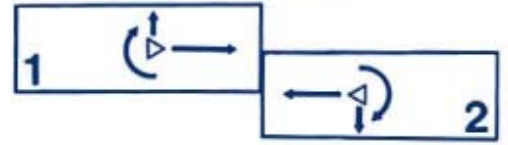


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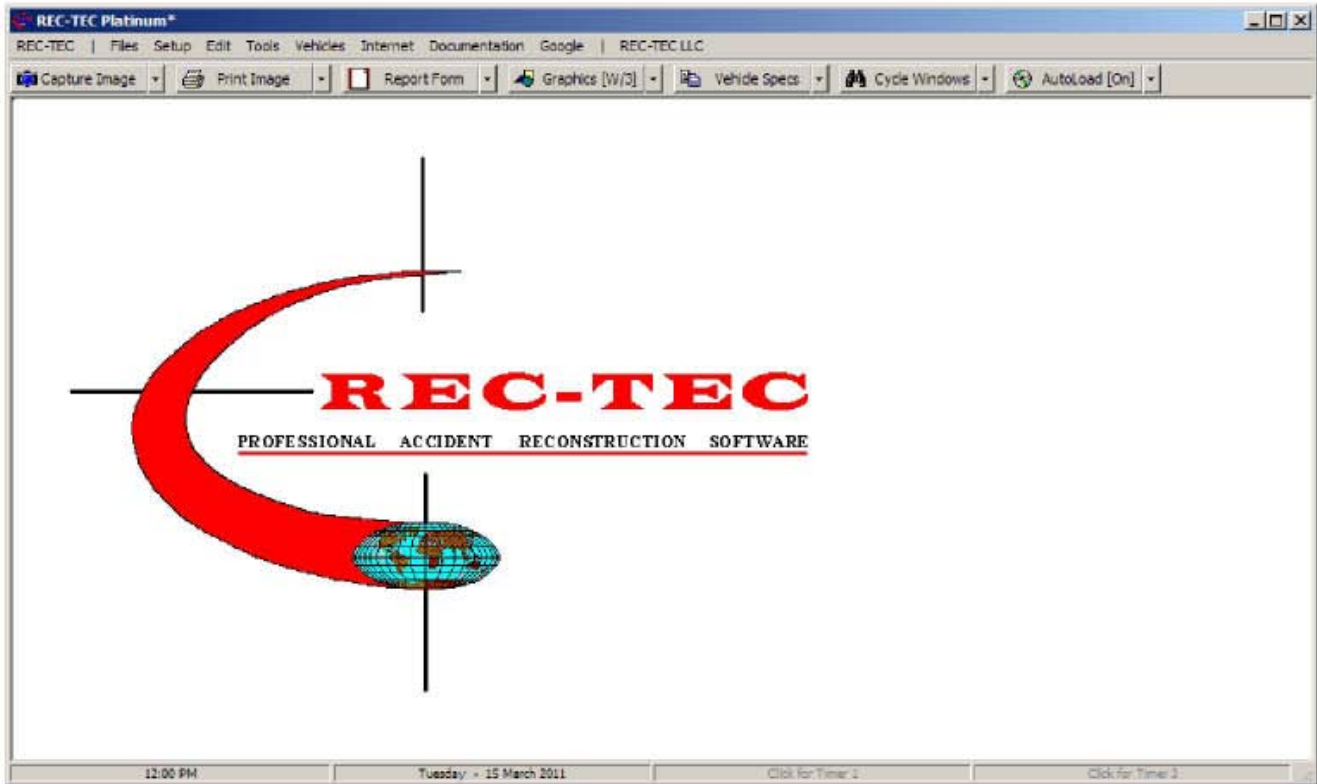
VOLUME 21, NO. 3

MAY/JUNE, 2011



INSIDE: *Visual Demand of Curves/Fog-Limited Sight Distance and Brake Response Time Using Physics Data Analysis Software for Accident Reconstruction*
Case Study: Tractor-Semitrailer Rear-End 10-Fatality Collision
Assessing the Attention-Getting Capability of Brake Signals
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PLAINTIFFS CHALLENGE NASA REPORT ON UNINTENDED ACCELERATION

Lawyers representing hundreds of people suing Toyota Motor Corp. over incidents of sudden acceleration challenged a NASA report that found electronic flaws weren't the cause of problems that resulted in the recall of thousands of vehicles.

Plaintiffs' experts will contradict the findings in the NASA report, conducted for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and will prove Toyota's electronic throttle control system is the cause of sudden acceleration, lawyers said in court papers filed last week in U.S. District Court in Santa Ana, Calif.

Toyota urged U.S. District Judge James V. Selna to take judicial notice of the findings. The NASA conclusions could then be used by Toyota as factually true during trials that are scheduled to begin in 2013.

"Toyota asks this court to take judicial notice of findings and conclusions by NASA and NHTSA that are hotly disputed in this litigation," Steve Berman, the plaintiffs' lawyer, wrote. "If this court took judicial notice of the disputed findings and conclusions, plaintiffs would be barred from challenging them in this litigation."

NASA concluded in the Feb. 8 report that incidents of unintended acceleration in Toyota vehicles were rooted in mechanical flaws such as sticking accelerator pedals and floor mats that jammed the pedals or were

caused by driver error.

Electronics Systems

The findings were cited in Toyota's court filings and news releases to support the automaker's contention that its electronics systems weren't at fault in hundreds of reported cases of sudden acceleration.

The NASA study wasn't expansive enough because engineers reviewed 280,000 lines of computer code from a total of 8 million in the automaker's electronic systems, the plaintiffs said.

The plaintiffs also cited crystalline structures that emanate from tinned surfaces, known as "tin whiskers," as a new cause of the unintended acceleration. The microscopic particles "can create catastrophic problems in electronic components," the plaintiffs said.

"Tin whiskers were implicated in the complete failure of three in-orbit commercial satellites." - *Automotive News*

ACCIDENT RECONSTRUCTION JOURNAL

P.O. Box 234, Waldorf, MD 20604

Telephone/Fax: 301/843-1371

E-mail: accidentrj@aol.com

VICTOR CRAIG - EDITOR

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U.K. £ 28.00	U.K. £ 69.00
Canada \$ 59.00	Canada \$ 155.00
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Accident Reconstruction Journal, ISSN 1057-8153, USPS 008283, is published bimonthly at 3004 Charleton Court, Waldorf, Maryland 20602-2527. Second class postage paid at Waldorf, Maryland. Postmaster: Send address changes to Accident Reconstruction Journal, P.O. Box 234, Waldorf, MD 20604-0234.