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TITLE: A Comparison of the Relative Effectiveness of Alternative Sanctions for DUI Offenders  
(Volume 1 of "Development of a DUI Accident and Recidivism Tracking System")

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PROTECT OBTECTIVE:

To develop a DUI data base for tracking accident and recidivism rates of first, second and third-or-more DUI drivers; to identify programs and sanctions associated with reduced accident and conviction rates, and to develop a system for detecting variation among counties in DUI sanctioning policy.

SUMMARY:

Quasi-experimental analyses were conducted evaluating the association between various DUI sanctions and the posttreatment driving records of a 1984 statewide sample of 96,711 first, second and third-or-more (third+) DUI offenders. Six-month (first offenders only) and 1- and 2-year subsequent accidents and convictions were compared for various sanctions within each of the three offender groups. Analyses were also conducted, within each offender group, evaluating the relationship between subsequent driving record and county average fine, number of jail days prescribed (or jail vs. no jail for first offenders) and, for a subsample, blood alcohol concentration level (BAC). Aggregated county DUI recidivism and accident data were evaluated in relation to the proportions of various sanctions given by each county, the average county fine, and a sanction stringency score derived from several variables included in a DUI court survey.

First-offender groups receiving some form of driving curtailment (license restriction or suspension), either alone or in conjunction with an SB 38 or first-offender alcohol program, had significantly fewer posttreatment accidents than did groups receiving no license control. Groups without license control actions had the highest subsequent accident and conviction rates. License suspension among second offenders was significantly associated with reduced subsequent total accidents, while ~)B 38 program plus license restriction was significantly associated with reduced subsequent alcohol-related accidents and major convictions. Although significant sanction differences on several outcome measures were present for third+ offenders, the uncertainty of prior treatment effects within both groups raised questions about the validity of these findings. Longer jail terms for repeat offenders were associated with fewer subsequent alcohol-related accidents, total accidents and major convictions. High BAC levels were associated with more subsequent alcohol-related accidents and major convictions for both first and second offenders, but not for third+ offenders. There was evidence that counties imposing higher fines for repeat offenders experienced fewer subsequent total accidents than would be predicted on the basis of driver and area characteristics alone.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

A DUI management information system was developed and implemented pursuant to AB 757 (Friedman), effective 1/1/90. As of this writing, 6 annual "state of the state" DUI-MIS legislative reports had been produced.

SUPPLEMENT ARY INFORMATION:

See Helander (1989), Report #121 for the conceptual design of a DUI management information system. Also see Rogers & Schoenig (1989), Report #123 for volume II of this study.