



# ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

2102 WEST ENCANTO BLVD. P.O. BOX 6638 PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85005-6638 (602) 223-2000

*"Courteous Vigilance"*

JANET NAPOLITANO ROGER VANDERPOOL  
Governor Director

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## DPS Response to Year Two Study

In January 2003, the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) began voluntarily collecting data regarding traffic and pedestrian stops, including information pertaining to the characteristics of the traffic stop, driver, vehicle and officer(s) is obtained. Although data collection was voluntarily initiated by DPS as part of the 2006 settlement agreement (Arnold, et. al. v. Arizona Department of Public Safety), DPS has agreed to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the traffic stop data for three years.

DPS contracted with an independent research team from the University of Cincinnati Policing Institute (UCPI) to conduct the department's traffic stop data analysis. The research team is led by Dr. Robin Engel, the director of the UCPI. Dr. Engel and members of her research team have extensive experience with traffic stop studies for police agencies throughout the Nation. DPS has received the Traffic Stop Data Analysis Study Year Two Report from the UCPI and is providing the following information, which indicates what has been accomplished and actions that will be implemented in the future. The Year Two Report has been posted on the DPS Web site at [www.azdps.gov](http://www.azdps.gov).

The UCPI Year Two analysis of traffic stops by DPS examined 485,183 officer-initiated stops between January 1 and December 31, 2007. The UCPI team focused its analysis on the post-stop outcomes received by motorist stopped by DPS officers in 2007. As documented in the report, this analysis revealed:

Even after controlling for other explanatory factors, racial/ethnic disparities exist for warnings, repair orders, citations, arrests and searches. The levels of unexplained racial/ethnic disparities are greatest for the most intrusive outcomes – arrests and searches (p.133)

The report's authors caution that:

Because of the potential influence of unmeasured variables, the reason for the racial/ethnic disparities in post-stop outcomes cannot be determined with these data. Racial/ethnic differences in post-stop outcomes may be explained by other characteristics that are also believed to potentially influence officer decision making, but were not available for analysis at this time and/or are not included in the current data collection system (p.129).

Furthermore, the authors note that "statistical data alone cannot determine whether or not officers are engaging in racial profiling" (p.133).

The department recognizes that racial/ethnic disparities have been indicated similarly to the Year One Report. DPS is committed to determining why they exist.

Over the past year, based on recommendations from the Year One Report, DPS has been working with the University of Cincinnati, the Governor's Traffic Stop Advisory Board, and the ACLU to address the disparities. DPS has benefited greatly from the information and data collection, policy and training recommended by the UCPI research team. As a result, DPS has voluntarily chosen to go beyond the requirements of the settlement agreement and will continue to analyze and monitor traffic stop data in the future.

DPS has implemented recommendations and proactively acted upon the information to achieve the following results in the last year:

- ❖ DPS formed an internal committee to enhance data collection on traffic stops and enforcement outcome. After reviewing the various data collection options currently in use across the country, the committee recommended that DPS utilize an electronic data collection format. The electronic data collection format was recently implemented and should significantly enhance the quality of data collection and provides for greater accuracy.
- ❖ In addition to instituting the electronic data collection system, DPS added additional data elements upon the recommendation by Dr. Engel and the UCPI research team in addition to collecting the information electronically. These additional fields go well beyond the requirements of the settlement agreement and will allow the DPS to be more transparent regarding traffic stops, as well as giving a better understanding of the statistical information developed from the data submitted by officers.
- ❖ UCPI conducted Focus Group meetings with interdiction officers as well as officers from specialized enforcement units. These Focus Groups were designed to aid the research team to better understand the criteria and decision making process by officers conducting traffic stops and subsequent searches.
- ❖ Due to the critical importance of this issue DPS Executive Staff has closely interacted with the UCPI Research Team. UCPI has also met with supervisors and command staff to explain the results of their analysis.

The proactive steps taken by the Arizona Department of Public Safety have allowed this agency to seek and institute positive, long term and effective ways to prevent racial profiling and to immediately respond to concerns or potential problems. Although these changes are not captured in the Year Two Report, it is expected that they will have a positive impact in the future.

Roger Vanderpool, Director of the Arizona Department of Public Safety, is committed to ensuring that racially biased policing does not occur within the agency and has ensured adherence to specific policies and procedures dating back to 1979. Director Vanderpool supports the importance of this initiative and as a result has assigned a member of his Executive Team,

Mikel Longman, Chief of the Agency Support Division to oversee the recommendations from the UCPI research study, along with the Governor's Citizen's Traffic Stop Advisory Board and actions developed within the Department.

The Department is committed to treating all people with fairness and respect as we carry out the mandates entrusted in us to provide public safety. DPS supervisory and command level personnel will continue to monitor enforcement activities to ensure compliance with the policies and procedures that prohibit racial profiling. All employees have been vested with the responsibility to ensure racial profiling does not occur within the agency.

Governor Janet Napolitano established the Governor's Citizen's Traffic Stop Advisory Board and has been very supportive of the Department's efforts to promote a biased-free enforcement strategy. DPS has worked closely with the Governor's Office and the Traffic Stop Advisory Board to implement the recommended changes and address issues presented through the University of Cincinnati's research. The Governor's Citizen's Traffic Stop Advisory Board recently adopted specific recommendations and will be submitting them to Governor Napolitano for her consideration. Chief Longman is the agency representative to the Advisory Board.

The UCPI research team was awarded a three-year contract by the Department to conduct the "Traffic Stop Data Analysis Study." DPS has benefitted greatly from the research information and will continue to analyze and monitor traffic stop data in the future.

The Arizona Department of Public Safety is a full-service law enforcement agency committed to serving and protecting the citizens of our state and those who visit or travel through it. The pride, tradition and reputation our department enjoys is built on decades of dedication to duty by its employees. DPS Officers are dedicated to reducing crime, keeping our public highways safe and preventing acts of terrorism. They are law enforcement professionals and are expected to adhere to the laws of the United States, Arizona and the regulations of this agency and are committed to upholding the civil and constitutional rights of each person they encounter.