

TITLE: A Study on the Feasibility of Placing Selected Negligent Operators on Probation by Mail

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PROTECT OBTECTIVE:

To estimate the potential cost savings if negligent operators had the option of waiving the hearing process and accepting probationary status by mail.

SUMMARY:

Nine hundred persons eligible for a negligent operator hearing were placed in one of two processes; half were entered into the experimental probation-by-mail process, and the other half entered a regular individual hearing process for comparison.

The study identified significant cost and personnel savings. The best estimate indicated that a potential annual cost reduction of \$254,000 (32%) was probable. These cost savings derived from the estimated reduction in negligent operator hearings (14,000) and corresponding reduction in staff (12.5 work years). It was emphasized, however, that the impact on highway safety of this procedure was not known. There was definitive evidence from the then-ongoing Post Licensing Control Reporting and Evaluation System that the Individual Hearing reduced accidents and convictions. Since the hearing itself provided a personal one-to-one interaction with the department, it seemed possible that elimination of this interaction could reduce or eliminate the effect of the program. It was therefore recommended that the traffic safety implications of this new process be scrutinized prior to any plans for implementation.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The recommendation to evaluate the traffic safety impact of the probation-by-mail process and an alternative known as "no-action hearing" was implemented.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Studies completed on the effects of no action hearings and probation by mail are: Garretson and Peck, Report #69, and Sherman and Ratz, Report #70.