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Event Data Recorder

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Since the term "EDR" can be used to cover many different types of devices, we believe it is important to define the term for purposes of this research site. When we use the term EDR in this site, we are referring to a device installed in a motor vehicle to record technical vehicle and occupant information for a brief period of time (seconds, not minutes) before, during and after a crash. For instance, EDRs may record (1) pre-crash vehicle dynamics and system status, (2) driver inputs, (3) vehicle crash signature, (4) restraint usage/deployment status, and (5) post-crash data such as the activation of an automatic collision notification (ACN) system. We are not using the term to include any type of device that either makes an audio or video record, or logs data such as hours of service for truck operators. EDRs are devices which record information related to an "event." In the context of this site the event is defined as a highway vehicle crash.

EDRs can be simple or complex in design, scope, and reach. They can make a major impact on highway safety, assisting in real-world data collection to better define the auto safety problem, aiding in law enforcement, and understanding the specific aspects of a crash.

In 1997, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued recommendations to "pursue crash information gathering using EDRs." NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, in April of the same year recommended that NHTSA "study the feasibility of installing and obtaining crash data for safety analyses from crash recorders on vehicles."

In early 1998, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Office of Research and Development formed a working group comprised of industry, academia, and other government organizations. The group's objective was to facilitate the collection and use of collision-avoidance and crashworthiness data from on-board EDRs. The working group published a report with 29 findings presenting an overview from users and manufacturers.

In 2000, NHTSA sponsored a second working group looking into EDRs specifically associated with trucks, school buses, and motor coaches based on 1999 safety recommendations by the NTSB.

NHTSA has been using EDRs to support its crash investigation program for several years.

EDR data is routinely incorporated into NHTSA's crash databases.

The record of the first NHTSA EDR Working Group, including minutes of the meetings and the final report, is in Docket NHTSA-99-5218. See: Event Data Recorders: Summary of Findings by the NHTSA EDR Working Group, August 2001, Final Report (Docket No. NHTSA-1999-5218-9) at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov)

People interested in additional information about EDRs can examine section 12 of the final report, which lists the bibliography and references.

The record of this second Working Group is in Docket NHTSA-2000-7699. The final report was published in May 2002. See Event Data Recorders, Summary of Findings by the NHTSA EDR Working Group, May 2002, Final Report, Volume II, Supplemental Findings for Trucks, Motorcoaches, and School Buses. (Docket No. NHTSA-2000-7699-6) at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov)

On three occasions, the NHTSA has published documents in the Federal Register addressing particular questions about its role with respect to EDRs.

In 63 FR 60270, November 9, 1998, and 64 FR 29616, June 2, 1999, the agency denied petitions for rulemaking asking to require installation of EDRs in all new motor vehicles.

In responding to these petitions, NHTSA said EDRs could provide information that is very valuable to understanding crashes, and which can be used in a variety of ways to improve motor vehicle safety. The agency denied the petitions because the motor vehicle industry was already voluntarily moving in the direction recommended by the petitioners, and because the agency believed "this area presents some issues that are, at least for the present time, best addressed in a non-regulatory context."

The agency received a third petition asking it to require the installation of EDRs in new motor vehicles. The agency responded in 67 FR 63493 on October 11, 2002, via a "Request for Comments." 83 submissions are available for review in Docket No. NHTSA-2002-13546-3 at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov)

In FR 69 32932 on June 14, 2004, the agency issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (49 CFR Part 563). The 125 submissions are available for review in Docket #.NHTSA-2004-18029-2 at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov)

As of February 2005, the agency was reviewing these submissions.

This Internet Web site is another EDR-related effort to promote the understanding and widespread use of these devices. It is designed to be a useful resource for anyone seeking knowledge of the emerging highway-based EDR technologies. By sponsoring this effort, NHTSA encourages dialogue, research and development in emerging EDR technologies with the goal of fewer crashes, injuries, and deaths.

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