

SECTION II

Section II reports address the issues of driver standards and testing.

Ideally, only applicants possessing the knowledge and skill level needed to drive safely and lawfully would be licensed to drive on California highways. Progress toward this ideal requires the development of task-relevant performance standards and the use of reliable and valid assessment instruments. The standard written and drive tests are periodically reviewed and subjected to various forms of psychometric analysis. Alternative testing approaches are proposed and evaluated in an attempt to develop improved licensure screening instruments.

An equally important objective of the licensing tests is to motivate the acquisition of safe driving information and skills. There are several advantages to linking educational objectives and systems to the examination process. First, it avoids the necessity of establishing separate program mechanisms and different facilities. Second, it minimizes use of the applicant's time. Third, the use of tests as a means of teaching has been found to be an effective technique in other disciplines, especially when some pretest preparation has occurred and programmed learning feedback is incorporated into the test. Fourth, and perhaps most important, driver licensing tests have extremely limited potential as devices for "screening out" accident-prone drivers. Therefore, use of testing as an educational and quality assurance tool offers more potential benefits without compromising screening objectives.