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TITLE: The Effectiveness of an At-Home Drivers' Licensing Law Test

DATE: March 1978

AUTHOR(S): David M. Harrington & Michael Ratz

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FUNDING SOURCE: Special state appropriation

PROTECT OBJECTIVE:

To explore new approaches to testing which would cost less, be more convenient to the public, and reduce accidents and convictions.

SUMMARY:

Those drivers with no accidents or convictions within the preceding three years were sent a pamphlet self-test, a sheet with the answers, and a specially coded notice to renew their driver's license. When they presented the renewal notice at the field office, their regular written knowledge test was waived.

Drivers with one accident or one conviction during the past three years were sent a pamphlet test, a sheet on which to mark their answers, and a renewal notice. When they presented the answer sheet and renewal notice, their regular written test was waived. Control groups comprised of similar drivers receiving DMV's regular written test were included to provide a comparison baseline.

There were no significant overall differences in subsequent accident and conviction rates between the control and treatment groups, but there was some evidence of a detrimental effect for certain subgroups. Although the new experimental programs cost less operationally, the cost of the increased accidents would have been greater than the operational savings.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Since the new at-home tests were not cost-effective compared to the standard field office testing, it was recommended that they not be implemented; management concurred.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

None.