



**COLLISION WITH CRASH ATTENUATOR – NOVEMBER 14, 2015  
FACTUAL REPORT**

**Mountain View, CA**

**HWY18FH011**

(7 pages)



**NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD  
OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY  
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

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**A. CRASH INFORMATION**

Location: Southbound US Highway 101 (US-101) south of North Shoreline Boulevard at the exit ramp transition to State Route 85 (SR-85), milepost 48.38, Santa Clara County, Mountain View, California.

Vehicle 1: 2017 Tesla Model X P100D

Vehicle 2: 2010 Mazda 3

Vehicle 3: 2017 Audi A4

Date: March 23, 2018

Time: Approximately 9:27 a.m. PDST

NTSB #: **HWY18FH011**

**B. CRASH SUMMARY**

For a summary of the crash, refer to the *Crash Summary Report* in the docket for this investigation.

**C. DETAILS OF THE NOVEMBER 14, 2015 FATAL COLLISION WITH CRASH ATTENUATOR REPORT**

- Section 1 of the report provides background information regarding the collision
- Section 2 of the report provides scene and vehicle damage photos

## 1. Background of the November 14, 2015 Collision with Crash Attenuator

On Saturday, November 14, 2015, at about 10:00 p.m., a 2008 Lexus RX350 SUV was operated by a 67-year-old male driver on US-101 southbound south of North Shoreline Boulevard.<sup>1</sup> The Lexus was traveling in the leftmost HOV exit lane to SR-85 southbound. The vehicle entered the gore area between the US-101 mainline lanes and collided with the crash attenuator. As a result of the crash, the driver died at Stanford University Medical Center in Palo Alto, California on November 15, 2015 at 5:15 a.m. The right front passenger also sustained injuries. Both occupants were wearing their lap/shoulder restraints at the time of the crash. The driver side front airbag, as well as the driver side knee bolster airbag, the driver side curtain airbag, the driver side seat airbag, and the passenger side front airbag all deployed.

NTSB investigators reviewed the circumstances of this crash and determined that the SCI SmartCushion® SCI100GM crash cushion at the location was non-operational at the time of the collision due to being compromised (compressed) in a prior collision. Additionally, the crash cushion was missing its black and yellow retroreflective object marker at the end of the attenuator. The precrash damaged condition of the crash cushion was not reported in the CHP Traffic Collision Report 9330-2015-3996. After the crash, the crash cushion was replaced on December 23, 2015 (39 days after the crash).

Caltrans maintenance records and Google Maps Street View images were reviewed to determine the condition of the crash attenuator prior to the November 15, 2015 fatal crash. Figure 1 below depicts the precrash condition of the crash attenuator as depicted in a Google Maps Street View (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1** – Google Maps Street View image from October 2015 showing the crash cushion fully collapsed and missing the retroreflective object marker. This was the condition of the crash attenuator when the fatal traffic collision occurred on November 14, 2015.

<sup>1</sup> See Highway Attachment 10 –Copies of Traffic Collision Reports

## 2. Photographs of November 14, 2015 Collision with Crash Attenuator

In addition to reviewing CHP Traffic Collision Report 9330-2015-3996, NTSB investigators reviewed CHP photos from the crash scene (see Figures 2 – 7).



**Figure 2** – Postcrash photo of 2008 Lexus SUV on November 14, 2015, after colliding with non-operational crash cushion on US-101 southbound at the exit ramp transition to SR-85.



**Figure 3** – Postcrash photo of crash cushion on November 14, 2015, at the exit ramp transition to SR-85.



**Figure 4** – Postcrash photo of crash cushion on November 14, 2015, at the exit ramp transition to SR-85.



**Figure 5** – Postcrash photo of crash cushion on November 14, 2015, at the exit ramp transition to SR-85.



**Figure 6** – Postcrash photo of 2008 Lexus SUV on November 14, 2015, after colliding with non-operational crash cushion on US-101 southbound at the exit ramp transition to SR-85.



**Figure 7** – Postcrash photo of driver's side of 2008 Lexus SUV on November 14, 2015, after colliding with non-operational crash cushion on US-101 southbound at the exit ramp transition to SR-85.

END OF REPORT

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