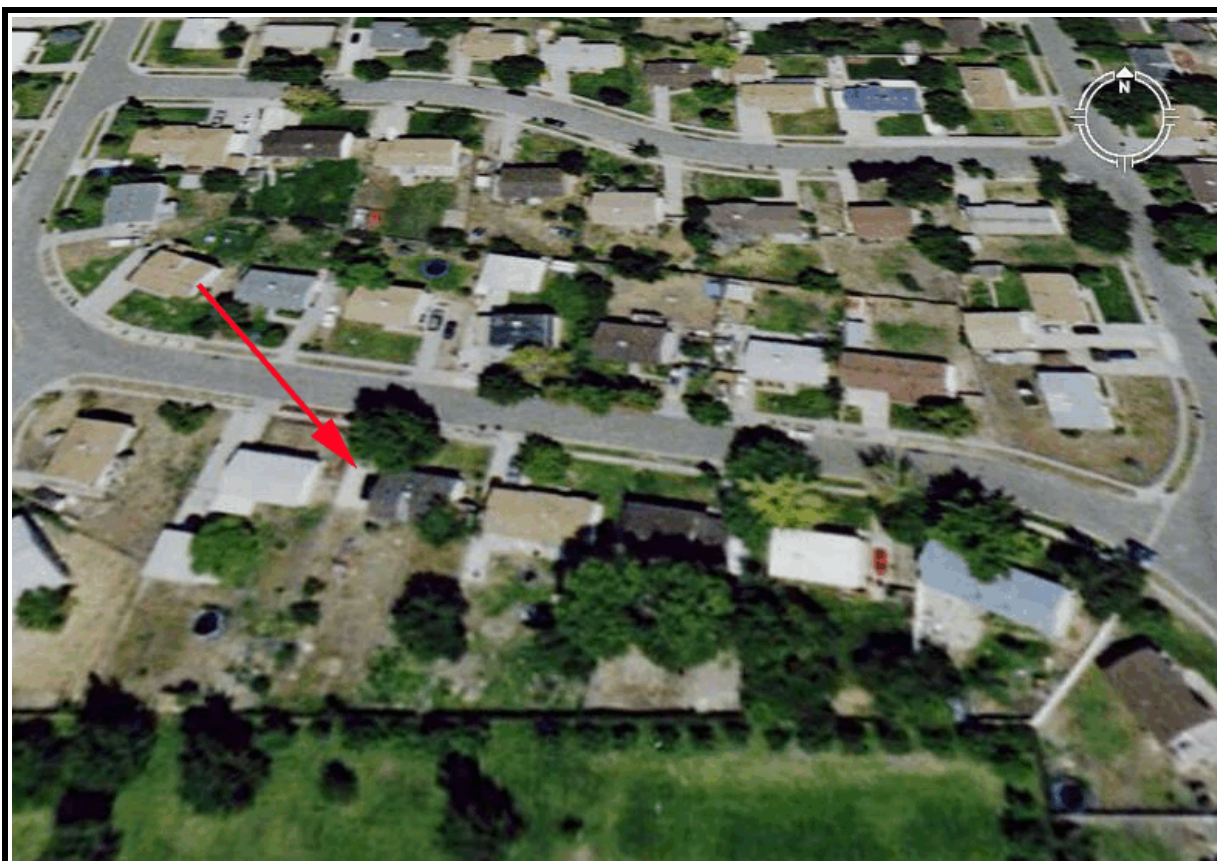
at 1230 hours from a trip to the grocery store. As she began to unload the groceries, she noticed that the child had fallen asleep in the back of the vehicle. She decided to leave the child in the vehicle until she had finished unloading the groceries. At approximately 1540 hours, she remembered that the child was still in the vehicle. As she returned to the vehicle, she noticed that the child was pale white and was foaming at the mouth. She removed the child from the vehicle, brought him into the residence, and called emergency services. The child was pronounced dead at approximately 1545 hours by the responding paramedics. A liver temperature was taken at this time and measured 42 degrees C (107 degrees F).

An autopsy was conducted on the following day. The medical examiner listed the manner of death as Accident and the immediate cause of death as Hyperthermia. The medical examiner noted petechiae on the epicardial surface of the heart and right ventricular dilatation. The toxicology report was negative for drugs. The medical examiner indicated that the child was otherwise healthy and the consequence of being left in the vehicle led to his death.

Attachment 1. Scene Diagram



Attachment 2. Satellite View of Incident Site



Attachment 3. Data Forms



1. Case Number

IDENTIFICATION

2. Date of Crash ____ / ____ / ____

3. Time of Crash _____

Code reported military time of crash.

NOTE: Midnight = 2400
Unknown = 9999

AMBIENT CONDITIONS

4. Light Conditions

- Daylight
- Dark
- Dark but lighted
- Dawn
- Dusk
- Unknown

5. Atmospheric Conditions
(Select all that apply)

- Clear-No adverse conditions
- Cloudy
- Rain
- Snow
- Fog, Smog, Smoke
- Sleet, Hail (freezing rain or drizzle)
- Blowing Snow
- Severe Crosswinds
- Blowing Sand, Soil, Dirt
- Other (specify):
- Unknown

6. Temperature

- Below 0 degrees Celsius (Below 32 F)
- 1-10 degrees Celsius (33-50 F)
- >10-24 degrees Celsius (51-75 F)
- Over 24 degrees Celsius (Over 75 F)
- Unknown

SCENE INFORMATION

7. Type of area in which crash occurred
(Select all that apply)

- Single family residential
- Row houses/townhouses
- Multi family housing
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Rural
- Unknown

8. Driver exterior sightline obstructions
(Select all that apply)

- None
- Other vehicles
- Building
- Trees
- Shrubby
- Other (specify) _____
- Utility poles
- Signs
- Glare
- Unknown
- No driver present

9. Crash location

- Driveway
- Parking Lot
- Sidewalk
- Alley
- Intersection of driveway and sidewalk
- Road / street
- Roadside / shoulder
- Other (specify) _____
- Unknown

10. Non motorist sightline obstructions
(Select all that apply)

- None
- Other vehicles
- Building
- Trees
- Shrubby
- Utility poles
- Signs
- Glare
- Other (specify) _____
- Unknown

11. Grade at parked position _____ +/- %

12. Estimated distance from parked position to impact
_____ m

13. Estimated speed at impact _____ +/- kmph

14. Grade at impact _____ +/- %

15. Estimated distance from impact to vehicle final rest
_____ m

Unknown = 999 Reference Items 11,12, 13, 14, 15



VEHICLE FORM

1. Case Number _____

VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION

2. VIN _____

3. Model Year _____

4. Vehicle Make (specify): _____

5. Vehicle Model (specify): _____

GLAZING

Location	Presence (check)	Status (select)	Clarity (select)	Tint (check)	Glazing Obstructions (specify if present)
Windshield		Fixed / Closed / Open / Partially Open / Unknown	Clear / Hazy / Very Dirty / Unknown		
LF		Fixed / Closed / Open / Partially Open	Clear / Hazy / Very Dirty		
RF		Fixed / Closed / Open / Partially Open	Clear / Hazy / Very Dirty		
2 nd Left		Fixed / Closed / Open / Partially Open	Clear / Hazy / Very Dirty		
2 nd Right		Fixed / Closed / Open / Partially Open	Clear / Hazy / Very Dirty		
3 rd Left		Fixed / Closed / Open / Partially Open	Clear / Hazy / Very Dirty		
3 rd Right		Fixed / Closed / Open / Partially Open	Clear / Hazy / Very Dirty		
Backlight		Fixed / Closed / Open / Partially Open	Clear / Hazy / Very Dirty		
Left Backlight		Fixed / Closed / Open / Partially Open	Clear / Hazy / Very Dirty		
Right Backlight		Fixed / Closed / Open / Partially Open	Clear / Hazy / Very Dirty		
Roof		Fixed / Closed / Open / Partially Open	Clear / Hazy / Very Dirty		
Other (specify)		Fixed / Closed / Open / Partially Open	Clear / Hazy / Very Dirty		

TIRE DATA

6. Vehicle Manufacturer Recommended Tire Size _____

7. LF Tire Size _____

9. RF Tire Size _____

8. LR Tire Size _____

10. RR Tire Size _____

Seats / Head Restraint Data

Seat Position	Seat Type (Select from below)	Head Restraint (Check if available)	Head Restraint Adjustment (select)	NOTES:
Front Left			Full Down / Mid / Full Up	
Front Middle			Full Down / Mid / Full Up	
Front Right			Full Down / Mid / Full Up	
2 nd Left			Full Down / Mid / Full Up	
2 nd Middle			Full Down / Mid / Full Up	
2 nd Right			Full Down / Mid / Full Up	
3 rd Left			Full Down / Mid / Full Up	
3 rd Middle			Full Down / Mid / Full Up	
3 rd Right			Full Down / Mid / Full Up	

Seat Type codes:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 0 = No seat or seat folded down | 8 = Pedestal (i.e. column supported) |
| 1 = Bucket | 9 = Box mounted (i.e. van type) |
| 2 = Bucket w/ folding back | 10= Other seat type (specify) |
| 3 = Bench | 99= Unknown seat type |
| 4 = Bench with folding back cushions | |
| 5 = Bench w/ folding back | |
| 6 = Split bench w/ separate back cushions | |
| 7 = Split bench w/ separate folding back | |

VEHICLE MEASUREMENTS

Clearance Heights	Measurements (all from ground, and in centimeters)	NOTES
Beltline		
Top of trunk/tailgate		
Bottom of bumper		
Trailer hitch (if applicable)		
Undercarriage		
Sway bar		
Axle		
Differential		
Other (specify):		
Sensor Height (if equipped)		
Camera Height (if equipped)		



1. Case Number

PARKING AID PRESENCE

2. Type of backing/parking aid present

- OEM camera
- OEM ultrasonic/radar sensor
- OEM combination camera-ultrasonic/radar sensor
- OEM Fresnel lens
- OEM interior mirrors
- Aftermarket camera
- Aftermarket ultrasonic/radar sensor
- Aftermarket combination camera-ultrasonic radar sensor
- Aftermarket Fresnel lens
- Aftermarket interior mirrors
- Other (specify): _____

CAMERA INFORMATION

Specify field of view measurements on diagram

3. System make/model

4. Video monitor type

- None present
- LCD (color)
- CRT (black & white)
- Unknown

5. Video display size _____ cm
(Diagonal)

6. Camera location

- None present
- Bumper
- License plate
- Tailgate/Hatch/Trunk
- Other (specify): _____

7. Video image quality under scene lighting conditions

- None present
- Good
- Average
- Poor (specify): _____
- Unknown

8. Was the camera functioning properly

- None present
- Yes
- No, poor image quality due to glare
- No, poor image quality due to atmospheric conditions
- No, camera turned off
- No, camera inoperable
- Unknown

ULTRASONIC/RADAR SENSOR

Specify object detection range on diagram

9. System make/model

10. Auditory warning illumination

- No sensor present
- Yes
- No
- Unknown

11. Number of sensors _____

12. Sensor locations
(Select all that apply)

- No sensor present
- Left bumper
- Center bumper
- Right bumper
- License plate area
- Tailgate/Hatch/Trunk

13. Was warning system functioning properly

- No sensor present
- Yes, system alerted driver
- No, system did not alert driver
- No, system turned off
- No, system inoperable
- Unknown

14. Did driver react to warning

- No sensor present
- Yes
- No
- Unknown

15. Did driver report common false warnings

- No sensor present
- Yes
- No
- Unknown



DRIVER FORM

1. Case Number

DRIVER PROFILE

2. Driver's Age _____
99 = Unknown

3. Driver's Sex Male
 Female
 Unknown

4. Driver's Height _____ cm
999 = Unknown

5. Driver's Weight _____ kg
999 = Unknown

6. Driver eyewear worn
(Select all that apply)
 None
 Eyeglasses
 Sunglasses
 Contacts
 Unknown

7. Driver vision deficiency condition
(Select all that apply)
 None
 Near sighted
 Far sighted
 Astigmatism
 Other (specify): _____
 Unknown

8. Non motorist's relationship to driver
 No relationship
 Child
 Grandchild
 Sibling
 Neighbor
 Friend
 Other (specify): _____
 Unknown

DRIVER ACTIONS

9. Driver approach to vehicle for entry
From left front
 From left
 From left rear
 From right rear
 From right front
 Circled vehicle
 Return trip (backing into driveway/lot)
 Other (specify): _____
 N/A
 Unknown

10. Driver entry interruption
(Select all that apply)
 Direct trip from building to vehicle
 Loaded items into vehicle
 Spoke with family
 Spoke with neighbors
 Spoke with contacted nonmotorist
 Return trip (backing into driveway/lot)
 Other (specify): _____
 N/A
Unknown

11. Purpose of backing
 Leaving parking space in parking lot
 Backing onto roadway from driveway
 Entering parking space in parking lot
 Backing into driveway from roadway
 Other (specify): _____
 N/A
Unknown

12. Where was driver going
Description:

13. Driver in a hurry
 Yes N/A
 No Unknown
 Unknown

14. How did driver check behind (rear area of vehicle)
after vehicle entry
(Select all that apply)
 Did not look
 Checked mirrors
 Turned right and looked back
 Turned left and looked back
 Viewed Camera
 Listened for auditory/visual warning from system
 Other (specify): _____
N/A Unknown

15. Estimated time between vehicle entry and start
of backing
 0-10 Seconds Over 60 Seconds
 11-30 Seconds N/A
 31-60 Seconds Unknown

16. What direction was the driver looking during backing maneuver
(Select all that apply)
- Straight ahead
 - Right
 - Left
 - Rearward
 - At object inside the car
 - At mirrors
 - Other (specify): _____
 - N/A
 - Unknown
17. Was the driver distracted during back up maneuver
(Select all that apply)
- No non-driving activities
 - External**
 - Looking at other vehicles
 - Looking at other non motorist
 - Looking at intended turn destination
 - External focus, not specified
 - Other external focus (specify): _____
 - Internal**
 - Looking at other occupant
 - Talking to passenger
 - Dialing phone
 - Talking on phone
 - Listening to radio/cd/portable playback device
 - Adjusting radio/cd player
 - Adjusting climate controls
 - Using a device/controls integral to vehicle (specify): _____
 - Reading/adjusting navigation system
 - Eating or drinking
 - Smoking related
 - Retrieving fallen object (specify): _____
 - Internal focus, not specified
 - Focused on other internal object (specify): _____
 - N/A
 - Unknown
18. Driver avoidance actions prior to impact
(Select all that apply)
- None
 - Braking
 - Steering left
 - Steering right
 - Accelerating
 - Other (specify): _____
 - N/A
 - Unknown

19. Did driver see struck non motorist prior to impact
(Select all that apply)
- No, never saw non motorist
 - Saw non motorist prior to entering vehicle
 - Saw non motorist after entering vehicle
 - Other (specify): _____
 - N/A
 - Unknown
20. Est time between start of backing and impact
- <2 or = 1 second
 - 2-5 seconds
 - 6-10 seconds
 - > 10 seconds
 - N/A
 - Unknown
21. Driver interior sightline obstructions
(Select all that apply)
- Pillar
 - Headrest
 - Cargo
 - Other occupant
 - Other (specify) _____
 - Unknown
 - None
22. Recent experience driving this vehicle
- More than 10 times the last three months
 - 6-10 times the last three months
 - 2-5 times the last three months
 - Less than 2 times the last three months
 - First time driving this vehicle
 - N/A
 - Unknown
23. Frequency of driving in this parking lot/driveway
- Daily
 - Weekly
 - Several times a month
 - Monthly
 - Rarely
 - First time in lot/driveway
 - N/A
 - Unknown
24. Driver Impairment
(Select all that apply)
- No drugs or alcohol present
 - Alcohol present (specify BAC): _____
 - Drugs present (specify): _____
 - Unknown
25. Source of alcohol/drug results
- Police reported
 - Medical record
 - Other (specify) _____
 - Not Tested
 - Unknown if tested



Non Motorist Form

1. Case Number

NON-MOTORIST PROFILE

2. Non-motorist's Age _____ Months
_____ Years
99 = Unknown

3. Non-motorist's Sex
 Male
 Female
 Unknown

4. Non-motorist's Height _____ cm
999 = Unknown

5. Non-motorist's Weight _____ kg
999 = Unknown

6. Medical outcome
 Not injured
 ER only
 Hospitalized 1-4 days
 Hospitalized 5 days or more
 Treatment later
 Fatal
 Unknown

7. Source of most severe injury
 Bumper
 Tire
 Undercarriage
 Other Specify: _____
 Ground
 N/A
 Unknown

8. Non-motorist impairment
(Select all that apply)
 No drugs or alcohol present
 Positive for alcohol (specify BAC): _____
 Positive for drugs (specify): _____
 Unknown

9. Source of alcohol/drug results
 Police reported
 Medical Report
 Other (specify) _____
 Not Tested
 Unknown if tested

NON-MOTORIST ACTIONS

10. Non-motorist attitude
 Standing
 Bending at waist
 Sitting
 Crouching
 Kneeling
 On skates/skateboard
 On bike/scooter
 Other (specify) _____
 Unknown

11. Non-motorist motion
 Not moving
 Walking slowly
 Walking rapidly
 Running or jogging
 Skipping/Hopping/Jumping
 Falling/Stumbling/Rising
 On skates/skateboard
 On bike/scooter
 Other (specify): _____
 Unknown

12. Non-motorist approach relative to rear of vehicle
 Stationary
 From left
 From right
 From behind
 Other (specify): _____
 Unknown

13. Non-motorist first avoidance action
 No avoidance actions
 Stopped
 Accelerated pace
 Ran away (along vehicle path)
 Jumped
 Turned away from vehicle
 Turned toward vehicle and braced
 Dove or fell away from vehicle
 Other (specify): _____
 Unknown

14. Non-motorist primary focus of attention
 Striking vehicle
 Play object
 Person
 Surrounding traffic
 Animal
 Handheld electronic (phone, MP3 player, etc.)
 Other Object (specify) _____
 Unknown

15. Were any other Non-motorists present?
(Select all that apply)
 Alone
 One adult present
 One other child present
 Multiple adults present
 Multiple children present
 Unknown

NON MOTORIST CLOTHING

NOTES:

- Specify Color, Fabric and Texture/Weight for outermost layer only
- Indicate "NONE" if applicable
- Available codes:

	<u>Colors</u>		<u>Fabrics</u>		<u>Textures</u>		<u>Weights</u>
Black	Charcoal gray		Natural		Soft		Heavy
Lt gray/silver	Brown		Synthetic		Slick		Medium
Gold/tan	Purple		Blend		Coarse		Light
Dark blue	Light blue						
Dark green	Light green						
Maroon	Red						
Orange	Yellow						
White	Other (specify)						

	Clothing	Color	Fabric	Texture	Weight
H E A D W E A R	Hat				
	Helmet				
	Hood				
	Other (specify): _____				
U P P E R B O D Y	Short Sleeve				
	Long Sleeve				
	Light Jacket				
	Heavy Jacket				
	Other (Specify): _____				
L O W E R B O D Y	Shorts				
	Pants				
	Shoes				
	Other (specify): _____				