

From: Martha Montalvo
To: RStein.City of Houston Site 1.CoH Messaging
Date: 11/15/2007 2:33:54 PM
Subject: Re: Red Light Cameras

Michael, I gave him everything. The letter to chief detailing all our actions and if you recall your assessment was discussed. I also sent his staff your memo on the study

-----Original Message-----

From: Robert M. Stein
To: MMontalvo.ACLANPO.TRAVDOM
Creation Date: 11/15 2:15 pm
Subject: Re: Red Light Cameras

Chief: I was wondering if the Mayor received a copy of our analysis of accidents at red light camera intersections or only the proposal? Point 1 in the mayor's email is what we proposed to study and more importantly what we reported in our initial findings i.e., accidents at lighted intersections declined over the previous three years. This was true, however, only for the first 20+ intersections implemented for 12+ months. Moreover, we also examined the shape of the trend and raised several reasons why the trend might vary over time (e.g., initial increase in rear-end collisions over side impact collisions). I am concerned that the aggregate finding in your Oct 15 memo to Chief Hurtt might not be related to red light cameras and therefore not sustainable over time. --bob

At 11:49 11/15/2007, you wrote:

>Received. I agree with your perspective and will look at the issues you
>noted

>

>-----Original Message-----

>From: Mayor Bill White
>To: MMontalvo.ACLANPO.TRAVDOM
>STEIN@RICE.EDU
>CC: e123386.City of Houston Site 1.CoH Messaging
>e128296.City of Houston Site 1.CoH Messaging
>Creation Date: 11/15 11:27 am
>Subject: Red Light Cameras

>

> [DICTATED BUT NOT PROOFED]

>

>I saw a report that accidents at red light intersections went down for
>the first seven months of this year, when all fifty intersections had
>deployment, compared to the first seven months of last year.
>Specifically, I saw they went down from 529 to 345. That is a good
>trend. There is a lot of traffic going through those intersections. It
>might be worthwhile to find out what the difference in accidents was in
>the first seven months of the prior two years, but that is definitely a
>trend in the right direction.

>

>I also read a proposal about all these things that Rice and TTI would
>study. Let's just make sure that we study things that really matter for
>decision-making. To me, the things that matter for decision-making, as
>opposed to being something that might be interesting to somebody to

> simply study, are:

>

>(1) When you put a number of red light cameras up at
> congested intersections does the number of accidents drop in the
> aggregate for some comparable period of time during which there is a
> significant number of accidents prior to the introduction of red light
> cameras?

>

>(2) Does the drop occur suddenly or does it have a
> pattern over time?

>

>(3) If you put dummy cameras or signs up indicating
> there may be red light cameras, or you replace existing cameras with
> some dummy cameras, does that change behavior over time? (I don't know
> the extent to which the law allows us to either use dummy cameras or
> advertise that we do.)

>

> Our funds for public policy research are scarce. Obviously we might
> want to study more any data that doesn't make sense. If it makes sense
> that: (a) more people stop for red lights when the law is enforced, (b)
> people running red lights cause more accidents, and (c) greater
> enforcement results in significantly fewer accidents in total over a
> large number of intersections, you might get to the point where you know
> what you need to know.

>

> I am not suggesting that somebody alter one's conclusions and I am not
> trying to influence the conclusions. What I am trying to do is give
> helpful advice from a decision-maker concerning how to avoid analytical
> overkill.

>

> BILL WHITE

> MAYOR

>

> Debra Dunlap

> Secretary to the Mayor

> 713-247-2122

>

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> you.

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From: Michael Harkins
To: stein@rice.edu
Date: 2/12/2008 7:52:01 AM
Subject: Preliminary Study

Dr. Stein,

I just happened to run into Michael Moore of the Mayor's staff yesterday outside of Council chambers and he was actually asking Chief Montalvo if she knew when the preliminary study on red light cameras was coming out. Chief Montalvo pointed out that those questions now need to be referred to EA/C Oettmeier. I advised Mr. Moore that you and I had talked recently and that you had indicated the report was near completion, but I wasn't sure if it is actually ready for dissemination.

Also, Chief Montalvo raised the issue that it was her understanding that this preliminary report was going to be limited to looking at the statistics on just the first ten intersections (because those are the cameras on which we have a year's worth of data). Because those first ten intersections were not TxDOT intersections, Chief Montalvo thought they might not accurately reflect what was happening.

I'd like to be able to pass on to Chief Oettmeier where we are in terms of the release of a preliminary report and how many intersections were looked at. Similarly, what information may we pass on to Michael Moore (if you have not already done so yesterday)?

Michael Harkins
Chief's Command/Legal Services

CC: Ferrell, Craig; Muench, Michael; Oettmeier, Timothy

From: Robert M. Stein
To: Michael Muench
Date: 3/14/2008 3:17:54 PM
Subject: red light study

SGT: Below is the website for a recent article in the Tampa Tribune about a study of their red light camera program. Recall our own findings match what is reported in article and in the public health study cited in the article. Tim and I have reviewed 10 years worth of studies on red light camera programs and the tentative evidence is that those studies using the weakest designs are most likely to report a reduction in side impact collisions after the installation of red light cameras. More rigorous and appropriate research designs (like the one we use for the Houston program) fail to detect this reduction after the installation of red light cameras.

<<http://www2.tbo.com/content/2008/mar/12/na-red-light-cameras-increase-accidents-usf-study/>><http://www2.tbo.com/content/2008/mar/12/na-red-light-cameras-increase-accidents-usf-study/>

From: Robert M. Stein
To: Darrell Prince
Date: 11/13/2008 12:43:37 PM
Subject: Re: Accident totals

wow, this is perfect, thanks so much, bob

Darrell Prince wrote:

> Dr. Stein,
>
> Here are the Citywide accident totals provided by Technology Services Division.
> Let me know if you require anything else, thanks.

>
> Darrell Prince, Sergeant
> Houston Police Department
> Vehicular Crimes Division
> Digital Automatic Red Light Enforcement Program
> Office: 713 247 5919
> Cell: 713 376 0896

>
>
> -----
>
> Subject:
> Re: Gentlemen,
> From:
> "Syed Ali" <Syed.Ali@cityofhouston.net>
> Date:
> Thu, 13 Nov 2008 09:29:42 -0600
> To:
> "Darrell Prince" <Darrell.Prince@cityofhouston.net>
>
> To:
> "Darrell Prince" <Darrell.Prince@cityofhouston.net>

>
> Darrell, data follows:
>
> 2008 - as of today 53,560
> 2007 - 67,405
> 2006 - 68,248
> 2005 - 74,182
> 2004 - 81,238
>
> Syed
> 713-247-5549

From: Jonathan Zera
To: King, VICKI
Date: 4/30/2008 9:06:46 AM
Subject: DARLEP update

Chief,

This is an update on yesterday's DARLEP meeting with Dr. Stein.

History:

Dr. Stein's analysis of the original 20 intersections from Sept - Dec 2006 found 169 accidents. However, HPD countered that the findings were flawed because:

1. All accidents within 500' of the intersections were being counted
2. All accidents within the intersection were being counted even if neither vehicle's approach to the intersection was regulated by a red-light camera.

As such, Dr. Stein will re-analyze the 169 accidents. He will create a new data group that consists only of accidents that occurred:

1. Within the controlled intersection.
2. Within 100' feet of the intersection if it is an approach regulated by a red-light camera.

He will then take this data group and divide it into four subsections.

1. The at-fault vehicle entered the intersection from a red-light camera regulated approach.
2. The at-fault vehicle entered the intersection from an unregulated approach.
3. One of the vehicles entered the intersection from a red-light camera regulated approach, but fault could not be determined.
4. Neither vehicle entered the intersection from a red-light camera regulated approach.

We are confident that these divisions will give us a truer picture of the effects of the red-light cameras.

After obtaining his results, Dr. Stein will provide us with a statistically significant sample group of accidents for us to place into the above categories (without advising us of his findings on the sample group). We will then compare results. If our findings are near 100% in agreement with his, then we are confident that sufficient parameters will have been established for future analysis.

Please call if you have any questions.

jon