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TITLE: License Extensions for Clean-Record Drivers: A Four-Year Follow-Up

DATE: March 1985

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PROJECT OBJECTIVE:

To evaluate the traffic safety effect of extending driver licenses by mail for drivers with clean prior four-year records.

SUMMARY:

Drivers whose prior four-year accident and conviction records showed no entries two months prior to the date of the expiration of their driver licenses were randomly assigned either to a group which had licenses renewed in the normal manner or a group which was offered the opportunity to receive a four-year license extension by mail.

There was no evidence that extending licenses by mail affected accidents or convictions during the period 18 months subsequent to the date on which renewal or extension notices were sent. This was true for the driver group as a whole and for subgroups of drivers in different age categories; the single exception was an increase in convictions among the under-30 drivers of the extension group. Another evaluation of drivers with four-year clean prior records who were offered a two-year license extension showed similar results overall; however, the age by treatment interaction on convictions was not replicated, and an analysis of drivers over the age of 70 revealed a significant reduction in accidents among the extension group.

A follow-up report on 36-month data again found no effects due to the extension program. Three years after the initial renewal notice, neither interaction found in the 18-month data remained. Caution must be used in comparing the three-year data with those in the two-year extension program, as the extension group (but not the controls) had experienced another renewal cycle.

The final report, covering 48-month data, found a slight (11 %) increase in accidents for the extension group, although the difference was far from significant ($p > .10$). Supplemental Bayesian analysis resulted in a probability of .76 that there was at least some negative program effect on accidents. If the means for the sample reflected the true magnitude of the population difference, an increase of 13 accidents per 10,000 4-year clean drivers could be projected over the term of the offered license extension.

Analysis of the over-70 population at the end of their two-year extension term again found significantly fewer accidents in the extension group.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

New legislation to expand the selection criteria for extensions went into effect for drivers whose licenses expired in January 1983 or later ..

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

The report to the legislature (18-month data) was published as Report #80, *Traffic safety impact of the extension of driver licenses by mail for renewal applicants with clean prior driving records*, in December 1981 by Mary K Janke and Shara Lynn Kelsey.

Janke, M. K., & Kelsey, S. L. Traffic safety impact of the extension of driver licenses by mail for renewal applicants with clean prior driving records.

Proceedings of the *Second Symposium on Traffic Safety Effectiveness (Impact) Evaluation Projects*. Fredericksburg, V A: May 1982.

Presentation at the *Western Psychological Association Annual Conference*, Sacramento, CA: April 1982.
Kelsey, S. L., & Janke M. K (1983) Driver license renewal by mail in California.
Journal of Safety Research, 14(2), 65-82.

Kelsey, S. L., Janke M. K, Peck, R. c., & Ratz, M. (1985) License extensions for clean record drivers: A 4-year follow-up. *Journal of Safety Research*, 16(4), 149-167.

On related topic (license renewal by mail for drivers with less than 4-year clean records), see Janke, Reports #101 and #118.