Operating Systems  
Spring Semester 2020

Greg Witt

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# Automobile Black Boxes

Let me preface this by saying that I indeed drive a Blue 2006 Scion xA, Scion is a Japanese Based Company that defunct and was purchased by Mazda in 2016 therefore I suppose I am unintentionally driving a Mazda. Scions were designed in 2003 to be for college grads who wanted a sportier less expensive vehicle and had a variety of models available. Black boxes in this model are probably going to be hard to find information on. As I only see 3 or 4 still on the road today. It is hard enough trying to scour youtube for maintenance videos and general repairs. I should know because I once spent 45 minutes trying to take off the front bumper to replace my headlights. Let’s just say they are a rare vehicle to come across. Literally “3” of the exact model of my car were sold in 2009 alone. I laughed so hard when I read this information I had to include the graphic which can be seen in the bibliography below. According to the site listed below in the bibliography as **Harris Technical Services Black Box Checker**, I do indeed have a black box in my vehicle. These devices aren’t actually called black boxes by manufactures in fact they are referred to as EDRs or Event Data Recorders. They have been installed in vehicles since the turn of the century according to many of the articles I have read. Most manufactures such as Chevy, Buick, and Ford have been placing them in their vehicles since some sources speculate as early as 1994. The claim for them is to determine safety and concerns that have lead up to the accidents in order to prevent them from happening in future installations. According to the sources which I have read and have listed below the locations of these boxes are often behind the steering wheel, accessing the device can’t help those who are able to retrieve the device because they aren’t able to be deactivated from the average person. A special piece of equipment must be used to deactivate and read the data from them. The device is said to calculate the exact position and state of the vehicle 20 seconds before and 20 seconds after the accident. This is data collected can tell readers clues to what might have caused the crash and prevent the argument for systems and vehicular malfunctioning. It can tell a reader if the throttle was slammed details about the breaks, seatbelts and also might even tell you what NPR Radio station they were tuned into and at what volume. There is clearly an issue of mistrust, when insurance companies are eager to pass blame on the driver this data can reinforce their claims as accessing the data from these crashes is often expensive as much as $20,000.00 to access the details of this information.

A lot of individuals are questioning the right these bodies of law have to this data, in the Washington Post there was an article that featured the Florida Case which questions the legality of looking at this data without the permission of the user and classifying the data as private. According to another article posted only 15 States have taken a stance on this issue when it comes to the insurance company and law-enforcement looking into these private boxes of data. This data is as of July 15, 2019. There is little you can do to prevent someone from taking the data if they have the right tools to ascertain the connections necessary, unless they do not have a court order in these 15 states.

According to Lifewire, if you have purchased your car in the past few years from 2012 onward you most definitely have a black box and the black box is most likely not disclosed to your knowledge inside of your vehicle due to NHTSA refusing to order manufacturers to disclose these details to potential buyers. But in 2006 there was a law passed which made the listing of an EDR mandatory, if your car doesn’t have the listed EDR in your manual then you most likely have a car which is not complying with the 2006 regulations and most certainly if you have a car that is built within 2012 you are not going to read about it because the short lived ban was lifted after 2006. The 2006 mandate gave automotive makers 6 years to comply and if you have a black box in your car and your car is built past 2012 with no mention of it there might be a legal team awaiting your call. Most of the black boxes or EDRs are built into the Airbag module of new models of vehicles. Often times your airbags will deploy if you start tinkering with them. This is mostly why when your insurance company asks if your airbags have gone off, when it comes to reporting accidents and claims because the data is more easily retrieve able when there is a traceable incident in the accident of the vehicle. Because there is no easy way to tackle the concept of tracking down your black box and deactivating it you are better off not worrying about it until you have an accident at which point you should take all steps to ensure your seatbelt is fastened and you are not driving into an expensive insurance firm because they will check it, other than that you are probably going to be okay.

**Bibliography**

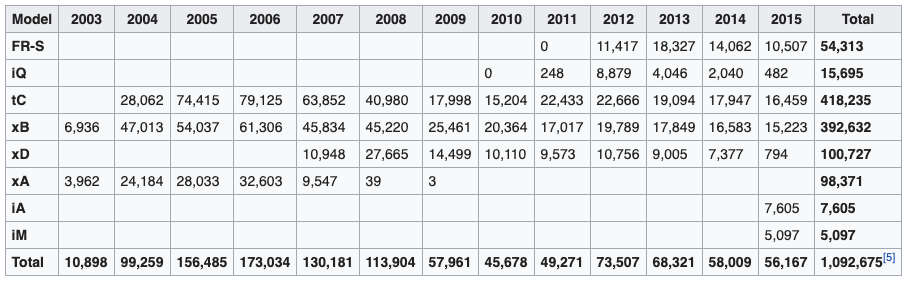
[**Scion Automotive**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scion_(automobile))

[**Does My Car have a Black Box?**](https://www.hyperlube.com/blog/blog/does-my-car-have-a-black-box/)

[**4th Amendment Rights for BBs**](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/volokh-conspiracy/wp/2017/03/30/the-fourth-amendment-and-access-to-automobile-black-boxes/)

[**LifeWire Article September 2019**](https://www.lifewire.com/finding-turning-off-cars-black-box-534841)

[**Washington Post from 2017**](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/volokh-conspiracy/wp/2017/03/30/the-fourth-amendment-and-access-to-automobile-black-boxes/)

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