

## THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

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PUBLISHED: JULY 29, 2025

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# NHTSA Closes Waymo Investigation: Key Takeaways for the AV Industry

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) closed its 14-month investigation into Waymo, the autonomous vehicle (AV) subsidiary of Alphabet, finding no systemic safety violations. The probe examined 22 incidents involving 440 Waymo vehicles, of which 17 were collisions. Several of the incidents involved vehicles violating traffic control signs or exhibiting unexpected behavior near these signs. Importantly, none of these incidents resulted in reported injuries.

In response to the investigation, Waymo took decisive action by issuing two major recalls: a recall of 1,212 vehicles in May 2025 to address a software issue affecting detection and avoidance of roadway barriers such as chains and gates, and an earlier recall in 2024 for 672 vehicles after a robotaxi collided with a wooden utility pole in Arizona. NHTSA cited these recalls, along with Waymo's thorough data analysis and transparent communication, as key factors in causing it to close the investigation without further regulatory action.

For stakeholders in the AV sector, this outcome highlights the value regulators place on rapid incident response, open communication, and robust safety management systems. As AV companies continue to expand into new and highly regulated urban markets, demonstrating a strong commitment to safety, regulatory cooperation, and continuous system improvement will be essential to maintaining both compliance and public trust. Husch Blackwell stands ready to guide clients in the AV industry on regulatory best practices, risk mitigation, and effective strategies for engagement with federal and local authorities as the sector evolves.

### Contact us

If you have questions regarding AV regulation and compliance, please contact you Husch Blackwell Attorney.