



HUMAN RELATIONS OFFICE
MEMORANDUM

384-2456

July 07, 2014

TO: Urbana IDOT Traffic Study Task Force

FROM: Todd Rent, Human Relations Officer

CC: Mayor Laurel Prussing
Chief Patrick Connolly

RE: IDOT Traffic Study Background Materials

The Illinois Traffic Stop Statistics Act

In July 2003, the state of Illinois enacted the “Traffic Stop Statistical Study” (the “Act”) which requires state, county, and local law enforcement agencies to collect specific data “[w]henver a State or local law enforcement officer issues a uniform traffic citation or warning citation for an alleged violation of the Illinois Vehicle Code...” 625 ILCS 5/11-212. The *Illinois Traffic Stop Statistics Act Report for the Year 2004* notes that the law was “designed to end the practice of racial profiling by assessing the extent to which race is used as a factor in police stops and searches.” . The specific data to be collected is as follows:

Vehicle Stops

- (1) Name of driver,
- (2) Address of driver,
- (3) Gender of driver,
- (4) Race of drivers (based on the officer's subjective determination of the race of the person stopped: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or White)
- (5) Reason for the stop;
- (6) Make and year of the vehicle;
- (7) Date, time, and duration of the stop,
- (8) Location of the traffic stop;

Vehicle Searches

- (9) Whether a consent search was requested of the vehicle, driver, passenger, or passengers; and, if so, whether consent was given or denied;
- (10) Whether any search was conducted of the vehicle, driver, passenger, or passengers; and, if so, whether it was with consent or by other means;

- (11) Whether or not a police dog performed a sniff of the vehicle; and, if so, whether or not the dog alerted to the presence of contraband; and, if so, whether or not an officer searched the vehicle; and, if so, whether or not contraband was discovered; and, if so, the type and amount of contraband
- (12) Whether or not contraband was found during a search; and, if so, the type and amount of contraband seized; and
- (13) The name and badge number of the issuing officer.

Once collected, the data is submitted to an IDOT-operated website via a standardized data compilation format.

A Brief Overview of Methodology

The *Illinois Traffic Stop Statistics Act Report for the Year 2004* provides a comprehensive review of the methodological approach underlying the data collection. As such, the section will merely provide a brief overview.

The study is designed to answer two questions:

- 1. To what extent, if any, does race influence an officer’s decision to stop a vehicle?
- 2. To what extent, if any, does race influence the disposition of the stop?
 - a. Was a citation issued?
 - b. Was the vehicle subject to a consent search?

The study compares the percentage minority drivers subject to stop and/or search within a particular geographic area to an estimate of the percentage of minority drivers within that same area. The comparison of the two percentages generates a ratio wherein the “percentage of minorities stopped” functions as the numerator and the “estimated minority driving population” functions as the denominator. A ratio of 1.0 denotes parity between the two percentages. Ratios greater than 1.0 indicate that minorities are being stopped at a disproportionately higher rate than the estimated percentage of minority drivers. The estimate of the percentage of minority drivers within an area is referred to as the “estimated minority driving population” or EMDP. The EMDP is equivalent to the percentage of individuals 15 years of age or older within a particular geographic area as reported in U.S. Census data. The study methodology assumes a strong similarity between residential population as reflected in the census and driving population.

The following table shows Urbana’s ratios from 2004 to 2013.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1.47	1.44	1.53	1.47	1.49	1.56	1.7	1.58	1.07	1.14

In 2012, Urbana’s EMDP was adjusted from 30.62% to 39.5% based upon the increase in minority population reflected in the 2010 Census data. The impact of that adjustment is observable in the relatively wide gap between the 2011 and 2012 ratios. The average disparity between 2004 and 2013 is approximately 1.44.

Enclosed Materials

The attached reading materials are intended to provide general introduction to the ongoing conversation regarding the validity and scope of the IDOT.

1. Illinois Traffic Stop Statistics Act Report for the Year 2004. In this report, study authors, Alexander Weiss, Ph.D., and Aviva Grumet-Morris, provide a comprehensive overview of the history, purpose, and methodology underlying the collection of traffic stop data under the Act. The report also provides results from the study's inaugural year of data collection.
2. Urbana Traffic Stop Results 2004 -2013. This document compiles Urbana's traffic stop data from 2004 through 2013.
3. Urbana Traffic Stop Drill Down Report 2009. This report was authored by University of Illinois-Chicago graduate student, Tom Christoff at the recommendation of Dr. Alexander Weiss. The report attempts to identify the source of persistent disparity observed in Urbana's traffic stop data in the years preceding 2010.
4. Additional Materials. I have provided web links to additional materials available on the internet.

cc: Mayor Laurel Prussing
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