



provides, *inter alia*, for the appointment of a Special Master to oversee the distribution of \$975 million in restitution (the “Restitution Funds”) that Takata agreed to pay to designated claimants, including auto manufacturers (the “OEMs”) and individuals with personal injuries.<sup>1</sup> This proposed seventeenth distribution addresses only the restitution to individuals under the Individual Restitution Fund (defined below).

Contemporaneously with the acceptance of the Plea Agreement, the Court entered the *Restitution Order* [Docket No. 24] (the “Restitution Order”) requiring Takata to, among other things, pay \$125 million in restitution to individuals who suffered (or will suffer) personal injury caused by the malfunction of a Takata airbag inflator, and who have not already resolved their claims against Takata (the “Individual Restitution Fund” or “IRF”).

Pursuant to the Plea Agreement, on July 31, 2017, the Court entered an order appointing Eric D. Green as Special Master of the Takata Restitution Funds (the “Appointment Order”) [Docket No. 40] to administer the Individual Restitution Fund (as well as the OEM Restitution Fund). Pursuant to paragraph 2 of the

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<sup>1</sup> The Restitution Order requires, *inter alia*, Takata to pay \$850 million in restitution to the OEMs in connection with their purchase of Takata airbags inflators (the “OEM Restitution Fund”). The Special Master previously submitted the proposed allocation of the OEM Restitution Fund and requested Court approval of the proposed notice program [Docket No. 49]. The Court entered the order approving the proposed notice program to distribute notice regarding the OEM Restitution Fund on November 28, 2017 [Docket No. 50], and the distribution of the \$850 million in restitution to the OEMs has been completed in accordance with the Court’s orders [Docket Nos. 81, 90, 100, 105].

Appointment Order, the Special Master’s responsibilities include, *inter alia*, establishing procedures, subject to Court approval, to determine eligible claimants and the amount of loss eligible for compensation, developing a formula or formulas, subject to Court approval, for distributing funds to eligible claimants, making determinations regarding allowed claims, and making a recommendation to the Court regarding allocation of funds from the Individual Restitution Fund.

**A. The Revised IRF Methodology.**

On March 21, 2018, the Court entered an order approving the Special Master’s proposed approach to distributing the funds in the IRF (the “Revised IRF Methodology”).<sup>2</sup> The Revised IRF Methodology sets forth the requirements for qualifying as an Eligible Claimant<sup>3</sup> and divides eligible claims into two categories: (i) “Current Claims” filed with the Special Master by August 31, 2018; and (ii) “Future Claims”<sup>4</sup> filed after August 31, 2018. Under the Revised IRF

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<sup>2</sup> *Order Granting Special Master’s Request for Approval of the Revised Individual Restitution Fund Methodology* [Docket No. 77] and *Overruling Defendant’s Objection* [Docket No. 78] (the “IRF Methodology Order”).

<sup>3</sup> “Eligible Claimant” means an individual (1) who has suffered personal injury or death caused by the rupture or aggressive deployment of a Takata phase-stabilized ammonium nitrate (PSAN) airbag inflator (the “PSAN Airbag Inflator Malfunction”); (2) who was at the time the PSAN Airbag Inflator Malfunction occurred (a) in a vehicle located or registered in the United States, its territories or its possessions, or (b) a U.S. citizen or permanent resident (wherever the PSAN Airbag Inflator Malfunction occurred); and (3) who has not already resolved his or her claim against Takata Corporation and/or any of its affiliates.

<sup>4</sup> The Special Master now refers to “Future Claims” as simply “Claims” given that all claims that are processed pursuant to this Request and thereafter were filed after August 31, 2018.

Methodology, a portion of the IRF is allocated to Current Claims and the balance is reserved for Future Claims based on estimations of Current and Future Claims conducted by NERA.

Given that the estimated value of all anticipated Current and Future Claims far exceeds the \$125 million in the Individual Restitution Fund, the Special Master decided to utilize a relative valuation approach to determine awards to Eligible Claimants. Under this approach, points are assigned to claims based on injury categories in an injury valuation matrix and certain other factors, and then the points assigned to each claim are converted to a monetary award based on the number and value of allowed claims and the funds available. Future Claims are valued and paid under the same procedures as Current Claims. In the event that there are fewer Future Claims than estimated, unused funds will be distributed to all eligible claimants on a proportional basis.

On February 4, 2021, the Special Master moved the Court to modify the Revised IRF Methodology and the points schedule incorporated therein [Docket No. 138] (the “Points Modification Motion”) to more equitably compensate personal injury victims. On February 26, 2021, the Court entered an order approving the Points Modification Motion [Docket No. 140].

**B. The Claim Forms and Notice Program.**

On May 29, 2018, the Special Master obtained Court approval of the following in connection with the IRF: (i) the Notice Program; (ii) the Personal Injury Claim Form; (iii) the Wrongful Death Claim Form; (iv) the lists of required supporting documentation; (v) the Notice of Claim Form, which enables claimants to timely file but defer consideration of their claim; and (vi) the HIPAA Release.<sup>5</sup>

The next day, May 30, 2018, the Special Master launched the targeted Notice Program for the IRF, including direct notification through mail and email, indirect notice through international publication and a press release, and various types of online media. With respect to the direct notification, the Claims Administrator mailed a claim package consisting of a direct notice, claim forms, supporting documentation checklists, and a notice of claim. This targeted notice supplemented the notice program in the U.S. Bankruptcy Proceedings, which was designed to reach approximately 83 million past and present registered owners of a vehicle containing a Takata PSAN Inflator. Subsequently, the Special Master has received, evaluated, processed, and paid claims pursuant to the IRF Methodology upon receiving Court approval in response to periodic distribution requests.

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<sup>5</sup> *Order Granting Special Master's Request for Approval of Individual Restitution Fund Claim Forms, Notice Program, and Extension of Current Claims Filing Deadline*, dated May 29, 2018 [Docket No. 94].

**C. Sixteenth Distribution Request.**

On July 29, 2022, the Special Master filed the *Special Master's Request for Approval of Sixteenth Distribution of Individual Restitution Fund* [Docket No. 169] (the "Sixteenth IRF Distribution Request"). In the Sixteenth IRF Distribution Request, the Special Master indicated that he evaluated each Claim, determined whether such claims were eligible for compensation from the IRF, and, if eligible, assigned a point value to each claim. In total, after all internal reviews and appeals, 3,010 points were awarded to those Claimants. On September 19, 2022, the Court entered its *Order Granting Special Master's Request for Approval of Sixteenth Distribution of Individual Restitution Fund* (the "Sixteenth Request Order") [Docket No. 171].

**D. The Evaluation of Claims Subject to the Seventeenth Distribution Request.**

Since entry of the Sixteenth Request Order, the Special Master has administered, reviewed, analyzed, and evaluated fourteen (14) additional Claims. The purpose of this Request is to seek the Court's approval of the Special Master's determinations for these Claims.

Epiq, under the Special Master's supervision, reviewed each of the fourteen (14) Claims: (i) for facial deficiencies, such as a missing signature, lack of basic documentation, or failure to supply required information; and (ii) for more substantive deficiencies, such as failure to supply evidence of a rupture or aggressive

deployment. If deficiencies were identified by Epiq, then deficiency notices were sent out to those claimants, or their attorneys, identifying the deficiencies and requesting supplementation within the cure period set forth in the Revised IRF Methodology.

Once a Claim was deemed complete, it was evaluated by staff at Epiq, reviewed by senior management at Epiq according to criteria developed and specified by the Special Master, and then sent to the Special Master for final review and determination.

Ultimately, of these fourteen (14) Claims, the Special Master and his team determined that two (2) of the Claims are eligible for compensation and twelve (12) of the Claims are ineligible for compensation.

With respect to the twelve (12) ineligible Claims: (i) six (6) of the Claims did not have an eligible Takata airbag inflator installed in the subject vehicle; (ii) two (2) of the Claims failed to provide sufficient evidence of aggressive deployment; (iii) two (2) of the Claims failed to provide sufficient evidence of rupture; and (iv) two (2) of the Claims failed to establish that the sustained injuries were caused by a malfunctioning Takata airbag inflator.

For each of the two (2) eligible Claims, the Special Master, with the assistance of his advisors, finalized the point awards following both an initial evaluation and

additional review sessions to ensure that each eligible Claim was treated fairly and equitably.

**i. Notice of Award or Denial.**

Next, the Special Master sent either award or denial letters to the fourteen (14) Claimants, as applicable, notifying them of the Special Master's determination and, if eligible, their proposed point award. Award letters included the number of points that each Claimant had been awarded, as well as the dollar value of a point and the dollar value of their Claim. The denial letters that were sent to ineligible Claimants notified the Claimants of the basis of the Special Master's determination.

**ii. Appeal Process.**

Upon receipt of the award or denial letter, Claimants were provided the opportunity to appeal the Special Master's determination through the internal appeals process set forth in the Revised IRF Methodology. Claimants could initiate an appeal by filing a Notice of Appeal with the Special Master within thirty (30) days of receipt of the determination letter (the "Appeal Deadline"). Prior to the expiration of the Appeal Deadline, the Special Master received: (i) five (5) Notices of Appeal regarding a determination of ineligibility, and (ii) one (1) Notice of Appeal regarding valuation.

As directed in the Revised IRF Methodology, randomly assigned Review Officers then re-examined each of the six (6) claims for which a Notice of Appeal

was filed and made a recommendation to the Special Master with respect to each claim. The Review Officers affirmed the Special Master's award for the five (5) ineligibility appeals.

With respect to the one (1) valuation appeal, the Review Officer recommended an increase to the Claimant's award based on the seriousness of injuries sustained. Applying the Points Schedule, the Special Master awarded the claimant 350 points for a moderate neck or back injury. The Review Officer recommended increasing the point award by 60 points based on the severity of the claimant's back injuries and because the claimant suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder. After carefully considering the Review Officer's recommendation, the Special Master has concluded that an increase above 350 points is not warranted under the Revised IRF Methodology for two separate reasons. First, the Special Master continues to believe that the initial injury severity classification (*i.e.*, "moderate neck or back injury") is appropriate under the Points Schedule and already takes into account the severity of the injury. Secondly, neither the Revised IRF Methodology nor the Points Schedule provides for additional compensation for psychological injuries such as post-traumatic stress disorder. In the Special Master's experience, such additional psychological injuries are already accounted for in the standard Points Schedule. For these reasons, the Special Master respectfully disagrees with Review Officer's disposition and recommends that the Court approve

the claimant's points award as proposed by the Special Master. The Special Master's recommendation to the Court with respect to each appeal is contained in **Exhibit C**.

## **II. Seventeenth Distribution Request.**

### **A. Claims Determinations.**

In accordance with the Revised IRF Methodology, the Special Master has evaluated each Claim, determined whether it is eligible for compensation from the IRF, and, if eligible, assigned a point value. In total, after all internal reviews and appeals, 3,088 points were awarded for the two (2) eligible Claims. In accordance with the proposed Seventeenth Request Order, the value of a point is currently set at \$191 for the two (2) eligible Claims filed in 2022. Accordingly, the Special Master recommends that \$589,808.00 be distributed to the Claimants included in this proposed distribution.

Attached hereto as **Exhibit A** is a chart of the two (2) Claims determined to be eligible for compensation, the points awarded to each Claim, and the corresponding monetary value of each point award, based on the proposed dollar value of a point. Attached hereto as **Exhibit B** is a chart reflecting the twelve (12) Claims determined to be ineligible for compensation, organized by basis for denial. Attached hereto as **Exhibit C** is a chart reflecting the claims that were subject to internal appeal and the corresponding dispositions. The names of the claimants in each exhibit are removed to protect each Claimant's personal information.

The Special Master recommends that the Court approve the Claimants listed on Exhibit A as Eligible Claimants and the distribution of the monetary awards listed on Exhibit A to these Claimants. The Special Master further recommends that the Court approve the denial of the Claims listed on Exhibit B.

**B. Releases.**

The Court previously approved conditioning payment from the IRF on the execution and submission of a release to the Special Master. *See* IRF Methodology Order. In addition, the Court ordered that attorney's fees for Claims may not exceed twenty-five percent 25% of an award, except for good cause shown as to why the permissible attorney's fees portion of an award should be upwardly adjusted. *See id.*, at Section VII(I). The Special Master recommends requiring that, as a condition for payment from the IRF to any individual represented by counsel, counsel must execute a rider to the release acknowledging and agreeing to abide by the restriction on attorney's fees set forth in the IRF Methodology Order.

**C. Notice And Objections.**

Consistent with the procedures set forth in the *Minutes of July 25, 2019 Conference with Special Master* [Docket No. 110] (attached hereto as Exhibit D), the Special Master will notify Claimants: (i) of their point award and the monetary value of the award (if any); (ii) of the filing of this Request; and (iii) that they may object to the Request by submitting a written response to the Special Master on or

before October 27, 2022 (the “Objection Deadline”). Shortly following the Objection Deadline, the Special Master will confer with the Court and file with the Court in the miscellaneous case docket a supplemental filing providing further information with (i) a brief background materials as to the claims for which Notices of Appeal were filed, the recommendations of the independent third-party Review Officers with respect to those appeals, and the Special Master’s recommendations as to same; and (ii) any objections filed on or before the Objection Deadline as permitted in the Request and the Special Master’s recommendation with respect to any such objections. Following that submission and any further meeting or request of the Court, the Special Master will request that the Court enter an order approving this Request.

**CONCLUSION**

**WHEREFORE**, the Special Master requests that the Court enter an order substantially in the form attached hereto as **Exhibit E** approving: (a) the distribution to Claimants as set forth on **Exhibit A** hereto; (b) the determination that the claims of the Claimants set forth on **Exhibit B** are ineligible for compensation from the Individual Restitution Fund; and (c) conditioning payment from the IRF to individuals represented by counsel on execution of a rider by counsel acknowledging and agreeing to abide by the restriction on attorney's fees set forth in the IRF Methodology Order.

Dated: October 5, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. D. Green', written over a horizontal line.

Eric D. Green, Special Master

**EXHIBIT A**

	<b>Claim No.</b>	<b>Points Awarded</b>	<b>Point Value</b>	<b>Monetary Award</b>
1	262	350	\$191.00	\$66,850.00
2	271	2,738	\$191.00	\$522,958.00
	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>3,088</b>	<b>Total Award</b>	<b>\$589,808.00</b>

**EXHIBIT B**

	<b>Claim No.</b>	<b>Ineligibility Reason</b>
1	10001300	Ineligible Takata PSAN Inflator
2	10001350	Ineligible Takata PSAN Inflator
3	10001484	Ineligible Takata PSAN Inflator
4	10001381	Ineligible Takata PSAN Inflator
5	10001470	Ineligible Takata PSAN Inflator
6	10001495	Ineligible Takata PSAN Inflator
7	10000936	Insufficient Proof of Aggressive Deployment
8	10000818	Insufficient Proof of Aggressive Deployment
9	10001459	Insufficient Proof of Rupture
10	10001332	Insufficient Proof of Rupture
11	10001431	Non-Takata PSAN Inflator Airbag Caused Injury
12	10001473	Non-Takata PSAN Inflator Airbag Caused Injury

**EXHIBIT C**

**IRF Pending Claims**

**Eligibility Notice of Appeal – Insufficient Proof of Aggressive Deployment**

The Claimant did not offer evidence meeting aggressive deployment compensability criteria. Specifically, the Claimant did not offer evidence of over-pressurization of a dual-stage inflator or enhanced injury.

**Affirmed Appeals**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Claim ID</b>	<b>Reviewer</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
1	10000936	Gertner	Affirm

**IRF Pending Claims  
Eligibility Notice of Appeal – Insufficient Proof of Rupture**

The Special Master did not identify sufficient evidence in the Claim File to show rupture (e.g., ejection of metal fragments or shrapnel).

**Affirmed Appeals**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Claim ID</b>	<b>Reviewer</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
1	10001459	Rosen	Affirm

IRF Pending Claims  
Eligibility Notice of Appeal – Ineligible Takata PSAN Inflator

Based on the available information presented to the Special Master, the subject vehicles did not have PSAN inflators installed in the airbags claimed to have caused injury.

**Affirmed Appeals**

No.	Claim ID	Reviewer	Recommendation
1	10001300	Gertner	Affirm
2	10001350	Gertner	Affirm
3	10001484	Rosen	Affirm

**IRF Pending Claims**

**Notice of Appeals - Valuations**

**Affirmed Appeals**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Claim ID</b>	<b>Special Master's Point Award</b>	<b>Reviewer</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
1	271	2,738	Gertner	Affirm

IRF Pending Claims  
Notice of Appeals - Valuations

**Recommendation to Reconsider**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Claim ID</b>	<b>Special Master's Point Award</b>	<b>Reviewer</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Special Master Decision</b>	<b>Special Master Reasoning</b>
1	262	350	Rosen	Reviewer would increase the point award by 60 points for seriousness of injuries as compared to other claims.	Deny Recommendation	Per the recommendation of the Reviewer, the Special Master re-evaluated the evidence provided by the Claimant and found the initial valuation properly accounted for the severity of the injury and the applicable adjustment criteria.

**EXHIBIT D**

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN  
SOUTHERN DIVISION**

_____	)	
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,	)	
Plaintiff	)	Case No. 16-CR-20810-04
	)	
v.	)	Honorable George Caram Steeh
	)	
TAKATA CORPORATION,	)	
Defendant.	)	
_____	)	

**MINUTES OF JULY 25, 2019 CONFERENCE WITH SPECIAL MASTER**

On July 25, 2019, Special Master Eric D. Green conferred with the Court to discuss the substantial progress made in evaluating Current Claims. The Special Master reported that he and his team of professionals have nearly completed the Current Claims evaluation process, including the initial evaluation of each Current Claim, provision of notice of initial determinations and the opportunity to appeal, the re-examination of claims on appeal by the Review Officers, and the Special Master’s consideration of the recommendations of the Review Officers, all in accordance with the revised IRF Methodology approved by the Court on March 21, 2018 (Doc. 78). The Court and the Special Master then discussed the process for obtaining court approval of Current Claim dispositions and the final dollar value of a point. After conferring with the Special Master, the Court considered and approved the following procedure and timeline:





**EXHIBIT E**



3. The Court [APPROVES] the Special Master's determination that the claims of the Claimants set forth in Exhibit B are ineligible for compensation from the Individual Restitution Fund.

4. The Court [APPROVES] conditioning payment from the IRF to individuals represented by counsel on execution of a rider by counsel acknowledging and agreeing to abide by the restriction on attorney's fees set forth in the IRF Methodology Order.

5. The Court [DIRECTS] that Distributions shall be made in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Revised IRF Methodology.

6. This Court retains jurisdiction over all matters covered by, or related to, this Order.

So ordered.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_, 2022

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GEORGE CARAM STEEH  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE