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TITLE: Senior Driver Facts

DATE: January 1986

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PROJECT OBJECTIVE:

To provide a quick reference on the characteristics of senior drivers.

SUMMARY:

This report presents findings on senior drivers from DMV driver record files and the research literature. The following are conclusions offered in the report which have considerable generality, in that to date they have been consistently found in DMV studies and others.

When accidents are adjusted for miles driven, both older and younger drivers have higher accident rates than do mid-age drivers. Specifically, the accident rate per mile begins to increase at about age 60; this increase becomes pronounced for drivers aged 75 or older. When convictions are adjusted for miles driven, there is a similar tendency for the youngest and oldest age groups to have the highest conviction rates although the upward trend for older persons is not as steep as for accidents, and drivers at the most advanced ages never approach the conviction rate per mile of young drivers. When accident and conviction rates are not adjusted for mileage, they drop almost monotonically with advancing age, with the exception of a slight increase in accidents at age 70 and beyond. For the group at the highest age category used here (75 and above), the accident rate per driver is less than that for drivers age 40-44. In terms of convictions, drivers 70 years and older are relatively more often convicted of sign-and-signal, right-of-way, and turning violations. While abilities necessary for driving tend to decline at advanced ages, older drivers as a group are able to compensate by driving more cautiously and reducing miles driven.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Not applicable.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Huston, R. E. (1986). *Teen driver facts* [Report #81]. Stylos, L., & Janke, M. K. (1989); Berube, E., & Hagge, R. A. (1990); Foster, K. (1991). *Annual tabulations of mature driver program driving record comparisons: Annual report to the legislature of the State of California* (Reports #119, #125, #130), respectively. Romanowicz, P. A., & Gebers, M. A. (1990). *Teen and senior drivers* (Report #126). Gebers, M. A., Romanowicz, P. A., & McKenzie, D. M. (1993). *Teen and Senior Drivers* (Report #141). Sacramento, CA: California Department of Motor Vehicles.