



SPR RESEARCH PROGRAM

SECOND-STAGE PROBLEM STATEMENT

FY 2008-09

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I. PROBLEM NUMBER

RDHF-09-03

II. PROBLEM TITLE

Older Drivers: Effective DMV Programs and Practices

III. RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

The number of individuals in Oregon aged 65 years and older is growing rapidly. By 2020, it's predicted that one-fifth of Oregon's population will be over 65, and a great majority of these individuals will have valid driving privileges. During this time, traffic volume will increase, congestion will become more widespread, and the demands on drivers will grow significantly beyond present-day operating conditions. At the same time, Oregon's expanding population of aging drivers will experience declining vision, slowed decision-making and reaction times, and reduced strength, flexibility and overall fitness.

To ensure the safety of all drivers, it is important for DMV to compile information on the most effective programs in use today that address issues associated with older drivers. A comprehensive documentation and assessment of the screening tools, licensing requirements, and highway improvements in use by other states and countries would aid Oregon's DMV as we consider the need for future changes to our programs.

IV. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the research is to identify changes in licensing and control practices that would potentially improve DMV's management of older drivers. A literature search would document and assess how other states and countries are managing their older driver populations. There is a substantial volume of potentially relevant literature from diverse sources, including the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Transportation Research Board (TRB), the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA), and the allied health sciences. The literature search and assessment may address, but need not be limited to, the following subjects:

- Testing – Is testing based on age? Are other jurisdictions requiring more frequent testing after a certain age? Are some tests designed specifically for older drivers?
- Mandatory Reporting – What jurisdictions require mandatory reporting of medical issues? What conditions/impairments must be reported? Who must report? What actions are taken upon receipt of a report? What criteria are used to determine the appropriate action?
- Voluntary Reporting – Which jurisdictions allow voluntary reporting? What are the standards for making these reports? What actions are taken upon receipt of a report? What criteria are used to determine the appropriate action?
- Signage & Design– What steps have other jurisdictions taken to improve the readability of signs? Have they considered font size, style of font, and reflective materials? Have they changed the placement of signage? What have communities done to improve roadway

design in order to accommodate the needs of older drivers? What improvements provide more protection to older drivers?

In each of these areas, what scientific, evidence-based proof exists that supports the standards/requirements/designs that these jurisdictions have implemented?

V. WORK TASKS, COST ESTIMATE AND DURATION

The proposed project would include the following tasks:

1. Review literature relating to the licensing and control of older drivers. Summarize key features of effective programs and practices. Identify issues that need to be considered in designing and administering licensing and control programs involving older drivers.
2. Document licensing and control programs and practices of selected countries and state DMVs as they relate to older drivers. Assess licensing and control programs and practices in relation to demographic structure and dynamics (i.e., age composition and trends). Identify Oregon's demographic "peers" and assess commonalities/differences in relevant licensing and control practices.
3. Prepare a final report covering tasks 1 and 2, identifying changes with potential for improving Oregon DMV performance.

Estimated project duration: 12 months

Estimated project budget: \$60,000

VI. IMPLEMENTATION

DMV manages a number of driver programs that address the mobility and safety of older drivers. The findings of the research will be used directly in the Division's ongoing program evaluation processes.

VII. POTENTIAL BENEFITS

This information will be evaluated by DMV to determine what changes should be made in various program areas to accommodate Oregon's aging driver population. Evidence-based studies that support the requirements implemented in other states will help justify potential changes to Oregon's programs. This research will aid DMV in its continuing efforts to ensure the safe mobility of older drivers and to find the most effective means of identifying at-risk drivers and improving traffic safety.

VIII. SUBMITTED BY

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