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TITLE: An Abstract of Modifying Negligent Driving Behavior: Evaluation of Selected Driver Improvement Techniques

DATE: March 1971

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REPORT NUMBER: 36.1

NTIS NUMBER: PB-218853

FUNDING SOURCE: Departmental Budget

PROTECT OBTECTIVE:

To compare and evaluate eight different methods of dealing with negligent drivers.

SUMMARY:

A total of 15,290 California drivers who met specific criteria were selected as subjects and randomly assigned to one of the following treatments:

1. Control Group
2. Warning Letter (W / L)
3. Subject Interaction Meeting (SIM)
4. Leader Interaction Meeting (UM)
5. Group Educational Meeting (GEM)
6. Driver Improvement Meeting (DIM)
7. Group Administrative Review (GAR)
8. Regular Individual Hearing (RIH)
9. Experimental Individual Hearing (EIH)

Each Subject's driver record was examined for collision and conviction reports during the year after his selection.

Comparisons were made between each treatment and an untreated (control) group. When the records for males and females were combined, only the group scheduled for GEMs had a collision rate that was significantly lower than that of the control group ( $p < .20$ , two tailed). Cost-benefit analysis indicated that the GEM was also cost-beneficial. The department's regular group meeting program (DIM) had no impact on accidents. Although several other treatment groups showed a significant reduction in convictions compared to the control group, the GEM did not. Furthermore, the drivers scheduled for GARs had significantly more collisions than the control group—a finding unique in research involving driver improvement programs. The difference in collision rates between the warning-letter and control groups did not even approach statistical significance. In general, treatment effects on convictions were much larger than the collision effects, with some of the contrasts exceeding conventional significance levels ( $p < .05$ ).

Because men represented almost 90% of the total sample, the rank order of the treatment for men was almost identical to the order for both sexes combined. For women, the picture was quite different. Five treatments (one of which was the GAR) had significantly lower collision rates than the control group, but only the two individual hearing treatments (RIH and EIH) showed a significant reduction in convictions compared to the control group. The size of the treatment effects on collisions was considerably larger than for males and, despite the much smaller female Ns, tended to reveal higher significance levels.

An analysis was also performed on the effects of a follow-up hearing administered to drivers who continued to accumulate traffic convictions and collisions after their initial treatment. This analysis

indicated that such follow-up action results in further collision reduction except in those cases where no initial treatment was administered (control group). this was interpreted as support for DMV's practice of progressing from mild to more severe actions when a driver continues to be involved in collisions and traffic convictions.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Acting upon recommendations within the report, the department instituted use of the GEM on a statewide basis for both sexes and eliminated the DIM, which had been the department's operational group meeting.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

None.