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TITLE: An Evaluation of the Specific Deterrent Effects of Alternative Sanctions for First and Repeat DUI Offenders (Volume 3 of "An Evaluation of the California Drunk Driving Countermeasure System")

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PROJECT OBJECTIVE:

To evaluate the relative effectiveness of the licensing actions and sanctions established by Assembly Bill (AB) 541 on January 1, 1982 for first and repeat DUI offenders.

SUMMARY:

This quasi-experimental study evaluated the effectiveness of the new 1982 California DUI sanctions (AB 541) upon the subsequent driving records of statewide samples of first and second DUI offenders, convicted in October-December 1982, and assessed the overall impact of AB 541 by comparing DUI drivers convicted before and after AB 541 implementation. Six-month and I-year posttreatment driving records were compared among second offenders who received either (1) license suspension or (2) license restriction plus an alcohol rehabilitation (SB 38) program. Similar driving records were compared for first offenders who received (1) license suspension, (2) jail and fine only, (3) program and jail, (4) license restriction only, and (5) license restriction plus program.

Among second offenders, the suspended group (N = 7,797) had rates significantly lower than those of the restricted SB 38 group on the I-year posttreatment non alcohol, fatal/injury, and total accident measures. On alcohol accidents, the rates for the two groups did not differ significantly. On subsequent major convictions (including DUI), the restricted SB 38 group's rate was significantly lower than that of the suspended group. In the first offender analyses (N = 29,097) there was a significant overall difference among the groups, with the following pattern of results. First offenders who were given stronger license control sanctions incurred accident and conviction rates that were lower than those of offenders given lesser penalties. The suspended group had the lowest total and nonalcohol (I-year) accident rate, while the restricted program group had the lowest 6-month alcohol-related accident rate. The restricted program and restricted-only groups had the lowest rates of I-year major convictions.

Findings from the pre-post AB 541 analyses indicated that AB 541 had an impact in lowering alcohol accident, total accident and major conviction rates among DUI drivers.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Senate Bill 1623 (Lockyer), effective 7/1/90, implemented "administrative per se" suspension of the driver's license for 0.10% BAC level on a DUI arrest or refusal to take the BAC test.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

See Peck, Report # 112.