

TITLE: Evaluation of Driver License Knowledge Tests

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PROJECT OBJECTIVE:

To pilot-test four of the Department's written knowledge examinations for driver licensure and provide test and item statistics.

SUMMARY:

The following written tests were evaluated:

1. 46-item test for original applicants over age 17 (DL-5, Rev. 12/84);
2. 18-item test for renewal applicants (DL-4, Rev. 7/86);
3. 46-item test for 15- through 17-year-olds (DL-5T, Rev. 8/85); and
4. 25-item motorcycle test (DL-5K, Rev. 1/86).

The pilot was conducted during September 1986 in all field offices. Tests were collected from first-attempt applicants only. The analysis yielded the following information:

1. percentage response to each item alternative, and item-total correlation, for each test form;
2. cumulative percentage of total applicants by number of items missed for each test form; and
3. fail rate, mean items missed, and test reliability for each test form.

It was recommended that a number of test forms and items be revised to achieve acceptable fail-rate and reliability standards. It was also recommended that, because the Hispanic and Asian populations were continuing to grow in California, a follow-up pilot of non-English written tests should be conducted.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The tests were revised to improve reliability and achieve more equal fail rates. The non-English tests have not been piloted.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A 36-item DL-5 knowledge test for both original and renewal license applicants had been evaluated in July 1982 and again in July 1983. The evaluation reports are on file in the Research and Development Branch.