

TITLE: Review of "An Appraisal of San Diego County SB 38 Participant DUI Recidivism and Traffic Accident Involvement"

DATE: October 1981

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NTIS NUMBER: None

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PROTECT OBJECTIVE:

To communicate to the drunk driving rehabilitation community some evaluation defects in the above study which limit the conclusions that can be reached, and to increase knowledge of evaluation research methodology.

SUMMARY:

In the above-referenced paper, by Ryan and Vasquez, the authors concluded that the alcohol rehabilitation treatment provided by the San Diego convicted drinking driver project was superior to license suspension in reducing recidivism. The reviewer pointed out that methodological flaws in the evaluation precluded drawing any conclusions about the relative efficacy of the two countermeasures. Among the defects were: (1) self-selection bias caused by dropping program failures from data, and (2) comparing programs from different time periods and geographical areas. The review also pointed out that the evaluators failed to recognize that the great majority of persons in the suspension group had their licenses reinstated prior to comparing the two programs. Thus, even if the rehabilitation group really had lower recidivism rates, this fact would not be evidence against the efficacy of license suspension during the suspension period.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Ryan and Vasquez acknowledged the validity of some of the criticisms but pointed out that their study was not intended to be a definitive evaluation. The authors concurred with the reviewer's recommendation for more rigorous SB 38 program evaluations and, in addition, recommended that DMV initiate a statewide SB 38 program evaluation system.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

This article was published in *Abstracts and Reviews in Alcohol and Driving*, 2(10), October 1981.