

# **FEASIBILITY OF A STATEWIDE VEHICLE IMPOUNDMENT DATABASE**

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13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 words) A 1997 DMV study evaluating the effectiveness of vehicle impoundment in California found that it was associated with significant declines in subsequent crashes, moving violation convictions and driving-while-suspended/driving-while-unlicensed convictions. However, apart from the information provided by this study, little else is known about vehicle impoundment in California, because there is no centralized statewide database of impoundment actions. A statewide database could provide information that could be used to monitor the integrity of vehicle impoundment in California, and also to assist Legislators in making informed policy decisions on impoundment.  The purpose of the present study was to explore whether it is feasible to develop a statewide vehicle impoundment database, preferably using existing reporting systems and databases so that the creation of the database would not add significant new tasks and responsibilities on law enforcement. An interagency task force was convened to explore the feasibility of creating a statewide impoundment database and, if feasible, to develop a model of the database. The task force determined that it is feasible to develop the database, and recommended that it be based upon an existing system in which law enforcement agencies report vehicle impoundment actions to the Department of Justice's Stolen Vehicle System database. A Memorandum of Understanding will be written by DMV staff and sent to the Office of Traffic Safety requesting funding to develop the database.				
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## **PREFACE**

This report is the final product of a project entitled *Feasibility of a Statewide Vehicle Impoundment Database*. This project is part of the California Traffic Safety Program and was funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) through the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS)(project TR0007). The report was prepared by the Research & Development Branch of the DMV under the administrative direction of Clifford J. Helander, Acting Chief. The opinions, findings and conclusions expressed in the report are those of the author and not necessarily those of NHTSA, OTS, DMV or the State of California. Additionally, the Administration has decided that it will not pursue the recommendations of the report at this time.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Examining how vehicles are impounded in California, how information on these actions is reported and stored, and developing a model of a statewide vehicle impoundment database, was the work of a task force of individuals representing several agencies and departments in the traffic enforcement system. The author would like to acknowledge and express his appreciation for the valuable work of these individuals, as follows. Mike Boruff and George Hisamoto, Department of Justice; Terry Wilson and Bob Metzker, California Highway Patrol; Mike Gebers, Anita Lopez, Eva Toyama and Cliff Helander, Department of Motor Vehicles; Tom Swearingen, Santa Rosa Police Department, and; Bill Ehart, Santa Ana Police Department. The author would also like to thank Debbie McKenzie, for assistance in preparing this final report.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Introduction**

In an effort to better control the traffic risk posed by problem drivers, California implemented a law, beginning January 1995, authorizing peace officers to seize and impound for 30 days the vehicles driven by suspended/revoked or unlicensed drivers. An evaluation of California's vehicle impoundment law found that it was associated with significant reductions in crashes and moving violation convictions.

While it has been demonstrated that vehicle impoundment is an effective traffic safety countermeasure in California, there is still much that is not known about it, because there is no statewide database containing information on vehicle impoundment actions. Data on vehicle impoundment is critical, both to monitor the integrity of this proven countermeasure, and to provide empirical information to legislators so that any future changes to the law are based on objective and reliable data.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether it is possible to develop a centralized statewide database of vehicle impoundment actions in California and, if so, to develop a model of the database. An important consideration in developing such a database is to explore whether there are existing reporting systems and databases that

could form the backbone of a centralized impoundment database, so that the creation of the new database would add minimal additional new workload to law enforcement.

This study is just the first step in creating a statewide vehicle impoundment database. If it is determined that it is feasible to develop the database, a second grant will be written and submitted to the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to actually develop and implement the database.

## **Methods**

There are a number of agencies involved in the traffic enforcement system, and the creation of a statewide vehicle impoundment database necessarily involves the participation of all involved agencies in order to be successful. Thus, the first step in exploring the feasibility of creating a statewide impoundment database was to determine which agencies needed to be involved, and then contacting these agencies to explain the project and request that a staff member be assigned to the project task force. The project leader determined that the task force needed to include local law enforcement, the California Highway patrol (CHP), the Department of Justice (DOJ), OTS, and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

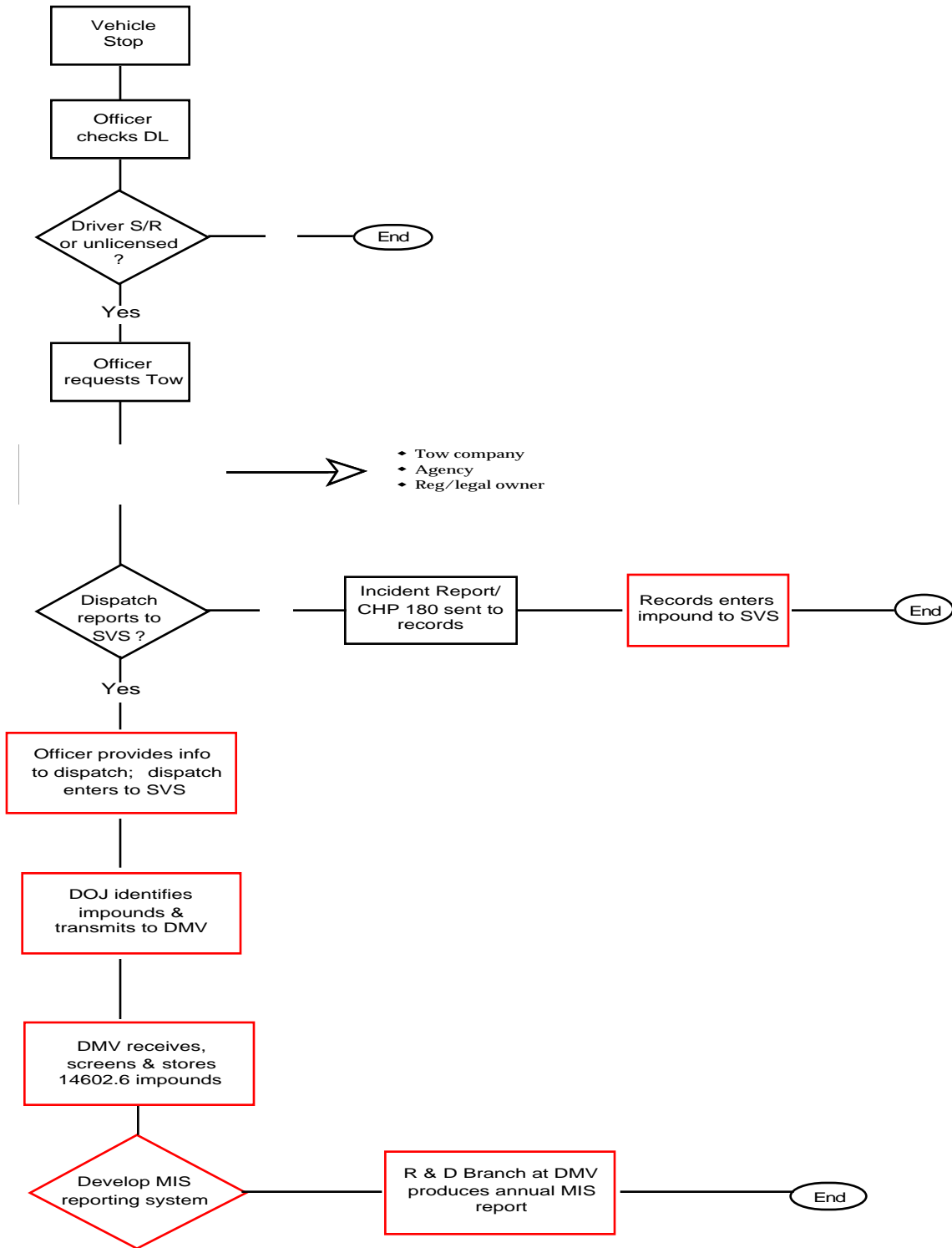
The project grant specified that the task force would need to meet at least 3 – 4 times in order to conduct the main part of the project work, with additional meetings between the project leader and specific task force members held as needed to work out details in situations where the input of all task force members was not necessary. As it turned out, the task force met four times, the first on February 16, 2000 and the fourth on June 21, 2000. The minutes from the meetings are in Appendix A of this report.

## **Results**

### **Task Force Meetings**

The task force began by examining existing reports and databases that are used when vehicles are impounded. Two major reports/databases were identified that could form the backbone of a statewide vehicle impoundment database, the Stolen Vehicle System (SVS) database, and the CHP 180 Vehicle Report. After significant discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of each, the task force determined that the SVS database would be the best existing source to use to develop a statewide impoundment database.

The SVS database is maintained by the Department of Justice (DOJ). Currently, it is estimated that about 90% of vehicle impoundment actions are reported to SVS by law enforcement. The task force decided that in order for the statewide vehicle impoundment database to be successful, legislation would need to be enacted requiring law enforcement agencies to report all 30-vehicle impoundment actions to SVS. Figure 1 presents a flowchart of the proposed statewide vehicle impoundment database.



**Figure 1.** Flowchart of a Statewide Vehicle Impoundment Reporting System and Database

As shown in Figure 1, the statewide vehicle impoundment database would work as follows. Law enforcement agencies would report vehicle impoundment actions to SVS, including identifying information on the offender which they do not currently report. Since SVS only stores impoundment data for 60 days, DOJ would write a computer program to immediately transmit the data to DMV. DMV would write another computer program to identify the vehicle impoundment actions of interest, and create a database to store these data for 10 years. DMV would also use the impoundment data to produce an annual management information system report on vehicle impoundment.

There are a number of issues that need to be addressed if the statewide vehicle impoundment database is to be developed and implemented. As previously mentioned, enabling legislation must be written and enacted, funding will need to be secured to reimburse DOJ, DMV and CHP for some of their costs to develop the system, and local law enforcement agencies will need to be trained on the new procedures.

The project leader wrote legislative language which would mandate the creation of the statewide database and DMV agreed to sponsor it. It is anticipated that a grant will be written and submitted to OTS requesting funding to reimburse DOJ, DMV and CHP for some of their development costs, and DOJ and DMV have agreed to provide training to local agencies. However, another, unanticipated, issue emerged. While the additional workload imposed by creating the statewide database will be minimal, CHP was experiencing a critical shortage of dispatch staff, and at the time the database plans were being finalized (fall of 2000), CHP could not support the proposal until their dispatcher shortage is resolved.

Based on the work of the task force and CHP's staffing limitations, a decision was made to pursue the development of the statewide vehicle impoundment database, but to work with CHP to time the development to coincide with the resolution of their staffing shortage. Thus, it is anticipated that a Memorandum Proposal will be written and submitted to OTS in 2001, and that the project leader and DMV management will work with CHP on the timing of the project in order to secure CHP support.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
PREFACE.....	i
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	i
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	i
Introduction.....	i
Method .....	ii
Results.....	ii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
METHOD.....	2
RESULTS.....	3
First Task Force Meeting.....	3
Second Task Force Meeting.....	6
Third Task Force Meeting.....	8
Fourth Task Force Meeting.....	9
Post-Task-Force-Meeting Activities.....	11
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	11
REFERENCES.....	12

## APPENDICES

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
A1 Minutes from the First Meeting of the Vehicle Impoundment Database Task Force .....	13
A2 Minutes from the Second Meeting of the Vehicle Impoundment Database Task Force .....	16
A3 Minutes from the Third Meeting of the Vehicle Impoundment Database Task Force .....	19
A4 Minutes from the Fourth Meeting of the Vehicle Impoundment Database Task Force .....	22
B CHP 180 Vehicle Report.....	25
C Legislative Language Statewide Vehicle Impoundment Database.....	26

## LIST OF TABLES

1 Desirable Database Elements, and Their Potential Sources, for a Statewide Vehicle Impoundment Database .....	5
2 Issues Associated with Using SVS to Create a Statewide Vehicle Impoundment Database.....	8

## LIST OF FIGURES

1 Flowchart of a Statewide Vehicle Impoundment Reporting System and Database.....	7
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## INTRODUCTION

Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of injuries and deaths, and they exact a large emotional and fiscal cost from society. The National Safety Council (2000) reports that in 1997, motor vehicle crashes were the leading source of unintentional injury deaths in the United States, and cost the country more than \$40 billion. In California, 3,459 people died in motor vehicle crashes and 290,698 were injured in 1998 (California Highway Patrol [CHP], 2000). While significant progress has been made in reducing motor vehicle crashes, the problem remains formidable.

There are several avenues that have been taken to reduce motor vehicle crashes. Highways and roads have been better designed and safety features have been incorporated into the physical environment, vehicles have been significantly improved to better protect occupants when crashes do occur, and laws and countermeasures have been enacted and implemented to better control high-risk drivers. Among those measures taken to better control high-risk drivers, a new class of laws has emerged that targets the vehicles driven by such drivers.

There are several ways to target the vehicles of high-risk drivers. Vehicle license plates can be marked or confiscated so that peace officers can more easily detect and apprehend people who continue to drive after their driver license has been suspended or revoked, or peace officers can confiscate or impound vehicles driven by suspended/revoked drivers so that the driver will find it more difficult to drive and pose a risk on the highways. Research evaluating these countermeasures has shown that they can be effective, especially vehicle impoundment or immobilization (Voas & DeYoung, in press). In California, vehicle impoundment authorized under California Vehicle Code (CVC) Section 14602.6 has been shown to reduce crashes by 25%-38%, moving violation convictions by 18%-22%, and driving-while-suspended (DWS) and driving-while-unlicensed (DWU) convictions by 24%-34% (DeYoung, 1999). Importantly, vehicle impoundment appears to be even more effective with repeat DWS/DWU offenders than with first offenders.

While it has been demonstrated that vehicle impoundment is an effective traffic safety countermeasure in California, there is still much that is not known about it, even such basic information as how many vehicles are impounded in the state each year. Furthermore, even the study that found that it is effective can be considered somewhat dated, as the law has changed since the study was conducted.

Information about vehicle impoundment in California is not simply an academic question; such information is critical, both to monitor the integrity of this proven countermeasure, and to provide empirical information to legislators so that any future changes to the law are based on objective and reliable data.

In California, as in most other states that have implemented vehicle impoundment laws, information about these countermeasures is somewhat difficult to obtain. The study of California's impoundment program relied on police department records,



which in one case existed only on hardcopy, and the data collection for this study took almost a year. The problem is that there is no centralized database that contains information on vehicle impoundment actions in California. Vehicle impoundment data exist only in local law enforcement records, and there is no common format for these decentralized databases.

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether it is possible to develop a centralized, statewide database of vehicle impoundment actions in California and, if so, to develop a model of the database. An important consideration in developing such a database is to explore whether there are existing reporting systems and databases that could form the backbone of a centralized impoundment database, so that the creation of the new database would add minimal additional new workload to law enforcement. It is critical to maintain the current high level of support vehicle impoundment has from law enforcement, and adding significant new responsibilities and workload could endanger that support.

This study is just the first step in creating a statewide vehicle impoundment database. As the title of the project states, this study explores the “feasibility” of developing such a database. If it is determined that it is feasible to develop the database, a second grant will be written and submitted to the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to actually develop and implement the database.

## **METHODS**

There are a number of agencies involved in the traffic enforcement system, and the creation of a statewide vehicle impoundment database will necessarily involve the participation of all involved agencies in order to be successful. Even within agencies, the creation of an impoundment database requires input from staff with different types of expertise, from operational experience to knowledge of computers, reporting systems and databases.

The first step in exploring the feasibility of creating a statewide vehicle impoundment database was to determine which agencies needed to be involved, and then contacting these agencies to explain the project and request that a staff member be assigned to the project task force. The project leader determined that the task force needed to include local law enforcement, CHP, the Department of Justice (DOJ), OTS, and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). A list of the task force members and the agencies that they represent can be found in the meeting minutes, in Appendix A.

The project grant specified that the task force would need to meet at least 3 – 4 times in order to conduct the main part of the project work, with additional meetings between the project leader and specific task force members held as needed to work out details in situations where the input of all task force members was not necessary. As it turned out, the task force met four times, the first on February 16, 2000 and the fourth on June 21, 2000. All meetings were held at the Doubletree Hotel in Sacramento, due to its central location. The minutes from the meetings are in Appendix A of this report.

The project leader had done some preliminary work exploring the feasibility of creating a statewide vehicle impoundment database prior to initiating the present project. That preliminary work suggested the possibility that an existing reporting system between law enforcement and DOJ might form the backbone of the statewide impoundment database. Because of this, it was anticipated that it would be necessary to conduct a survey of local law enforcement agencies in order to determine how widely this existing reporting system was used, and this task was written into the grant. However, in the course of developing a potential database, the task force decided that legislation would need to be written and enacted requiring law enforcement agencies to report all 30-day impounds to DOJ. This obviated the need for a survey, since it doesn't really matter how many agencies are currently using the system if we are going to require all agencies to participate through legislation. As a result, the survey of law enforcement was not undertaken. More details on this are provided in the Results Section.

## RESULTS

### First Task Force Meeting

In order to determine whether it is feasible to develop a statewide vehicle impoundment database, it is important to first examine the process by which vehicles are impounded, paying particular attention to reports, databases and reporting systems that are generated as a result of these actions. It is important to attempt to minimize any burden that would be placed on law enforcement as a result of developing the database, so it was particularly important to consider existing reports and databases. This process revealed that the following existing reports and databases are produced during the impoundment process, depending upon the specific circumstances of the case.

- Stolen Vehicle System (SVS) Database. Law enforcement reports vehicle impounds to DOJ's SVS database electronically, using the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS). There is no accurate data on the percentage of 30-day vehicle impoundments that law enforcement reports to SVS, but law enforcement and DOJ task force members estimated it to be about 90%. Currently, the California Vehicle Code (CVC) does not require law enforcement to report 30-day impound actions to SVS, but most agencies generally report such actions because it is to their advantage to do so for tracking purposes. For example, sometimes an agency will impound a vehicle driven by someone other than the registered owner, and the registered owner will call and report it as stolen. The agency can then check SVS to see if there is a record of the vehicle being impounded or stolen.
- CHP 180 or Local Variant of this Vehicle Report. When peace officers impound a vehicle, they complete a Vehicle Report, either a CHP 180 or a similar local version of it, which contains information about the vehicle and the circumstances

surrounding its seizure. It is estimated that at least half of all law enforcement agencies use the CHP 180, while the remainder use their own version. A copy of the Vehicle Report is given to the tow company and one copy stays with the agency performing the impound; DOJ is provided a copy of the vehicle report only if the vehicle's owner can't be notified.

- Citation. Peace officers issue citations charging drivers for DWS or DWU when they impound vehicles pursuant to CVC 14602.6. There are 4 copies of the citation, with copies distributed to the arresting agency, the court, the offender and the officer. While citations are written when vehicles are impounded, there is usually nothing on the citation indicating that the vehicle has been impounded, making it difficult to rely on citations as the central source of impoundment data.
- Arrest Reports. Arrest reports are sometimes completed in situations where vehicles are impounded for 30 days, but they are not consistently done on all impounds.
- Accident Reports. Accident reports might be completed on 30-day impounds if the incident involved a crash. In such cases, the officer would forward copies to the agency, CHP and, in some situations, CALTRANS.

In reviewing these databases and reports, it was clear to the task force that the accident report, arrest report and citation are not feasible to use as a foundation to develop a statewide vehicle impoundment database, because either they are not consistently completed on all 30-day impounds, or they don't contain vehicle impoundment data. This left the SVS database and the CHP 180/Vehicle Report as the two existing reports/databases that could be used to develop the statewide impoundment database.

There are advantages and disadvantages to using the Vehicle Report or the SVS database as a foundation upon which to build the statewide impoundment database, and the task force explored these. An important consideration is the extent to which each captures the specific data elements that the task force identified as important to include in the statewide database. These specific data elements, and whether they are captured by the Vehicle Report, the SVS database, or both, are shown in Table 1, below.

It can be seen from Table 1 that neither the Vehicle Report nor the SVS database contains much information on the offender, which is important to include in the statewide vehicle impoundment database, so that the effectiveness of impoundment can be evaluated. However, this lack of offender data on the two existing sources is not critical as long as one of the sources contains either the offender's driver license number, or their name and date of birth; either one of these will allow the impoundment incident to be linked to DMV's driver record database, which contains almost all of the offender data of interest.

Table 1

## Desirable Database Elements, and Their Potential Sources, for a Statewide Vehicle Impoundment Database.

DATABASE ELEMENT	SOURCE
Offender's driving & conviction record	-----
Vehicle Code Section violated	Vehicle Report (usually)
Storage/Impound authority section	Vehicle Report
Suspended or unlicensed authority section	Vehicle Report (not consistent)
Impound date	Vehicle Report & SVS
Impound time	Vehicle Report
Vehicle release date	Vehicle Report (not consistent)
Impounding agency	Vehicle Report & SVS
Offender's ethnicity	-----
Offender's age	-----
Offender's gender	-----
Offender's driver license number	Vehicle Report (not consistent)
Offender's name	-----
Offender's date of birth	-----
Offender's residence ZIP Code	-----
Incident involved crash?	-----
Stipulated Vehicle Release Agreement on record?	-----
Offender registered owner of vehicle?	-----
Vehicle's VIN	Vehicle Report & SVS
Vehicle's license plate number	Vehicle Report & SVS
Vehicle description	Vehicle Report & SVS
Vehicle value	Vehicle Report (not consistent)

By the end of the first meeting, the task force had not reached a consensus about whether the Vehicle Report/CHP 180 or the SVS database represented the best foundation upon which to build a statewide vehicle impoundment database, or about whether either one would be workable. The Vehicle Report/CHP 180 contains the most data of interest and is used by all agencies in some form, but it is a manual system at present and it doesn't consistently contain information on the offender. In contrast, the SVS database is electronic and so would involve much less work and time, but since not all impounds are currently being reported, enabling legislation would need to be enacted to require peace officers to report all 30-day impounds to SVS. In addition, the SVS database contains no offender data. The challenges that would be involved in using either the SVS database or the Vehicle Report to create a statewide vehicle impoundment database were explored further at the second task force meeting.

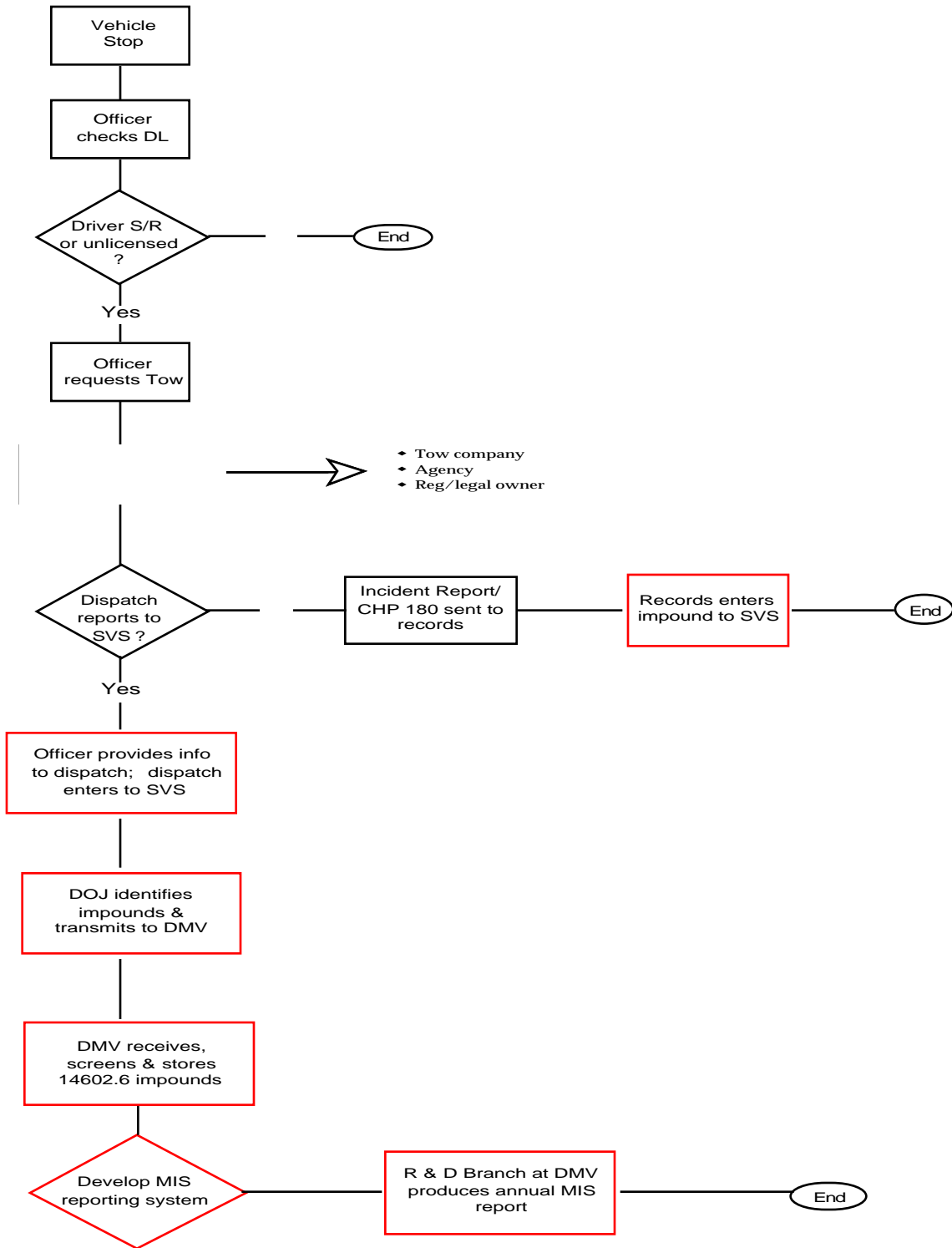
## Second Task Force Meeting

During the second meeting, the project leader introduced two additional possibilities that would use current or evolving systems to build a statewide vehicle impoundment database. The first is the National Insurance Crime Bureau, or NICB, database. This is composed of several databases, including one which contains information on impounded vehicles. The NICB database is privately owned, but the project leader spoke to staff responsible for this database and was informed that they would consider sharing the information on it. The task force discussed using NICB, but determined that while it has the advantage of being electronic, it would be problematic to use it because the database owner has no interest in adding offender data, the State of California would have no control over the database and, by policy, DOJ will not transmit offender data to NICB. In short, NICB has no advantage over SVS and has additional disadvantages that SVS does not have.

The second possibility is an automated CHP 180 Vehicle Report. The CHP is planning on automating the CHP 180 within the next year or two, and this could be an efficient way to transmit impoundment data to a centralized database. The task force reviewed the mechanics of how this might work, and discovered that there are some significant challenges to using the automated CHP 180; it is not yet automated, it is not used by all law enforcement agencies, and it would be costly to purchase all of the equipment that would be needed. The group decided to consider the automated CHP 180 along with the existing manual CHP 180/Vehicle Report.

With the automated CHP 180 folded into the existing CHP 180/Vehicle Report, the group returned to the task of identifying whether the CHP 180/Vehicle Report or the SVS database could form the foundation for the statewide impoundment database. After significant discussion, the group decided that the SVS database is the best existing option.

The proposed model for a statewide vehicle impoundment database, based upon the existing system where law enforcement reports impounds to DOJ's SVS database, would work as follows. Law enforcement agencies would be required to report all 30-day vehicle impoundment actions taken pursuant to CVC 14602.6/14607.6 to the SVS database. The data reported to SVS would include the offender's driver license number or, if this is unavailable, their name and date of birth. Because SVS currently stores vehicle impoundment data for only 60 days, another, more permanent, database would be developed and maintained by DMV. A computer program would be written so that all vehicle impoundment actions received by SVS would be immediately copied and transmitted to DMV's vehicle impoundment database. Another computer program at DMV would identify the 30-day impounds from all of the impoundment actions sent by SVS, and these would be stored for 10 years. DMV would use the impoundment data to produce a management information system (MIS) report annually. Figure 1 presents a flowchart of the proposed statewide vehicle impoundment database.



**Figure 1.** Flowchart of a Statewide Vehicle Impoundment Reporting System and Database

After the group had drafted a possible model of a statewide impoundment database, the next step was to identify the challenges that must be addressed in order for the database to be successfully developed and implemented. These issues are shown in Table 2, below.

Table 2

Issues Associated with Using SVS to Create a  
Statewide Vehicle Impoundment Database

1. Because the CHP 180 form does not routinely contain identifying information on the offender, those agencies that use the CHP 180 as a source document to input data to SVS will not have ready access to offender data.
2. There is very limited space on the CHP 180 form to add identifying information on the offender.
3. There will be programming costs for DOJ.
4. There will be programming costs for DMV.
5. Local agencies will incur costs associated with modifying the computer software they use to transmit impoundment data to SVS.
6. The new system for reporting vehicle impoundment actions will necessitate providing training for local agencies.
7. There will be minor ongoing costs for DMV that will be unfunded, and thus will need to be absorbed by the department.
8. Legislation will need to be written and enacted requiring law enforcement to report specified data on 30-day impounds to SVS.

The project leader concluded the second meeting by requesting that certain members collect additional information, so that the group could better assess whether the proposed reporting system and database can be successfully implemented.

### Third Task Force Meeting

Most of the third task force meeting involved discussing the challenges posed by using SVS to create the statewide impoundment database. One significant issue is that because identifying information is not consistently provided on the CHP 180 (see Appendix B), those agencies that use the CHP 180 as a source document to transmit impoundment data to SVS will need to somehow obtain this identifying information from another source. One way to deal with this problem is to reformat the CHP 180 so

that there are “boxes” dedicated to providing identifying information on the offender. A task force member representing CHP proposed a change to the CHP 180 which would add boxes for the offender’s driver license number and date of birth. The task force reviewed this proposed change, and made some additional suggestions.

Another significant issue is whether, and if so how, to reimburse local agencies for their costs to change the “masks,” or computer software interfaces, that they use to transmit data to SVS. Task force members representing law enforcement agencies stated that these masks typically undergo changes/updating every couple of years, so the group decided that local agencies would not be reimbursed for their costs, but instead would be allowed 18 months to make the changes; this should be sufficient time to allow the changes required by the impoundment database to be performed at the same time agencies would normally update their masks. In addition, local agencies can use masks developed by DOJ, or enter the data in a free-format manner.

Providing training to local agencies on the new reporting requirements is another issue that needed to be addressed. A task force member representing DOJ informed the group that his department could prepare and send training bulletins to local law enforcement agencies. In addition, both DMV and DOJ representatives agreed that both agencies could conduct training at conferences.

Perhaps the most important issue that needed to be addressed is drafting legislation requiring the following: law enforcement agencies to transmit specified information on vehicle impoundment actions to SVS; DOJ to transmit these data to DMV, and; DMV to create and maintain a database of 30-day impounds and to produce an annual MIS vehicle impoundment report. Task force members representing CHP and DOJ stated that their agencies would need to perform a significant amount of work to implement the statewide impoundment database, and that before doing so would want the guarantees afforded by legislation that the other agencies and departments that are a part of the system would also make the changes necessary to ensure success. The project leader agreed to draft legislation and submit it to the task force for review. If possible, the legislation could be introduced during the current (2000) legislative session.

To prepare for the fourth meeting, representatives from DMV, CHP and DOJ agreed to develop cost estimates and to research other matters related to developing and implementing the statewide impoundment database.

#### Fourth Task Force Meeting

At this final meeting of the task force, the group reviewed the figures developed by CHP, DOJ and DMV representatives to the task force, which estimated how much it would cost their respective agencies to make the changes necessary to develop the statewide vehicle impoundment database. The group also reviewed and suggested changes to the legislative proposal that would mandate the creation of the database,



discussed CHP workload issues and examined proposed changes to the CHP 180 Vehicle Report form.

Regarding costs, the DOJ representative to the task force told the group that his department would absorb costs associated with preparing training bulletins and updating manuals, but that programming costs, both to incorporate additional data fields in the SVS database, and to transmit impoundment data to DMV, will amount to approximately \$90,000, and these costs would need to be funded.

DMV representatives informed the task force that DMV programming development, hardware, software and data storage costs would amount to \$21,843, and that it would cost approximately \$22,000 to develop and implement procedures to produce a MIS vehicle impoundment report. In addition to these costs, which would need to be funded by outside sources, DMV would incur annual expenses of \$9,271 for data storage and system maintenance, and approximately \$16,000 for MIS report production; the department would absorb these costs.

CHP would incur costs associated with changing and printing their CHP 180 Vehicle Report form, and to update the programming of their computer-aided-dispatch (CAD) software. The costs for modifying and printing the CHP 180 were estimated to be about \$120,000, and funding would need to be secured to reimburse CHP for this cost. No costs were provided for updating the CHP CAD system, but a more important issue associated with additional workload for dispatchers was brought up for discussion.

CHP staff estimated that by requiring the agency to transmit 5 additional data fields on vehicle impoundment actions (mostly offender data to link to DMV's database), dispatchers would need to enter 55 to 65 additional keystrokes per case. While this might not seem like much, given the volume of transactions, especially at CHP's larger communications centers, it could represent a significant workload. This is especially problematic at the current time because of a significant shortage of CHP dispatchers. Apparently, due to relatively low current CHP dispatcher salary, many dispatchers start and train at CHP, and then transfer to more lucrative positions in local agencies. The group agreed that this issue needed further investigation.

The final issue discussed at the fourth task force meeting was legislation drafted by the project leader. The project leader submitted this legislation to the Senate and Assembly Public Safety Committees to be considered during the 2000 session, and also submitted it to DMV's Legislative Office for consideration as a departmental bill during the following year's session (2001). The task force reviewed the legislation and suggested several minor modifications, which the project leader promised to make and then email to the task force members for final approval.

In sum, during this final full meeting of the task force, the group recommended that a statewide vehicle impoundment database be developed, and proposed a model based on an existing reporting system and database. The group proposed solutions for

dealing with most of the challenges it identified at an earlier meeting, and the project leader stated that he would work with relevant task force members and others to develop solutions for the remaining issues.

### Post-Task-Force-Meeting Activities

The project leader revised the legislation and emailed it to task force members for review. A final copy of the legislative language specifying the development of a statewide vehicle impoundment reporting system and database is presented in Appendix C.

Before writing a grant to OTS requesting funding to develop and implement the statewide database, one final issue needed to be addressed. The project leader and other DMV staff met with CHP Legislative and Special Projects staff to discuss the project and how it might impact dispatch workload at CHP. While the project leader presented information that the extra workload should be minimal, perhaps a couple of extra positions statewide at most, the CHP legislative representative told the group that his agency was experiencing a critical shortage of dispatchers. He added that his agency was taking steps to deal with the problem, and that while they would consider supporting the project the following year, they could not support it this year.

The project leader met with R & D and DMV management to decide the best course of action. They decided to withdraw the legislative proposal that DMV had agreed to sponsor, recognizing that without CHP support it was unlikely to be successful in the legislature. While the timing was not good to move forward with the project, it is important to develop a statewide vehicle impoundment database, and the R & D Branch intends to pursue it in the near future.

## SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Surprisingly little is known about vehicle impoundment in California. A study conducted by the R & D Branch at DMV five years ago showed that it is strongly associated with declines in DWS/DWU recidivism, moving violation convictions and crashes (DeYoung, 1999). However, the law has been modified since that study was done, and local agency implementation of the law has changed, in unknown ways.

How many vehicles are impounded each year in California? Is this number increasing or decreasing? Is it implemented evenly throughout the state? Even basic questions about vehicle impoundment, such as these, can not be answered at present. And, this is not only of academic interest. In the last Legislative Session, a bill was introduced to excuse unlicensed drivers from the impoundment sanction, and flawed data were presented to support this proposal. Unfortunately, sound data are unavailable at present to support effective policy regarding vehicle impoundment, or to argue against misguided changes to the present law. In addition, without statewide data, the integrity of the sanction can not be monitored; are there areas where it is simply not used, or

jurisdictions where it was once used but is no longer? It is critical to have reliable statewide data to monitor and support this proven countermeasure, and the task force supported by this OTS grant has developed a model of the database that will impose minimal new workload on law enforcement, and will develop the database in a cost-effective manner. It deserves support.

It is recommended that the model developed by the task force be refined and implemented. The project leader will write a memorandum proposal and submit it to OTS in early 2001 requesting funding for the project. The project leader will also work with CHP staff to secure that agency's support for the project, timing it to coincide with the resolution of CHP's dispatcher shortage. The legislative language that was written to mandate the creation of the statewide impoundment database will be reintroduced, either as a DMV proposal or as one sponsored independently of the department. Thus, while the development and implementation of a statewide vehicle impoundment database has been delayed, it is recommended that it go forward, and steps will be taken to move it forward.

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## Appendix A

### Appendix A1

#### Minutes from the First Meeting of the Vehicle Impoundment Database Task Force

February 16, 2000

Doubletree Hotel, Sacramento

#### ATTENDEES

Mike Boruff, DOJ  
George Hisamoto, DOJ  
Jim Thompson, CHP  
Terry Wilson, CHP  
Bob Metzker, CHP  
Tom Swearingen, Santa Rosa PD  
Bill Ehart, Santa Ana PD  
Mike Gebers, DMV  
Anita Lopez, DMV  
Eva Toyama, DMV  
Dave DeYoung, DMV, Facilitator

#### ABSENT

Tricia Wynne, DOJ  
Chris Murphy, OTS  
Bill Wihl, DMV

The first meeting began with Dave DeYoung providing a brief overview of the purpose of the task force, and this was followed by each member introducing themselves to the group. Dave then delivered presentations on DMV's research study of the effectiveness of vehicle impoundment, the need for a statewide database, and a description of the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) grant which funds this task force's mission to explore the feasibility of creating a statewide database of vehicle impoundment/forfeiture actions.

The DMV study of vehicle impoundment shows that it is effective in decreasing crashes and traffic convictions among suspended/revoked (S/R) and unlicensed drivers whose vehicles are impounded. However, the study will become outdated as the laws change, and because there is no centralized database of impoundment/forfeiture actions, it is very difficult to obtain information about these countermeasures. Dave stated that there are compelling reasons for creating a statewide database, chief among them to provide information to legislators and others who are in a position to support vehicle impoundment. A planning grant has been awarded to DMV to investigate the feasibility of creating a statewide vehicle impoundment/forfeiture database, and to develop a model of the database should it prove feasible.

Following the presentations, the task force began discussing what information would be valuable to obtain on vehicle impoundment/forfeiture. These pieces of information were written on a flip chart and pasted to the wall for the group to consult during the next stage, which was to develop specific data elements that should be included in any database. The specific database elements identified by the group were:

- Offender's record of post-driving crashes/convictions,
- Vehicle Code section violated (*Maybe on CHP 180*),
- Storage/impound authority section (*CHP 180*),
- S/R or unlicensed authority section (*Maybe on CHP 180*),
- Date of impound (*CHP 180; SVS*),
- Time of impound (*CHP 180*),
- Date of vehicle release (*CHP 180; required by CHP, local agencies inconsistent*),
- Impounding agency (NCIC #) (*CHP 180; SVS*),
- Offender's ethnicity,
- Offender's age,
- Offender's gender,
- Offender's driver license # (*inconsistently on CHP 180*),
- Offender's name (Last, First, Middle initial),
- Offender's date of birth,
- Offender's residence ZIP Code,
- Was impound related to a crash?
- Stipulated Vehicle Release Agreement on record?
- Was the driver the registered owner of vehicle?
- Impounded vehicle's VIN (*CHP 180; SVS*),
- Impounded vehicle's license plate # (*CHP 180; SVS*),
- Description of impounded vehicle (Make, Model, Year) (*CHP 180; SVS*),
- Value of impounded vehicle (*CHP 180; only standardized with CHP*).

After returning from lunch, the task force outlined the current process of impounding and forfeiting vehicles, paying particular attention to reports, databases and reporting systems generated as a result of these actions. There was general consensus among the group that these existing reports, databases and reporting systems should be given first priority in developing a statewide impoundment database, so as not to add significant new responsibilities and tasks on law enforcement. The group identified the following existing specific reports and databases.

- Law enforcement uses the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS) to report vehicle impounds to the Department of Justice's Stolen Vehicle System (SVS) database.
- Vehicle Report -- CHP 180 or similar document developed by local agency.
- Citation.
- Arrest Report.
- Accident Report.

The group noted that not all agencies report impounds to the SVS database, and that while perhaps 80% of law enforcement agencies use the CHP 180 form, the others use similar forms that they have developed that may contain somewhat different data fields. Also, arrest reports and accident reports are only used in certain circumstances.

The next task involved examining the data contained on the two most promising reports/databases, the Vehicle Report (CHP 180) and the SVS database, and checking to see which of the important data elements identified earlier were captured by each database. While both the vehicle report and SVS database provide information about the vehicle, neither contains much data on the driver (see specific data elements outlined above). It is not necessary for the vehicle report/SVS database to

contain a lot of data on the offender, because much of this is available from records maintained by DMV. However, in order to access this DMV data, the report/database must contain identifying information on the offender, specifically driver license number and/or full name and date of birth.

Because the Vehicle Report and the SVS database appeared to be the most promising existing sources that could be used to develop a statewide vehicle impoundment and forfeiture database, the task force examined each in turn, listing its advantages and disadvantages. These relative merits of each are shown below.

### VEHICLE REPORT (CHP 180)

#### Advantages

- Contains the most data of interest.
- Used by all agencies, with some variation in data fields.
- There are plans to convert it to an electronic system.

#### Disadvantages

- No consistent information on offender.
- Manual at present.
- Some of the larger agencies do not use CHP version.
- Additional work to mail the forms to DMV.
- Additional costs to modify form.
- Difficult to add fields containing identifying information on offender.

### SVS DATABASE

#### Advantages

- Currently electronic.
- Transmitted electronically.
- Required under some conditions (90% -- 95% of impounds currently reported).
- Timely

#### Disadvantages

- May need enabling legislation to require all impounds to be reported.
- No offender data.
- Difficult & costly to add fields (primarily local agencies).
- Short period of data retention.
- No offline storage.
- Not mandatory to report all impounds.
- Additional resources to train local agencies.
- Additional data fields needed to identify offender & type of impound.
- Requires additional dispatch/transmission time (due to added fields).
- 18-24 months for all local agencies to make software changes.

The task force did not arrive at a consensus about which (if either) existing report/database, the SVS database or the Vehicle Report, represents the most promising basis for developing a statewide vehicle impoundment/forfeiture database. Using either one would present significant challenges, although at this point these do not appear to be insurmountable.

A second task force meeting was proposed for **Wednesday, March 15**, to continue investigating whether it is feasible to develop a statewide vehicle impoundment/forfeiture database. If, in the meantime, anyone has new ideas, questions or additional information about the project, please contact Dave DeYoung.

## Appendix A2

### Minutes from the Second Meeting of the Vehicle Impoundment Database Task Force

March 15, 2000

Doubletree Hotel, Sacramento

#### ATTENDEES

Mike Boruff, DOJ  
George Hisamoto, DOJ  
Terry Wilson, CHP  
Bob Metzker, CHP  
Shell Culp, CHP  
Tom Swearingen, Santa Rosa PD  
Bill Ehart, Santa Ana PD  
Mike Gebers, DMV  
Anita Lopez, DMV  
Eva Toyama, DMV  
Cliff Helander, DMV  
Dave DeYoung, DMV, Facilitator

#### ABSENT

Tricia Wynne, DOJ  
Chris Murphy, OTS  
Bill Wihl, DMV

The second task force meeting began with group members becoming reacquainted with each other. Cliff Helander of DMV introduced himself to the group for the first time, as did Shell Culp of CHP. Dave DeYoung then presented a short review of what transpired at the first task force meeting, including a summary of the purposes and efficacy of vehicle impoundment, the rationale for developing a statewide vehicle impoundment database, the OTS grant that is funding the work of the task force, and a description of the progress the group made in examining existing databases and reporting systems as potential sources for the development of the statewide database.

During the first meeting, the task force identified data that would be important to include in a statewide vehicle impoundment and forfeiture database, and then outlined the process of impounding vehicles, focusing on reports, reporting systems and databases that are used when vehicles are impounded. This revealed that there are two existing reports/databases that could potentially serve as the basis for developing a statewide impoundment database, the CHP 180 (Vehicle Report) and the Department of Justice's Stolen Vehicle System (SVS) database. During this second meeting, Dave presented two additional reports/databases that could serve as the basis for a statewide database.

The first additional database is known as the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) database, which in fact consists of several databases, including one which contains information on vehicles that have been impounded. Approximately thirty states currently participate in transmitting data to

NICB, and discussions are currently underway to persuade California to participate. The group discussed the advantages and disadvantages of using NICB as a source for developing a statewide vehicle impoundment/forfeiture database, and came up with the following list.

### NICB

#### Advantages

- Cost savings (database and hardware exist).
- Data fields are available to store offender information.
- Transmission mechanism from SVS to NICB database exists.
- NICB does not purge impound data.

#### Disadvantages

- Same disadvantages as SVS.
- No control over database.
- Problems in accessing the database.
- Database owner not interested in offender data.
- By policy, DOJ will not transmit offender data to NICB.

The group next turned its attention to the automated CHP 180, which isn't really as much of a new report/reporting system as it is an evolution of the current manual system to an electronic one. The CHP is in the process of automating a number of forms, including the CHP 180, which should be in electronic form in about 12 months. If relevant information from the CHP 180 could be electronically transmitted to SVS, and identifying information on the offender could be added to the form, then this could provide an efficient way to transmit impound data to SVS. The group discussed the advantages and disadvantages of using the automated CHP 180 as a basis for developing a statewide database, and came up with the following list.

### AUTOMATED CHP 180

#### Advantages

- Will be automated in about 12 months.
- Can add new fields.
- May be relatively easy to transmit to DMV

#### Disadvantages

- Local agencies may not use.
- Cost to purchase equipment.
- 180 form not uniformly used.

Having identified four potential reports/databases that could serve as the basis for developing a statewide impoundment/forfeiture database, the group focused on examining these options and ruling out any that appear infeasible. The national impound database that is part of NICB was ruled out from further consideration because DOJ will not transmit offender information due to privacy concerns; without offender data, vehicle impoundment incidents could not be linked to DMV's database in order to capture additional important information. Bob suggested considering the automated CHP 180 as part of the manual CHP 180 that now exists, and this merger left the two original options; the CHP 180 and SVS.

The group next focused on identifying which of the two existing options represents the best choice to use in developing a statewide impoundment database. A significant amount of discussion



ensued, with the group identifying problems and searching for solutions. While there are significant hurdles to overcome, the group eventually decided that the SVS database is the best existing option to utilize to develop a statewide database.

Dave shifted the focus to having the group identify and list the tasks and issues associated with using the SVS database to build a statewide impoundment database, a process that was helped considerably by Mike's expertise with SVS. The following is a list of these critical tasks and issues.

### SVS ISSUES

- Because the CHP 180 does not contain DOB, and officers do not consistently list driver license number and name on impounds, those agencies that use the CHP 180 as a source document to input data to SVS will not have ready access to all of the additional offender data when transmitting to SVS.
- A decision needs to be made as to whether to develop a new message key for impounds.
- There will be programming costs for DOJ.
- There will be programming costs for DMV.
- There will be programming costs for local agencies (Bob proposed offering a set amount, such as \$5,000, to local agencies as an incentive to quickly reprogram their software).
- There will need to be training for local agencies on the new input for impounds.
- There is very limited space on the CHP 180 to add additional offender data.
- There will be some ongoing costs, primarily for DMV. Since OTS grants do not fund ongoing costs, this project will likely involve unfunded costs.
- There may need to be legislation enacted requiring law enforcement to report the additional offender data to SVS.

Some of these issues pose significant challenges to developing a statewide vehicle impoundment/forfeiture database. At this point, though, it appears that it may be feasible to use the SVS database as a foundation to develop a statewide database.

Before closing, Dave thanked the task force members for their active participation and sharing of their expertise, and proposed a third meeting for **April 12**. Dave will gather some additional information on some of the issues identified by the task force, and will likely meet with some members before the next meeting. If anyone has ideas, questions, or answers, for that matter, please contact Dave DeYoung.

## Appendix A3

### Minutes from the Third Meeting of the Vehicle Impoundment Database Task Force

April 18, 2000

Doubletree Hotel, Sacramento

#### ATTENDEES

Mike Boruff, DOJ  
Terry Wilson, CHP  
Bill Ehart, Santa Ana PD  
Mike Gebers, DMV  
Anita Lopez, DMV  
Eva Toyama, DMV  
Cliff Helander, DMV  
Dave DeYoung, DMV, Facilitator  
Chris Murphy, OTS

#### Absent

Tricia Wynne, DOJ  
Bill Wihl, DMV  
George Hisamoto, DOJ  
Bob Metzker, CHP  
Tom Swearingen, Santa Rosa PD

This third meeting of the task force began with Chris Murphy, from the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), introducing himself to the task force. Dave DeYoung then briefly reviewed the task force's progress in investigating whether it is feasible to develop a statewide vehicle impoundment database, which brought Chris up-to-date and also set the groundwork for discussing the outstanding issues at this meeting.

Some progress has been made since the task force's last meeting in addressing some of the issues related to developing a statewide database. Dave told the group about the survey that he conducted, in conjunction with the CHP Supply Services Unit, on local agencies that ordered the CHP 180 (Vehicle Report) during a one-year period ending in March 2000. This survey revealed that about 50% of local law enforcement agencies in California order, and presumably use, the CHP 180. This broad use of the CHP 180 suggests that if this form can be modified to include driver license (DL) # and date of birth (DOB), it will likely make it easier for many agencies to access this additional offender data on vehicle impoundment cases that they transmit to SVS.

Terry Wilson informed the group of the progress she has made in investigating whether the CHP 180 report can be modified to add the offender's DL # and DOB. Terry stated that she believes that the box labeled "name," which appears in the remarks section of the report, can potentially be revised to add DL # and DOB. The task force discussed the advantages and disadvantages of this approach, concluding that it would be more effective if DL # and DOB had separate boxes on the form. In this regard, it may be possible to expand the name box upward to include DL # and DOB. Terry agreed to further investigate modifying the CHP 180 report, and also informed the group that CHP administrators will only agree to modify the form if legislation is enacted requiring law enforcement agencies to report to SVS driver name, DOB and DL # on vehicles that they impound.

The focus of the meeting shifted to examining the proposed system of creating a statewide vehicle impoundment database based on the Department of Justice's SVS database. Dave passed out a flowchart he created which outlines the proposed system and the issues that must be solved in order to develop the database. The group made decisions on some of the issues, while others require more information; on the latter, those task force members that are in the best position to gather the additional information agreed to collect it. The specific issues, group decisions, and assigned responsibilities for collecting additional information are presented below.

ISSUE	DECISION	ADDITIONAL TASKS
1. Who trains local agencies on inputting additional offender data? How?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOJ will prepare info bulletins to agencies.</li> <li>• DMV/DOJ will present procedures @ training conferences.</li> <li>• Roll-call Sgt. @ agencies will inform officers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mike</b> will obtain estimates of DOJ costs to prepare bulletin &amp; update manuals.</li> </ul>
2. How to direct local agencies to access offender data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let agencies decide for themselves best procedures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>
3. How can the CHP 180 be modified to include DL # & DOB of offender ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The likely solution is to add DL # &amp; DOB to the name box, &amp; possibly enlarge box.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Terry</b> will investigate CHP 180 modifications, &amp; obtain estimates of costs to modify form and also to change CHP CAD to input additional data.</li> </ul>
4. Who pays to change local agency masks to SVS?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There will be no funding for this. Agencies will have 18 months to change masks. They may also use DOJ masks (50% already use), or enter data free-form.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>
5. Does DOJ provide new message key for 14602.6 impounds?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No. Instead, the EVSH files will be modified to include the new offender data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mike</b> will obtain estimates of DOJ programming costs &amp; development timelines.</li> </ul>
6. How does DOJ identify & transmit impounds to DMV?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DOJ transmits <u>all</u> impounds (about 35,000/month) to DMV using CLETS. Data transmitted real time as DOJ receives them. DOJ will <u>not</u> transmit canceled transactions, but will transmit modified transactions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See above.</li> </ul>
7. How does DMV receive, screen & store impound data from DOJ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DMV will screen all impounds received and select those of interest, storing these data for 10 years. ISD maintains, and R &amp; D queries, the database, which is updated weekly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Eva</b> will obtain estimates of hardware &amp; software needs for the system, development time, and both development costs and ongoing costs.</li> </ul>

ISSUE	DECISION	ADDITIONAL TASKS
8. What data will be on database?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Included</u>: impound date; agency; vehicle year, make &amp; model; vehicle license # &amp; VIN; file control #; storage authority section; driver name, DL # &amp; DOB.</li> <li>• <u>Not included</u>: CVC violation (in report as narrative &amp; would need interpretation -- available as license history info from DMV records); registered owner (unreliable because many sellers never submit release of liability).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>
9. Should a regular MIS report on impounds be developed & produced?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yes, and it should be mandated by legislation. Report produced annually and will include, at minimum, trends over time &amp; location. To be determined who report is sent to.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dave</b> will estimate development costs and ongoing costs for report.</li> </ul>
10. What issues should legislation address?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require agencies to report specified information (including new data -- storage authority, driver name, DL # &amp; DOB); intent of law; address funding (no funding provided); implement within 18 months; DOJ transmits impounds to DMV using CLETS; DMV must create &amp; maintain database to store the data; DMV will produce annual report.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dave</b> will draft legislation in time for current legislative session, preferably in omnibus bill.</li> </ul>

The task force agreed to allow 4 - 5 weeks for members to collect the cost estimates and other information that is needed before reconvening. The consensus of the group was that it appears feasible to develop a statewide database of vehicle impoundment actions, and that this will not present a substantial new burden for law enforcement. And, the timing is propitious; DOJ is in the process of making major changes to their system, and now is a good time to include those changes that are necessary to develop the statewide database. It should be noted that this database will cover vehicle impoundment but not forfeiture actions, because agencies typically transmit forfeiture as impounds, and then later modify them in the database.

This was a very productive meeting, and Dave thanked the members for sharing their expertise and for their active participation and interest in the task force's mission. The next meeting will likely be held in mid to late June, and Dave will notify members within the next several weeks to schedule it. If, in the meantime, anyone has questions, concerns or answers, please call Dave.

## Appendix A4

### Minutes from the Fourth Meeting of the Vehicle Impoundment Database Task Force

June 21, 2000

Doubletree Hotel, Sacramento

#### ATTENDEES

Mike Boruff, DOJ  
Terry Wilson, CHP  
Bill Ehart, Santa Ana PD  
Mike Gebers, DMV  
Anita Lopez, DMV  
Eva Toyama, DMV  
Cliff Helander, DMV  
Dave DeYoung, DMV, Facilitator  
Bob Metzker, CHP

#### ABSENT

Tricia Wynne, DOJ  
Bill Wihl, DMV  
George Hisamoto, DOJ  
Tom Swearingen, Santa Rosa PD  
Chris Murphy, OTS

Dave DeYoung began the fourth meeting of the task force by passing out an agenda, and then providing a recap of the progress that was made at the last meeting, in April. This recap summarized the task force's purpose, and stated that the task force has concluded that it is both important and feasible to develop a statewide vehicle impoundment database.

Dave next handed out a flowchart of the proposed reporting system and database, which had been revised to list the decisions that the group had made on important issues related to developing the database. The group examined the revised flowchart, concluding that, with one exception, it accurately depicts the proposed reporting system and database. The exception, noted by Mike Boruff, is that it is uncertain at this point whether DOJ will transmit canceled transactions to DMV. During the April meeting, the group decided that it would be best if DOJ did not transmit canceled transactions to DMV, because sometimes the original entries are valid. However, Mike indicated that he is continuing to investigate this, and that it might be possible for DOJ to select a group of canceled transactions that it would make sense to send.

Once the group finished discussing the flowchart of the proposed system, Dave handed out a list of the data elements that would be on the database. It was pointed out that the vehicle license number should be accompanied by another field which would indicate the state of the vehicle license, which is a field that currently exists on DOJ's SVS database. In addition, it was suggested that a fifth new data field be added, which would indicate the state of the driver's driver license number. The group agreed to incorporate these two "state" fields into the database. Bill mentioned that his agency uses CVC Sections 22651 and 14602.6 as authority sections for 30-day impounds. Dave replied that he believes that it is sufficient to simply use CVC 14602.6, because it authorizes both the seizure and the 30-day impoundment. The number of characters provided on SVS for storage authority data will not permit more than one CVC section to be input, so training for law enforcement on the new reporting requirements will need to emphasize giving 14602.6 priority when inputting impound data to SVS.

Terry handed out a draft of changes that could be made on the CHP 180, which would add the driver's driver license number and date of birth to the 180 form, including it in a box just below the box for the driver's name. The group agreed that these changes accomplished the goal of making this data readily available on the CHP 180 form.

The task force then turned its attention to reading a revised copy of the legislation that would mandate the reporting of data on vehicle impoundment actions in California, and the storage and production of a MIS report based on these data. Dave informed the group that this legislation has been delivered to the Senate and Assembly Public Safety Committees to be considered for inclusion in legislation being heard during the current session, and also has been submitted to the DMV Legislative Office for consideration as a departmental bill during next year's session. The group reviewed the legislation and then decided on the following changes.

- Include "driver license state" as a required field on impounds reported by law enforcement to DOJ (CVC 22853(d)) and on these data that DOJ reports to DMV (CVC 22853.5(a)).
- Examine existing legislative language for examples of information that is transmitted electronically, and modify CVC 22853.5 (a) to replace "notify."
- In subdivisions (a), (b) and (c) of CVC 22853, add language stating, in effect, that "...unless a vehicle is impounded under subdivision (d), in which case the requirements of that subdivision take precedence."
- In CVC 22853(d), add the word "notwithstanding," or something similar, that gives this subdivision priority over subdivisions (a), (b) and (c) in situations where a vehicle has been impounded pursuant to CVC 14602.6, 14602.7 or 14607.6

The group decided that once the legislation has been revised and reviewed by the group, that Dave should work with Scott McGregor, in CHP's Legislative Office, and Karen Douglas, in CHP's Special Projects Division, to obtain some feedback on how CHP will respond to the legislation.

During the April meeting, the task force agreed that Mike Boruff, Eva Toyama, Dave DeYoung and Terry Wilson would obtain estimates of the development time and costs associated with tasks that their respective departments would undertake, and present these at the June Task Force Meeting. Mike presented his estimates first, informing the group that while DOJ would absorb the costs associated with preparing training bulletins and updating manuals, programming costs to modify the SVS database would be approximately \$90,000, and take about 800 hours of programming time. Mike said that one year of lead time to implement the changes should be sufficient.

Terry informed the group that CHP estimates that it will cost about \$120,000 to modify and print their 180 form, and that it would take 3-4 months to do. Some discussion ensued about these costs and what they involved, and a question was raised about whether, if CHP received the money, the forms would then be provided to allied agencies at no cost. Terry agreed to check on this. Cliff told the group that he believes that this cost would be appropriate to include in the grant. Mention was also made that if money was unavailable for this, the changes to the CHP 180 form could simply take place when CHP next revised the form and that the new form would filter out to allied agencies when their supply of the current forms runs out. While no firm decision was made on this, the grant that is submitted to OTS will include a request for these funds if it appears feasible to request them in the context of the entire project. Terry also informed the group that CHP would absorb costs associated with changing the CHP CAD and their masks to SVS.

However, both Bob and Terry brought up another issue that CHP is concerned about that has significant implications for the vehicle impoundment database project. CHP estimates that requiring the agency to report to SVS the five new data fields will result in 55 to 65 additional keystrokes on each 14602.6, 14602.7 and 14607.6 vehicle impoundment case that is entered. This may have a significant impact on workload at some of the larger communications centers. There is a CAD Users Group meeting on July 20th, and Bob will discuss this workload issue there.

A question arose as to whether automating the CHP 180 form, and developing a mechanism to transmit it to SVS, might alleviate the extra workload of entering additional driver data on impounds. Bob indicated that it might, although this project is 1-2 years from being implemented and probably will cost about \$100,000. Bob also indicated that even if OTS funding were available for this project it probably wouldn't help quicken the pace, because CHP staff would need to work closely with consultants hired with the money, and staff at CHP are fully committed. However, Bob did state that the process we are setting up to develop a reporting system and database could assist CHP because they could potentially do individual queries on impound cases; this could be a "selling point" to encourage CHP's support for the project. Terry indicated that a written statement explaining the advantages of setting up the vehicle impoundment reporting system and database could be helpful in enlisting upper management support for the project.

The group's focus shifted to examining DMV's costs to implement the reporting system and database. Eva told the group that DMV's development costs would amount to \$21,483, which includes about 320 hours of programming time, hardware, software and data storage. In addition to this one-time expenditure, which could potentially be funded by OTS, the department will incur \$9,271 a year in ongoing costs, which can not be reimbursed. Eva also stated that she believed that the programming could be carried out within the timelines of this project.

The final cost estimates were provided by Dave, who explained that it would take about 11 weeks and cost approximately \$22,000 to develop and implement procedures to produce the first vehicle impoundment MIS report. Dave also stated that annual production costs for the report would amount to \$16,390, and that the department would absorb these costs.

Dave ended the meeting by summarizing the progress made on the project, and stating that he didn't think that another meeting would be necessary, although certain members of the task force will meet as needed. Dave told the task force that it is one of the best working groups he has had the pleasure to be involved with, and thanked the group for their participation and effort. Task force members are encouraged to contact Dave with questions, ideas or concerns as he begins to write up a final report of the task force's work and recommendations to develop a statewide vehicle impoundment database. The following is a list of tasks to be completed.

- **Dave** will revise legislation and email it to the group for feedback. Once the legislation has been finalized, **Dave** and **Cliff** will meet with CHP Legislative and Special Projects staff to solicit feedback and support.
- **Mike Boruff** will determine whether DOJ will transmit certain types of canceled transactions to DMV.
- **Terry** will investigate whether, if funding is obtained to modify and print new CHP 180 forms, these forms will be provided at no cost to allied agencies.
- **Bob** will bring up the issue of the increased workload that results from inputting additional driver data at the July 20th meeting of the CAD Users Group.
- **Dave** will prepare a written statement of the project and its benefits and deliver it to **Terry**, who will present it to CHP upper management. **Dave** will meet, if necessary, with CHP management to discuss the project.
- **Dave** will write a final report, and email or send a draft of it to task force members for their input. Dave will revise the report as needed, and submit it to OTS in partial fulfillment of the obligations of the grant.
- **Dave** will write a memorandum proposal to OTS requesting funds to develop and implement a statewide vehicle impoundment reporting system and database.

## Appendix B

### CHP 180 Vehicle Report

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL  
**VEHICLE REPORT**  
CHP 180 (REV 7-97) OPI 061

NOTE: CHP 180 IS FURNISHED TO ALL PEACE OFFICERS BY THE CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

REPORTING DEPARTMENT		LOCATION CODE: DATE / TIME OF REPORT		NOTICE OF STORED VEHICLE DELIVERED PERSONALLY <input type="checkbox"/>		FILE NO.	
LOCATION TOWED / STOLEN FROM		ODOMETER READING		VIN CLEAR IN SVS? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		DATE / TIME DISPATCH NOTIFIED	
YEAR		MAKE		MODEL		BODY TYPE	
COLOR		LICENSE NO.		<input type="checkbox"/> ONE MONTH / YEAR		STATE	
<input type="checkbox"/> TWO		ENGINE NO.		VALUATION BY <input type="checkbox"/> OFFICER <input type="checkbox"/> OWNER			
<input type="checkbox"/> 0-200 <input type="checkbox"/> 201-2500 <input type="checkbox"/> 2501 + <input type="checkbox"/> \$		REG-REGISTERED OWNER		<input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RIO		LEGAL OWNER	

STORED       IMPOUNDED       RELEASED       RECOVERED - VEHICLE / COMPONENT

TOWING / STORAGE CONCERN (NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE) \_\_\_\_\_ STORAGE AUTHORITY / REASON \_\_\_\_\_

TOWED TO / STORED AT		AIRBAG? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		DRIVEABLE? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		VIN SWITCHED? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
CONDITION		ITEMS		ITEMS		TIRES / WHEELS	
WRECKED	SEAT (FRONT)	REGISTRATION	CAMPER	LEFT FRONT			
BURNED HULK (or 431(c) VC)	SEAT (REAR)	ALT / GENERATOR	VESSEL AS LOAD	RIGHT FRONT			
VANDALIZED	RADIO	BATTERY	PREARMS	LEFT REAR			
ENG. / TRANS. STRIP	TAPE DECK	DIFFERENTIAL	OTHER	RIGHT REAR			
MISC. PARTS STRIP	TAPES	TRANSMISSION		SPARE			
BODY METAL STRIP	OTHER RADIO	AUTOMATIC		HUB CAPS			
SURGICAL STRIP (or 431(b) VC)	IGNITION KEY	MANUAL		SPECIAL WHEELS			

RELEASE VEHICLE TO:  RIO OR AGENT     AGENCY HOLD     22850.3 VC    GARAGE PRINCIPAL / AGENT STORING VEHICLE (SIGNATURE) \_\_\_\_\_ DATE / TIME \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF PERSON / AGENCY AUTHORIZING RELEASE    ID NO    DATE    CERTIFICATION: I, THE UNDERSIGNED, DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I AM LEGALLY AUTHORIZED AND ENTITLED TO TAKE POSSESSION OF THE ABOVE DESCRIBED VEHICLE

SIGNATURE OF PERSON AUTHORIZING RELEASE    SIGNATURE OF PERSON TAKING POSSESSION

STOLEN VEHICLE / COMPONENT       EMBEZZLED VEHICLE       PLATE(S) REPORT

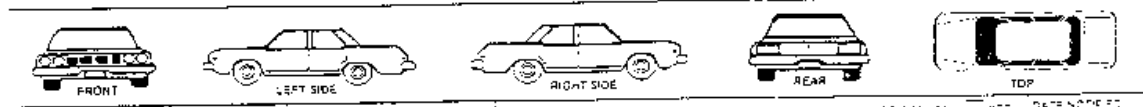
DATE / TIME OF OCCURRENCE	DATE / TIME REPORTED	NAME OF REPORTING PARTY (R/P)	DRIVER LICENSE NO. / STATE
LAST DRIVER OF VEHICLE	DATE / TIME	ADDRESS OF R/P	TELEPHONE OF R/P

I CERTIFY OR DECLARE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA THAT THE FOREGOING IS TRUE AND CORRECT

**REMARKS**  
(LIST PROPERTY TAGS, VEHICLE DAMAGE, ARRESTS)

DRIVER'S NAME	ARRESTED / SECTION? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	REPORTED BY	CARGO / TYPE? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	VALUE \$ <input type="checkbox"/> BILL OF LADING ATTACHED
---------------	--	-------------	--	---

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



SIGNATURE OF DRIVER TAKING REPORT \_\_\_\_\_ ID NO \_\_\_\_\_ JURISDICTION \_\_\_\_\_ REQUIRED NOT GOVERNMENT REGISTERED AND LEGAL OWNERS PER 22850.3 VC  YES  NO DATE NOTED \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix C

### LEGISLATIVE LANGUAGE STATEWIDE VEHICLE IMPOUNDMENT DATABASE

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 22853 of the Vehicle Code is amended to read:

22853. (a) Whenever an officer or an employee removing a California registered vehicle from a highway or from public property for storage under this chapter does not know and is not able to ascertain the name of the owner or for any other reason is unable to give notice to the owner as required by Section 22852, the officer or employee shall immediately notify, or cause to be notified, the Department of Justice, Stolen Vehicle System, of its removal. The officer or employee shall file a notice with the proprietor of any public garage in which the vehicle may be stored. The notice shall include a complete description of the vehicle, the date, time, and place from which removed, the amount of mileage on the vehicle at the time of removal, and the name of the garage or place where the vehicle is stored. *If a vehicle is removed for impoundment in accordance with subdivision (d) of this Section, then notification shall be made pursuant to both this subdivision and subdivision (d).*

(b) Whenever an officer or an employee removing a vehicle not registered in California from a highway or from public property for storage under this chapter does not know and is not able to ascertain the owner or for any other reason is unable to give the notice to the owner as required by Section 22852, the officer or employee shall immediately notify, or cause to be notified, the Department of Justice, Stolen Vehicle System. If the vehicle is not returned to the owner within 120 hours, the officer or employee shall immediately send, or cause to be sent, a written report of the removal by mail to the Department of Justice at Sacramento and shall file a copy of the notice with the proprietor of any public garage in which the vehicle may be stored. The report shall be made on a form furnished by that department and shall include a complete description of the vehicle, the date, time, and place from which the vehicle was removed, the amount of mileage on the vehicle at the time of removal, the grounds for removal, and the name of the garage or place where the vehicle is stored. *If a vehicle is removed for impoundment in accordance with subdivision (d) of this Section, then notification shall be made pursuant to both this subdivision and subdivision (d).*

(c) Whenever an officer or employee or private party removing a vehicle from private property for storage under this chapter does not know and is not able to ascertain the name of the owner or for any other reason is unable to give the notice to the owner as required by Section 22852 and if the vehicle is not returned to the owner within a period of 120 hours, the officer or employee or private party shall immediately send, or cause to be sent, a written report of the removal by mail to the Department of Justice at Sacramento and shall file a copy of the notice with the proprietor of any public garage in which the vehicle may be stored. The report shall be made on a form furnished by that department and shall include a complete description of the vehicle, the date, time and place from which the vehicle was removed, the amount of mileage on the vehicle at the time of removal, the grounds for removal, and the name of the garage or place where the vehicle is stored. *If a vehicle is removed for impoundment in accordance with subdivision (d) of this Section, then notification shall be made pursuant to both this subdivision and subdivision (d).*

(d) *Whenever an officer or an employee seizes and removes a vehicle from a highway or from public property for impoundment pursuant to Section 14602.6, 14602.7 or 14607.6, the officer or employee shall immediately notify, or cause to be notified, the Department of Justice, Stolen Vehicle System, of its impoundment. The notification shall include, at a minimum, a complete description of the vehicle, including license plate number and state, VIN, year, make and*

model, information about the impoundment of the vehicle, including the agency effecting the impoundment, the date of impoundment, and the Section authorizing the impoundment, and information about the driver of the vehicle, *including the driver's driver license number and state, or if unavailable, the driver's name and date of birth.* In order to minimize costs, the notification of this specified information shall take place when agencies next revise their system to transmit information to the Department of Justice, Stolen Vehicle System, but no later than 18 months. The officer or employee shall file a notice with the proprietor of any public garage in which the vehicle may be stored. The notice shall include a complete description of the vehicle, the date, time, and place from which impounded, the amount of mileage on the vehicle at the time of impoundment, and the name of the garage or place where the vehicle is stored. Notification shall be made pursuant to this subdivision in addition to any notification required in subdivisions (a), (b) or (c) of this Section.

*SECTION 2. The Legislature finds and declares the following:*

(a) Drivers with suspended or revoked driver licenses, and drivers who do not hold a valid license, pose a serious threat to the safety of Californians.

(b) Scientific research conducted by the Department of Motor Vehicles demonstrates that impounding vehicles driven by suspended/revoked and unlicensed drivers is a very effective measure for lessening the risk posed by these drivers, reducing their crashes by as much as 38% and their traffic convictions by 22%.

(c) Currently, no system exists to collect information on the use of vehicle impoundment throughout California.

(d) The lack of a statewide vehicle impoundment database makes it difficult to monitor the integrity of vehicle impoundment, examine changes in its use over time and across different cities throughout the state, and evaluate its efficacy.

(e) The absence of statewide data on vehicle impoundment impedes the ability of the Legislature to make informed policy decisions that enhance traffic safety in California by better controlling suspended/revoked, unlicensed and other high-risk drivers.

(f) It is important to develop a system to collect and store information on vehicle impoundment actions throughout the state, and to make this information in the aggregate available to the Legislature and other interested parties.

*SECTION 3. Section 22853.5 is added to the Vehicle code.*

22853.5 (a) The Department of Justice, upon receiving notice to its Stolen Vehicle System that a vehicle has been impounded, shall immediately electronically transmit this information to the Department of Motor Vehicles. The electronic transmission to the Department of Motor Vehicles shall include, at a minimum, a complete description of the vehicle, including license plate number and state, VIN, year, make and model, information about the impoundment of the vehicle, including the agency effecting the impoundment, the date of impoundment, and the Section authorizing the impoundment, and information about the driver of the vehicle, *including the driver's driver license number and state, and if available, the driver's name and date of birth.*

(b) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall maintain all of the information transmitted to it on vehicles impounded pursuant to Section 14602.6, 14602.7 or 14607.6 for a period of 10 years.

(c) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall produce a report each year which summarizes information on impounded vehicles, and shall otherwise make this information available, in summary form, to interested parties.