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TITLE: An Evaluation of Three Alternative Formats for Probation Violation Hearings

DATE: December 1981

AUTHOR(S): Rickey L. Williams & Roger E. Hagen

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PROTECT OBTECTIVE:

To develop and evaluate new formats hearings which incorporate behavior caseload-scheduling approach. for negligent operator probation violator modificatioll principles and a client

SUMMARY:

The purpose of the project was to improve the traffic safety impact and cost-benefit of the negligent operator probation violator hearing. The three hearing formats evaluated varied in several aspects, including use of license restrictions (rather than suspension or revocation), hearing duration, negotiation and contingency contracting, and caseload assignment. The two experimental programs differed primarily in the timing of the restriction removal, one employing a single fixed-interval restriction and the other a sequential multiphase strategy.

Project-trained driver improvement analysts (DIA) conducted the fixed-restriction and sequential-restriction hearings at 44 out of 150 hearing points statewide, while standard hearings at these points were conducted by other DIAs. Drivers were assigned randomly to hearing format.

The licensing actions used at the project entry hearing were more liberal than anticipated in all hearing formats. The standard hearing format was superior to the others both in terms of overall traffic safety impact and net cost benefits. The differences between hearing formats in fatal and injury accidents and countable convictions tended to favor the standard format. Implementation of either alternative format would probably ($p = .80$) result in a decline in benefits relative to costs.

The report makes recommendations regarding alternatives to the standard probation violator hearing, the most notable of these being the so-called single hearing strategy. Continued use of license restrictions, where effective, is also recommended. Limitations in the effectiveness of the behavior modification paradigm within the traffic safety setting are discussed.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendations for increasing the cost-benefit of the negligent operator hearing were mandated into the department's revamping of the negligent driver program. Specifically, the department was to make greater use of license suspensions and take a greater number of actions without first scheduling a hearing.

SUPPLEMENT ARY INFORMATION:

An interim report was published as DMV Report #72 by Roger E. Hagen and Rickey L. Williams, "Driver Improvement: A Survey of Personnel, Procedures, and Work Climate."
A shortened version of the report was published in the *Journal of Safety Research*, 15(3),97-105, 1984.