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TITLE: An Abstract of Licensing Novice Motorcyclists: A Comparison of the Traffic Safety Impact of California's Standard Test and the MOST II (Motorcycle Operator Skill Test) Administered at Centralized Testing Offices

DATE: May 1986

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REPORT NUMBER: 106.1

NTIS NUMBER: PB86-247384

FUNDING SOURCE: Office of Traffic Safety and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

PROTECT OBTECTIVE:

To clarify issues raised in the Anderson et al. study, "Improved Motorcyclist Licensing and Testing Project," to answer the following two questions: 1) Would the MOST II reduce accidents and convictions when compared to California's standard skill test? 2) Would there be an accident reduction which was independent of the reduction in instruction permit and license issuance rates resulting from the inconvenience of being required to travel to another location to be tested?

SUMMARY:

Applicants for an original California motorcycle license or endorsement were randomly assigned to either a group required to pass the MOST II motorcycle skill test to be licensed (N = 30,059), or a group required to pass the standard California skill test (N = 28,211). Skill tests were administered at 8 of the 29 Department of Motor Vehicles field offices involved in the study. The 21 other (feeder) offices referred applicants to the testing offices for administration of the appropriate skill test. All offices administered written tests and issued instruction permits to applicants who passed. MOST II subjects who made application at testing offices had 18% more motorcycle accidents and 9% more motorcycle convictions during the first year subsequent to application than their testing office counterparts assigned to the standard California program. Both differences were statistically significant. There was no evidence of a difference between MOST II and standard test applicants identified at feeder offices. The report discussed these findings and recommended that the MOST II not be adopted by the Department.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Department did not implement the MOST II.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

For a lively debate of study findings, see McPherson, K., April 1989, Motorcycle licensing research: A look at where we are, *Journal of Traffic Safety Education*, 36(3), 6-8, Peck, R. C. and Janke, M. K., April 1989, Backfire: A reply to McPherson, *Journal of Traffic Safety Education*, 36(4), 14 & 17, and Peck R. c., July 1990, Backfire: Peck's last peck at a canard, *Journal of Traffic Safety Education*, 37(4), 20.