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TITLE: Teen and Senior Drivers

DATE: October 1990

AUTHOR(S): Patricia A. Romanowicz & Michael A. Gebers

REPORT NUMBER: 126

NTIS NUMBER: PB91-172379

FUNDING SOURCE: Departmental Budget

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:

To provide highway safety administrators, insurance industry representatives, and researchers in the field of traffic safety with information for developing program and policy decisions.

SUMMARY:

Primarily, these reports examine the relationship between age and driving behavior. They state that although teen drivers have always represented the greatest societal risk because of their high accident rate and large numbers, the overall level of risk posed by the older driver is expected to rise with increases in the percentage of the elderly who drive and their increased proportion of the population. These reports confirm results presented in the earlier teen and senior reports indicating that when accidents are adjusted for miles driven, both older and younger drivers have higher accident rates than do mid-age drivers. They also confirm the finding that when accidents and convictions are not adjusted for mileage, they decrease with age, except for a slight increase at age 70 and above.

These reports point out that teens and seniors differ as to the major primary collision factors contributing to fatal/injury and fatal accidents. Speed and alcohol/drugs are the major causes of fatal/injury and fatal accidents among teens, while violation of right-of-way and improper turns are the major causes of fatal/injury and fatal accidents among older drivers. The report concludes that the primary underlying causative factors of accidents appear to be risk-taking and alcohol among teens, and deteriorating vision and cognitive/perceptual functions among senior drivers.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Not applicable.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Other related reports are as follows:

Gebers, M. A. (1991). Traffic violation patterns and age (Report #126b). Sacramento, CA: California Department of Motor Vehicles.

Huston, R. E. (1986). Teen driver facts (Report #81). Sacramento, CA: California Department of Motor Vehicles.

Huston, R. E., & Janke, M. K. (1986). Senior driver facts (Report #82). Sacramento, CA: California Department of Motor Vehicles.