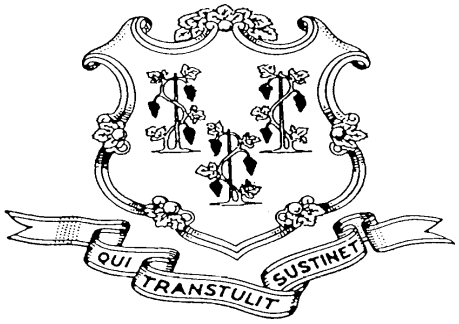
State of Connecticut

Interim Report of Traffic Stops Statistics

January 2000 to June 2000



Division of Criminal Justice
Office of the
Chief State's Attorney

With assistance from the:

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January 2001

State of Connecticut
DIVISION OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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January 24, 2001

To His Excellency, The Governor, and The Honorable General Assembly:

This document constitutes the interim report on traffic stops statistics prepared pursuant to Public Act 99-198, *An Act Concerning Traffic Stops Statistics*. The report analyzes data collected with regard to traffic stops made by police officers in Connecticut during the first six months of the 2000 calendar year.

The Office of the Chief State's Attorney is fully committed to the implementation of Public Act 99-198, and to the thorough and complete collection and analysis of the statistical information required by the Act. Given the importance we place on this issue, we have chosen to prepare this interim report, in addition to the final report mandated by the Public Act.

I would like to express my appreciation to all who have worked so diligently to develop and implement the system for collecting traffic stops data, and to those who have worked to analyze those data and prepare this interim report. Special thanks must go to the author of the report, Stephen M. Cox, Ph.D., of the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Central Connecticut State University, for his professional and independent analysis.

Pursuant to Public Act 99-198, the final report, and any recommendations, will be submitted to the Governor and the General Assembly not later than January 1, 2002.

Sincerely,

JOHN M. BAILEY
CHIEF STATE'S ATTORNEY

Enclosure

Interim Report of Traffic Stops Statistics

For the State of Connecticut

January 2001

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public Act No. 99-198 of the Connecticut General Assembly was signed into law by Governor Rowland on June 28, 1999 and went into effect on October 1, 1999. This Act, "An Act Concerning Traffic Stops Statistics," defined the concept of "racial profiling", directed the Department of Public Safety and municipal police agencies to adopt a written policy prohibiting the practice of stopping, detaining, or searching any person based on the individual's race, color, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, and instructed the Chief State's Attorney to collect information on all police-initiated traffic stops in Connecticut. This report is an interim summary, analysis, and presentation of the traffic stops occurring in the State of Connecticut during the first six months of 2000. These statistics are presented for the entire state and for each individual police agency in Connecticut.

Prior Research on Racial Profiling

Research on racial profiling is limited, but has suggested that minorities tend to be stopped and searched more often than white drivers. Prior racial profiling research has failed to explain why disparities exist other than to suggest that police departments are systematically targeting racial and ethnic minorities when making traffic stops. These conclusions have been largely based upon questionable baseline comparisons. For example, the baseline comparison of the traffic stop analyses is the percentage (or proportion) of minorities stopped compared to the percentage of minorities that live in the town. This comparison is based on the assumption that the percentage of minorities residing in a town is representative of the percentage of minority driving the roadways within the town. While we believe that in many cases, the percentage of minorities living in a town should be similar to the percentage of minorities driving within the town, there may be instances when these percentages are significantly different. Such instances can be the geographic location of the town (e.g., towns that border towns with large minority populations), attractions in the town (e.g., retail districts, entertainment centers, tourism locations), and employment/educational institutions having a high number of nonresident employees/students.

Collection of the Traffic Stops Data

The Chief State's Attorney, a law enforcement subcommittee comprised of representatives of state and local police agencies, and the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management created a reporting format for collecting traffic stops data and instructed the Division of State Police and municipal agencies on its use. These data consisted of the town name, date and time of the traffic stop, age, gender, race, ethnicity of the driver, the nature of the traffic stop (criminal investigation, motor vehicle violation, or equipment violation), whether a vehicle search was conducted, and the disposition of the traffic stop (uniform arrest report, misdemeanor summons, infraction ticket, written warning, verbal warning, or no disposition).

Law enforcement officers completed the traffic stop form immediately following the traffic stop. These forms were sent to the Chief State's Attorney's Office and forwarded to the Connecticut Department of Information Technology for compilation. The Office of Policy and Management reviewed them for errors or missing information.

Analysis of Traffic Stops Data

The traffic stops data were presented two separate ways. The first method presented a statewide summary of the data. The statewide aggregate of traffic stops statistics showed some differences in the percentages of traffic stops conducted with black and Hispanic motorists compared to the percentages of blacks and Hispanics residing in the state.

The second method computed a measure of disproportionality that compared blacks to non-black motorists and Hispanic to non-Hispanic motorists at the four traffic stops decision points (conducting the stop, the nature of the stop, the disposition of the stop, and whether a search was conducted). Overall, a small amount of disproportionality was found across the four traffic stop decision points. In regards to traffic stops, the majority of police departments showed a difference of less than 5% between the percentage of blacks and Hispanics stopped relative to their representation in the town population. For the nature of traffic stops, the disproportionality was less than 5% in over 90% of the police departments when looking at criminal investigations. For motor vehicle and equipment violations, 80% of the police departments had a disproportionality of less than 5%. In terms of dispositions, there was slightly higher disproportionality among blacks and Hispanics for misdemeanor summons. The majority of police departments exhibited little or no disproportionality for the remaining dispositions. Finally, for motor vehicle searches, there were slightly more disproportionality for blacks and Hispanics, yet over 90% of police departments had less than a 10% disparity.

Conclusions

Based on the traffic stops data, minority drivers do not appear to be systematically treated differently than non-minority drivers. The analysis of traffic stops statistics for the State of Connecticut revealed that although some disparities were present, these were small and appeared to be limited to a small number of police agencies or associated with low occurrences of traffic stops. Even though disparities between the treatment of black and non-black drivers and Hispanic and non-Hispanic drivers were more prevalent for the issuance of misdemeanor summons and motor vehicles searches, these differences were not extreme.

While we believe that disparate treatment of minority drivers is not prevalent throughout Connecticut, we cannot definitively conclude that individual police officers do not practice racial profiling. The decision to stop a motor vehicle and how to dispose of this traffic stop is ultimately made on an individual basis. Police departments should be proactive in monitoring the activities of individual officers to decrease the possibility that enforcement decisions are solely being based on race or ethnicity.

The failure to explain why disparities exist other than to suggest that police departments practice racial profiling has been a major limitation of prior studies of traffic stops. We conducted an analysis of extraneous influences in an attempt to better understand why some disparities were present. One important finding was that towns stopping a higher percentage of minority drivers bordered towns or cities having a high percentage of minority residents. The value of this finding is that it supports our belief that outside factors may be associated with disparities in the traffic stops statistics and not systematic racial profiling by law enforcement agencies.

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INTRODUCTION

This report is an interim summary, analysis, and presentation of the traffic stops occurring in the State of Connecticut during the first six months of 2000. These statistics are presented for the entire state and for each individual police agency in Connecticut. There are four sections to this report. The first section provides an overview of the Public Act that directed the Chief State's Attorney in collecting the traffic stops data along with a review of other research involving racial profiling of traffic stops. The second section discusses the data collection process employed by the Chief State's Attorney and the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management as well as a summary of the information collected from each traffic stop. The third section of this report presents a summary and statistical analysis of statewide data. The fourth section summarizes the traffic stops for every police jurisdiction in the state.

Summary of Public Act No. 99-198

Public Act No. 99-198 of the Connecticut General Assembly was signed into law by Governor Rowland on June 28, 1999 and went into effect on October 1, 1999. There were three components to this Act. The first component defined the concept of "racial profiling" as:

> *"…the detention, interdiction or other disparate treatment of an individual solely on the basis of the racial or ethnic status of such individual."*

The first component of the Act also instructed the Division of State Police, municipal police departments, and all other law enforcement agencies not to engage in racial profiling, in that, the race of ethnicity of an individual cannot be the only factor in establishing probable cause or reasonable and articulable suspicion for the purposes of arrest, detention, or an investigatory stop of a motor vehicle.

The second component of this legislation directed municipal police agencies and the Department of Public Safety to adopt a written policy prohibiting the stopping, detaining or searching or any person based on race, color, ethnicity, age, gender or sexual orientation. This part of the legislation also provided the guidelines for collecting information from traffic stops. This information consists of:

(1) the number of persons stopped for traffic violations;
(2) the characteristics of the persons stopped (race, color, ethnicity, gender and age);
(3) the nature of the traffic violation that resulted in the stop (criminal investigation, motor vehicle violation, or equipment violation);
(4) the disposition of the traffic stop (e.g., warning, ticket, arrest, or vehicle search);
(5) other information deemed appropriate by the police agency involved.

In addition, each police agency is required to provide summary reports of this information to the Chief State's Attorney, who in turn, is required to provide a report to the Governor and General Assembly. The final report is to be presented no later than January 1, 2002.

The final section of the legislation stipulated that the Chief State's Attorney, in conjunction with the Commissioner of Public Safety, the Attorney General, the Chief Court Administrator, the Police Officer Standards and Training Council, the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association, and the Connecticut Coalition of Police and Correctional Officers, create and distribute a format for law enforcement officers to use when collecting information on traffic stops. Furthermore, an additional form was developed and distributed by the Chief State's Attorney to be used for reporting complaints made by citizens who feel

they were stopped for a motor vehicle violation based solely on their race, color, ethnicity, age, gender or sexual orientation. This report is limited to an analysis and presentation of the data collected from the traffic stops.

Prior Research on Racial Profiling

The phrase "racial profiling" has commonly been used to describe police practices of suspecting individuals of illegal activity primarily based on their race and ethnicity (Ramirez, McDevitt, and Farrell, 2000). Racial profiling, as applied in this report, describes the disproportionate targeting of minority drivers for pretextual traffic stops. These pretextual stops offer law enforcement the opportunity to stop, detain, and possibly search any driver the police officer believes may be involved in other criminal activity such as drug trafficking. Anecdotal evidence suggests that innocent motorists have felt victimized during these stops particularly when police search their cars for drugs or other contraband after informing the driver that he or she was stopped for a broken taillight or other minor traffic violation (ACLU, 2000; Harris, 1997; 1999; Meeks, 2000). Lawsuits alleging racial profiling have been filed in Oklahoma, New Jersey, Maryland, Illinois, Florida, Pennsylvania, and Colorado (U.S. General Accounting Office, 2000). Although the law allows race and ethnicity to describe a particular suspect, race and ethnicity cannot be used as a single factor to stop-and-search (Ramirez, McDevitt, and Farrell, 2000).

History Of Racial Profiling

Harris (1997; 1999) and Meeks (2000) argue that racial profiling is simply an extension of the practices developed during the 1980's "War on Drugs." During the drug war, a "drug courier profile" was created and used to stop, question, and search those who were considered suspicious or likely to be engaged in drug trafficking on highways, in train and bus stations, and in airports. The "drug courier profiles" were based on the physical, psychological and behavioral characteristics of previous drug traffickers. The U.S. Supreme Court generally supported searches made on the basis of a drug courier profile as long as the factors used to comprise the profile did not include race. However, Harris (1999) argues that race was an important component of the drug courier profile. He summarizes the 1985 Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' guidelines for the police on "The Common Characteristics of Drug Couriers" which included " 'scrupulous obedience to traffic laws' and drivers wearing 'lots of gold', or drivers who did not 'fit the vehicle,' and 'ethnic groups associated with drug trade'" (Harris, 1999, p. 5). In 1986, the Drug Enforcement Administration developed a highway drug interdiction program known as "Operation Pipeline" which Harris (1999) maintains trained law enforcement officers to target minority motorists through the use of pretextual traffic stops. Although the DEA claims "Operation Pipeline" passed the scrutiny of the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division in 1997 (U.S. General Accounting Office, 2000), Harris (1999) believes the training materials were implicitly biased toward targeting minorities.

It is because of these early drug courier profiles and their associations with ethnic minority groups that some critics believe minority drivers are more likely to be stopped, questioned, and searched on the highways (Harris, 1999; Meeks, 2000). Although most law enforcement agencies deny the use of racial profiling, some law enforcement officials have publicly acknowledged and defended racial profiling as an effective law enforcement tool in the war against drugs (Goldberg, 1999 June 20; Kocieniewski, 1999 March 2). It is important to note that the National Association of Police Organizations and International Association of Chiefs of Police unequivocally reject racial profiling as an unlawful and unacceptable practice (U.S. General Accounting Office, 2000).

Review of the Research to Date

In order to determine the nature and extent of racial profiling, Representative John Conyers (D-MI) and Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) have introduced bills to Congress which would offer incentives for police departments to keep detailed records of traffic stops, including race, gender, and ethnicity of the person stopped, as well as, whether a search was initiated and if any warning or citation was issued (ACLU, 2000). Two states, Connecticut and North Carolina have enacted legislation requiring state and local law enforcement personnel to collect data on traffic stops and several other states are considering such legislation. New Jersey is required to collect data on motorist stops as a result of a December 1999 consent decree resulting from a case filed in U.S. District Court by the U.S. Department of Justice (U.S. General Accounting Office, 2000). In a similar case filed against Maryland, a memorandum of understanding signed in January of 2000 required the Montgomery County Police Department to record data on traffic stops. A number of other local jurisdictions have also initiated data collection on motor vehicle stops.

Although statistical data is limited, there is some evidence to indicate that in certain areas minority drivers are stopped more often than whites. Harris (1997) found that for a three year period in the late 1980s, of 1,100 videotaped traffic stops on I-95 in Volusia County, Florida, more than 70% of the drivers stopped were either African-American or Hispanic even though these groups comprised only 5% of the drivers on this highway. Even though only 9 of the 1,100 stops received a ticket, 80% of about 500 searches involved African-American or Hispanic drivers and these groups were also detained on the average twice as long as whites. Harris (1997) also reported that 75% of the 732 motor vehicle searches conducted by the Maryland State Police from January 1995 through June 1996 were with African-American motorists.

The City of San Diego recently released a preliminary report detailing their traffic stops. From January 2000 through June 2000, 91,552 traffic stops were conducted (Cordner, Williams, and Zuniga, 2000). The preliminary findings indicate that Hispanics and African-Americans were stopped more often than their population percentages and were searched and arrested more often than Asian or white drivers. Hispanic residents, aged 15 and older, represented 20.2% of the city's population, yet represented 34.9% of equipment violation stops and 50.1% of searches subsequent to vehicle stops. African-American residents aged 15 and older comprised 8.0% of the city's population and represented 14.3 % of equipment violation stops and 19.5% of searches subsequent to vehicle stops. The researchers point out that it is possible these data overestimated the degree to which police stops of Hispanic drivers are disproportionate. Since San Diego is close to the Mexican border, there may be a higher percentage of Hispanic drivers in San Diego than the population data would suggest.

Furthermore, a report by the United States General Accounting Office (2000) reviewed five existing studies, including San Diego, and concluded that the data were too limited to determine the extent of racial profiling. However, the cumulative results did indicate that African Americans, in particular, and minorities in general, were more likely than whites to be stopped.

Research to date is limited, but suggests some occurrences of racial profiling in other areas, as it is defined in the literature. The present study examines Connecticut traffic stops data for indications of disparate treatment of minorities. This research can provide valuable insight about the way traffic stops are conducted, but caution should be taken in interpreting these findings as providing definitive answers regarding the extent of racial profiling.

COLLECTION AND INTERPRETATION OF TRAFFIC STOPS DATA

While Public Act No. 99-198 took effect on October 1, 1999, the actual collection of traffic stops data did not begin until January 1, 2000. During the three months prior to January 1, 2000, the Chief State's Attorney and the Office of Policy and Management met with a law enforcement subcommittee comprised of representatives of state and local police agencies (hereafter referred to as the "law enforcement subcommittee") to create the reporting format and data collection process. Representatives from the West Hartford Police Department and the Division of State Police were asked to join the law enforcement subcommittee due to their proactive responses to racial profiling prior to the passage of Public Act No. 99-198 (the West Hartford Police Department created a traffic stops form prior to the legislation and the Division of State Police had completed an internal review of its traffic stops). The following section summarizes the data collection process.

Format of the Traffic Stops Data

The Chief State's Attorney, the law enforcement subcommittee, and the Office of Policy and Management developed a form for all law enforcement officers in the State of Connecticut to complete when making a traffic stop (Figure 1). Regardless of the circumstances surrounding the traffic stop, every officer was required to complete this form. Police officers were not asked to complete this form when responding to traffic accidents or nontraffic-related incidents. The information to be collected in this form was set forth in Public Act No. 99-198.

Figure 1. Sample Traffic Stops Data Collection Form.

State of Connecticut
Traffic Stops Statistics

Department – ORI: _____ **Town:**_____

Date: ___/____/____ **Time:** ____:_____ **Age:** ____ **Gender:** **M***ale* **F***emale* **U***nknown*

Race: (Circle One)
W - *White*
B - *Black*
I - *Indian Amer./Alaskan Native*
A - *Asian/Pacific Islander*
U - *Unknown*

Ethnicity: (Circle One)
H - *Hispanic*
N - *Not Hispanic*
U - *Unknown*

Stop Nature: (Circle One)
I - *Investigation, Criminal*
V - *Violation, Motor Vehicle*
E - *Equipment, Motor Vehicle*

Statute: _____

Vehicle Search: (Circle One)
Y -*Yes*
N - *No*

Disposition: (Circle One)
U - *Uniform Arrest Report*
M - *Misdemeanor Summons*
I - *Infraction Ticket*
V - *Verbal Warning*
W - *Written Warning*
N - *No Disposition*

Event Number: _____
(as defined by your department)

Definitions of the Items on the Data Collection Form

This form contains 13 items of information that were completed by the law enforcement officer making the traffic stop. The definitions and explanations of these items are below.

Department – ORI

The ORI number represents an identification code number assigned by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. This number is unique for each law enforcement agency in the United States.

Town

This item is the name of the town or jurisdiction of the police officer making the traffic stop.

Date

This item is the date of the traffic stop.

Time

This item refers to the time of day when the traffic stop occurred.

Gender

This item refers to the gender of the driver of the motor vehicle.

Age

This item refers to the age of the driver at the time of the traffic stop.

Race

This item refers to the race of the driver of the stopped motor vehicle. The options available to the reporting police officer are White/Caucasian, Black, American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, or unknown. Public Act No. 99-198 specified that the race of the driver would be determined solely on the observation and perception of the police officer responsible and that this "information shall not be required to be provided by the person stopped."

Ethnicity

This item refers to the ethnicity of the driver of the stopped motor vehicle. Specifically, the police officer conducting traffic stop was asked to determine whether the driver was Hispanic, not Hispanic, or of unknown ethnicity. Similar to determining the race of the driver, the police officer based this decision on his or her own observation and perception.

Nature of the Traffic Stop

This item provides the reason the law enforcement officer conducted the traffic stop. Traffic stops data were collected only for officer-initiated traffic stops. There are three general reasons a police officer can legally conduct a traffic stop: a criminal investigation, a motor vehicle violation, or an equipment violation.

Statute

This item records the Connecticut General Statute that was allegedly violated, thereby causing the traffic stop. Public Act No. 98-198 did not require police officers to report this information. This optional item was included for use by individual police departments and was not part of the present study.

Vehicle Search

The item asked if a search of the stopped motor vehicle was conducted concurrent to the traffic stop. Police officers can conduct warrantless vehicle searches during traffic stops under limited circumstances. These instances are: (1) when a police officer has reasonable suspicion to believe that an occupant in the motor vehicle possesses a weapon and his/her safety could be in jeopardy (this is

commonly referred to as a *Terry Stop*); (2) if an officer has probable cause to believe a crime has been committed, the driver or other occupants of the motor vehicle can be arrested and the entire motor vehicle searched; (3) if an officer has probable cause to believe that there is illegal contraband in the motor vehicle (primarily illegal drugs); (4) if the driver gives the police officer consent to search his/her motor vehicle; and (5) a police officer, during the process of conducting a routine traffic stop, sees contraband, stolen property, or other dangerous items in the motor vehicle (Connecticut Law Enforcement Publications, 2000).

Disposition of the Traffic Stop

Along with the reason why the traffic stop occurred, police officers were required to report the disposition. There are basically six different ways police officers end a traffic stop. These are discussed in order of most restrictive to least restrictive.

A *Uniform Arrest Report* takes place when the police officer determines that a criminal offense has occurred or the driver is wanted under an arrest warrant. In these instances, the driver is taken into police custody and detained.

A *Misdemeanor Summons* can be issued for less serious criminal offenses or motor vehicle violations that are not infractions or serious criminal offenses. These, most often, include serious motor vehicle offenses such as driving while under the influence of intoxicating liquor and/or drugs, reckless operation of a motor vehicle (excessive speeding), failure to maintain motor vehicle insurance, operating a motor vehicle under a suspended driver's license, evading responsibility for personal injury or property damage, and offenses involving an accident resulting in a death. When issued a misdemeanor summons, the individual is not always arrested or detained, but is required to appear in court.

An *Infraction Ticket* can be issued by the police officer in cases where the driver commits a minor motor vehicle violation (e.g., speeding, failing to stop at a red light or stop sign, failing to use a turn signal).

The police officer can issue a *Written Warning* to the driver for a motor vehicle or equipment violation. There are two types of written warnings that can be issued. The first type of written warning is for motor vehicles that do not display valid emissions stickers. Under these cases, the driver must have the vehicle's emissions tested. Failure to do this results in the suspension of the vehicle's registration by the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles. The second type of written warning is issued for defective equipment (e.g., malfunctioning brakes, horns, windshield wipers, headlights, tail lights, turn signals) or minor motor vehicle violations.

A *Verbal Warning* can also be given to the driver of the vehicle. Verbal warnings are generally issued when police officers want to make drivers aware of minor traffic offenses.

It is possible for police officers to provide *No Disposition* to a traffic stop. This situation most often occurs during a criminal investigation traffic stop. For example, a police officer is dispatched to a neighborhood in response to a citizen complaint of a suspicious vehicle. After making the traffic stop, the driver of the vehicle is simply lost and needs directions. The police officer provides the motorist with directions. Since there were no criminal or motor vehicle violations, the officer does not provide a disposition.

Event Number

Some of the police agencies assigned unique identification numbers to the traffic stop forms to aid in the collection and compilation of data. The recording and collection of this information was left to the discretion of the police agencies.

Collection of the Traffic Stops Data

Law enforcement officers completed the traffic stop form immediately following the traffic stop. Officers were permitted to use either paper forms or electronic forms, depending on the preference of the individual police agencies. Police agencies were not required to use the form created by the Chief State's Attorney, the law enforcement subcommittee, and the Office of Policy and Management, but were required to collect the information using the same format. These forms were sent to the Chief State's Attorney's Office and forwarded to the Connecticut Department of Information Technology for compilation. The Office of Policy and Management reviewed them for errors or missing information.

Issues in Dealing with Traffic Stops Statistics

Given the sensitive nature of this topic, it is important that these data are presented in the most straightforward and comprehensive manner possible. The statewide data will be discussed separately and in a more detailed manner than the individual town data. Even though town data will be presented, it is beyond the scope of this study to discuss them in detail.

This report is based upon data provided by the municipal law enforcement agencies and the Division of State Police. In reviewing these data, there are issues that need to be taken into consideration when interpreting the statewide summary, and particularly, the individual town summaries.

The first issue pertains to the collection of traffic stops data. The value of this research is in exploring the presence of, extent of, and circumstances surrounding any disproportionate treatment of minority motorists by law enforcement officers. One of the major strengths of this study is the large number of individual traffic stops for which data has been collected. In addition, this information has been collected for every law enforcement agency in Connecticut. The large number of traffic stops allows for comparisons across towns and within towns regarding number of traffic stops, the nature of the traffic stops, the disposition of the traffic stops, and the number of motor vehicle searches.

The second issue pertains to the analysis of the data. One analysis in this study compares the racial and ethnic percentages of drivers stopped to the racial and ethnic percentages of the towns. These types of comparisons are common in racial profiling studies, but it is not clear that they are the most appropriate. Some studies have tried to determine the racial and ethnic percentages of all drivers on a particular stretch of road. Whereas, other studies have chosen the racial and ethnic composition of a particular state, city, or district within a city as an appropriate benchmark, and some studies have tried to use racial and ethnic composition of the driving age population in a given area (Ramirez, McDevitt, and Farrell, 2000). Other methods of determining if police officers treat minority drivers differently than non-minority drivers is to know the race and ethnicity of everyone driving through the town or the race and ethnicity of everyone driving past each police officer. For instance, if minority drivers drive 20% of the vehicles that Police Officer Jones observes, we would expect that 20% of Police Officer Jones' traffic stops be with minority drivers, not the 10% found in the town's population. Unfortunately, this information would require a

more complex and cost prohibitive study measuring the race and ethnicity of all drivers at several locations in each town.

Additionally, prior racial profiling research has failed to explain why disparities exist other than to suggest that police departments are systematically targeting racial and ethnic minorities when making traffic stops. These conclusions have been largely based upon questionable baseline comparisons. For example, the baseline comparison of the traffic stop analyses is the percentage (or proportion) of minorities stopped compared to the percentage of minorities that live in the town. This comparison is based on the assumption that the percentage of minorities residing in a town is representative of the percentage of minority driving the roadways within the town. While we believe that in many cases, the percentage of minorities living in a town should be similar to the percentage of minorities driving within the town, there may be instances when these percentages are significantly different. Such instances can be the geographic location of the town and attractions in the town.

Geographic location can affect the percentage of nonresidents driving through the town, in that, the racial and ethnic composition of neighboring towns likely would alter the racial and ethnic composition of drivers. For example, towns that are suburbs of Hartford, Bridgeport, and New Haven feasibly have a higher percentage of minority drivers as a result of large minority populations living in these cities. Also, the presence of a highway or major thoroughfare in close proximity to the town may also alter the racial and ethnic ratio of drivers. The presence of a highway brings nonresidents into the town more often than in towns without a highway. As people travel, they may need to exit the highway for purposes of meals, lodging, and/or sightseeing, increasing the number of nonresidents driving through town.

Town characteristics other than geographic location may also affect the racial and ethnic composition of the driving population. Towns with entertainment/tourism attractions or retail districts generally attract high numbers of drivers who are nonresidents. Examples these attractions are shopping malls, antique shop villages, amusement parks, casinos, beaches, and state parks. In addition, towns that are largely nonresidential may also attract a high percentage of nonresidents. These towns typically consist of a high number of corporate offices, factories, retail distribution centers, and tourist attractions that employ many nonresidents of the town. Colleges and universities can also be included in this grouping due to the high percentage of students that attend the school but do not live in the town.

We address this issue by providing additional pieces of information to the comparison of racial and ethnic percentages of drivers stopped to the racial and ethnic percentages of the towns. We created a measure of disproportionality to compare the proportion of nature, dispositions, and searches of black and Hispanic drivers to non-black and non-Hispanic drivers and employ a statistical procedure for ascertaining possible outside influences (e.g., town characteristics) on disproportionality. We also included state, county, and town racial and ethnic percentages in the individual town summaries of traffic stops. While these are not necessarily better baseline comparisons, they provide the reader with more information to better interpret the traffic stops statistics.

The third issue pertains to the reliability and validity of the data. One limitation is our inability to assess the consistency and accuracy of the information collected from the traffic stop forms. With 92 law enforcement agencies and an unknown number of law enforcement officers completing these forms, it was necessary to take measures to reduce the possibility of human error.

The Chief State's Attorney, the law enforcement subcommittee, and the Office of Policy and Management attempted to address this concern two separate ways. First, the creation of a common data collection format containing a limited number of narrowly defined items along with pre-specified

responses allowed for some degree of consistency across the numerous law enforcement agencies. Second, each jurisdiction's traffic stops statistics were reviewed in an effort to increase accuracy in the collection and reporting of these data. All police agencies were asked to review traffic stop reports when there were inconsistencies from previous reports. In no case was a department expected or asked to change their original statistics, but they were requested to verify the accuracy of the collected data on an ongoing basis throughout the study.

The fourth issue is in the interpretation of the traffic stops statistics. It is important to note that the purpose of this report is to provide straightforward summaries of the traffic stops statistics. Since there are no measurable and objective specifications for determining what constitutes the practice of racial profiling by a police agency, we cannot arrive at an absolute conclusion of the existence or nonexistence of racial profiling. This report presents the traffic stops data in a variety of formats to provide the reader with sufficient information for identifying issues related to traffic stops.

When interpreting percentages, it is extremely important to also note the actual numbers from which the percentages are based. Small numbers can produce percentages that overstate the issue. For example, some police agencies appear to have large disproportions between minorities and non-minorities in regards to traffic stop dispositions. These disproportions are actually due to few occurrences of traffic stops and/or small numbers of traffic stops of minority drivers.

Furthermore, when interpreting the traffic stop dispositions, it is not possible to correlate the nature of the traffic stop to the disposition. For instance, a police officer may conduct a traffic stop for an equipment violation and arrest the driver for a criminal offense. It is also possible for a police officer to stop a motor vehicle for a criminal investigation and issue a misdemeanor summons or infraction ticket for an equipment violation the police officers notices after making the traffic stop.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF STATEWIDE TRAFFIC STOPS DATA

The following section presents a statewide summary of the traffic stops statistics from January 1, 2000 to June 30, 2000. The summary also contains an analysis of disproportionality across all of the law enforcement jurisdictions in Connecticut.

Presentation of Statewide Data

This presentation has been divided into several tables and figures that show the actual numbers and/or percentages of traffic stops, natures of the traffic stops, dispositions of the traffic stops, and searches of motor vehicles across the racial and ethnic categories. The tables and figures used in this section are similar to the format of the individual town summaries. A narrative description of each table and figure has been provided to aid in the interpretation.

Tables 1 and 2 presents the racial and ethnic population distribution in Connecticut along with the racial and ethnic composition of the traffic stops for all of the police agencies. The state population information is based upon the 1990 U.S. Census. Even though more recent population estimates have been published, these estimates greatly vary depending on the methodology used by the organization providing the estimates. Therefore, the 1990 Census is believed to be the most reliable. The population demographical data will be updated upon publication of the 2000 Census.

Tables 1 and 2 presents the numbers and percentages of race and ethnicity for the state population and for all traffic stops. The racial and ethnic percentages of the traffic stops were similar to the race and ethnicity composition of the state population. A total of 316,158 traffic stops were reported from January 1, 2000 and June 30, 2000. The majority of the traffic stops consisted of white motorists (83.7%) with 12.1% of the traffic stops being black motorists, 1.8% were Asian, 0.2% were American Indian, and 2.2% were unknown. Further, the majority of stopped motorists were not Hispanic (72.9%), with 8.7% being Hispanic, and 18.4% were not readily known to the police officer completing the traffic stop form.

Table 1. Racial Summary of the State Population and the Statewide Traffic Stops*

	State Population (Number and Percentage)		Traffic Stops (Number and Percentage)	
White	2,859,353	**87.0%**	264,747	**83.7%**
Black	274,269	**8.4%**	38,272	**12.1%**
American Indian	6,654	**0.2%**	665	**0.2%**
Asian/Pacific Islander	50,698	**1.5%**	5,421	**1.8%**
Other/Unknown	96,142	**2.9%**	7,053	**2.2%**
Totals	3,287,116	**100.0%**	316,158	**100.0%**

(*Note: All percentages are column percentages.)

Table 2. Ethnic Summary of the State Population and the Statewide Traffic Stops*

	State Population (Number and Percentage)		Traffic Stops (Number and Percentage)	
Hispanic	213,116	**6.5%**	27,352	**8.7%**
Not Hispanic	3,074,000	**93.5%**	230,486	**72.9%**
Unknown	0	**0**	58,320	**18.4%**
Totals	3,287,116	**100.0%**	316,158	**100.0%**

(*Note: All percentages are column percentages.)

Tables 3 and 4 presents the racial and ethnic composition across the three general reasons for the traffic stops. It is important to note that the total number of traffic stops in Tables 3 through 6 may not equal the total number of traffic stops from Tables 1 and 2 (adding the number of criminal investigations, the number of motor vehicle violations, and the number of equipment violations may not be equal to the total number of traffic stops). These differences are due to missing information on the traffic stop forms. For example, a police officer may have left the "Nature of the Traffic Stop" item blank on the form while completing the rest of the form. The existing information was tallied in the traffic stops statistics.

The percentages of the nature of the traffic stops followed a similar pattern as the racial /ethnic percentages of all traffic stops. The majority of criminal investigations, motor vehicle violations, and equipment violations were with white motorists and non-Hispanics. The percentages of blacks and Hispanics stopped for criminal investigations were slightly higher than the percentages of blacks and Hispanics stopped for motor vehicle or equipment violations.

Table 3. Racial Summary of the Nature of the Traffic Stops*

	Nature of the Traffic Stops (Number and Percentage)					
	Criminal Investigations		Motor Vehicle Violations		Equipment Violations	
White	4,491	**75.3%**	232,495	**83.9%**	27,760	**83.8%**
Black	1,107	**18.6%**	32,996	**11.9%**	4,168	**12.6%**
American Indian	21	**0.4%**	563	**0.2%**	81	**0.2%**
Asian/Pacific Islander	97	**1.6%**	4,885	**1.8%**	439	**1.3%**
Unknown	248	**4.1%**	6,116	**2.2%**	682	**2.1%**
Totals	5,964	**100.0%**	277,055	**100.0%**	33,130	**100.0%**

(*Note: All percentages are column percentages of the Total.)

Table 4. Ethnic Summary of the Nature of the Traffic Stops*

	Nature of the Traffic Stops (Number and Percentage)					
	Criminal Investigations		Motor Vehicle Violations		Equipment Violations	
Hispanic	924	**15.5%**	23,368	**8.4%**	3,060	**9.2%**
Not Hispanic	4,075	**68.3%**	201,108	**72.6%**	25,301	**76.4%**
Unknown	965	**16.2%**	52,579	**19.0%**	4,769	**14.4%**
Totals	5,964	**100.0%**	277,055	**100.0%**	33,130	**100.0%**

(*Note: All percentages are column percentages of the Total.)

Figure 2 presents these data in a different way. Rather than looking at the percentage of all criminal investigation stops that were white, black, American Indian, Asian, or unknown, the data are

presented within each racial category. For instance, of all traffic stops of white motorists, 2% were for criminal investigation, 88% were for motor vehicle violations, and 11% were for equipment violations (these percentages do not total 100% due to rounding). Of all traffic stops involving black motorists, 3% were for criminal investigations, 86% were for motor vehicle violations, and 11% were for equipment violations. A similar interpretation should be used for American Indians, Asians, and unidentified motorists. Figure 2 shows little differences within each race for the nature of the traffic stops.

Figure 2. Percentages of the Nature of Traffic Stops Within Race

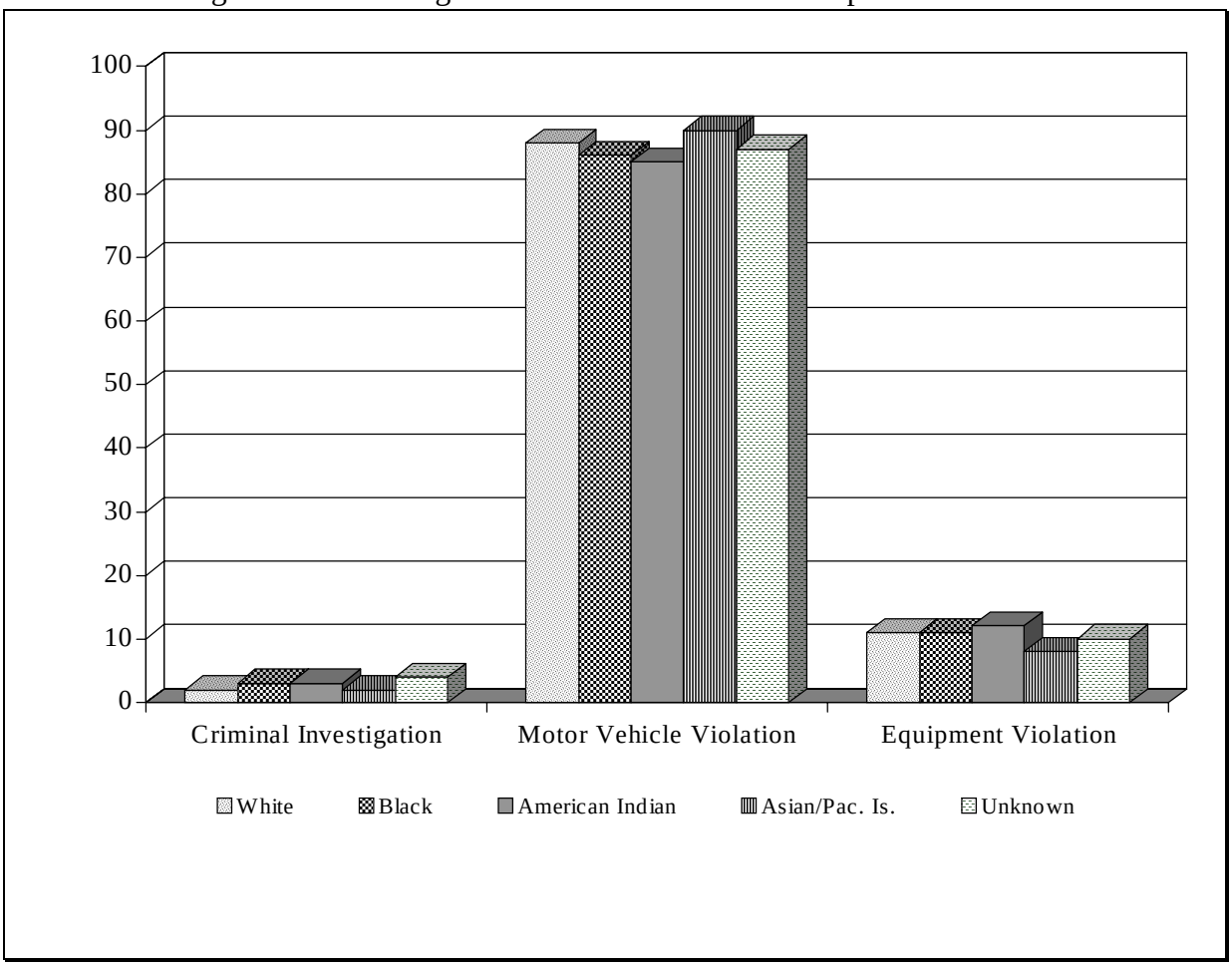
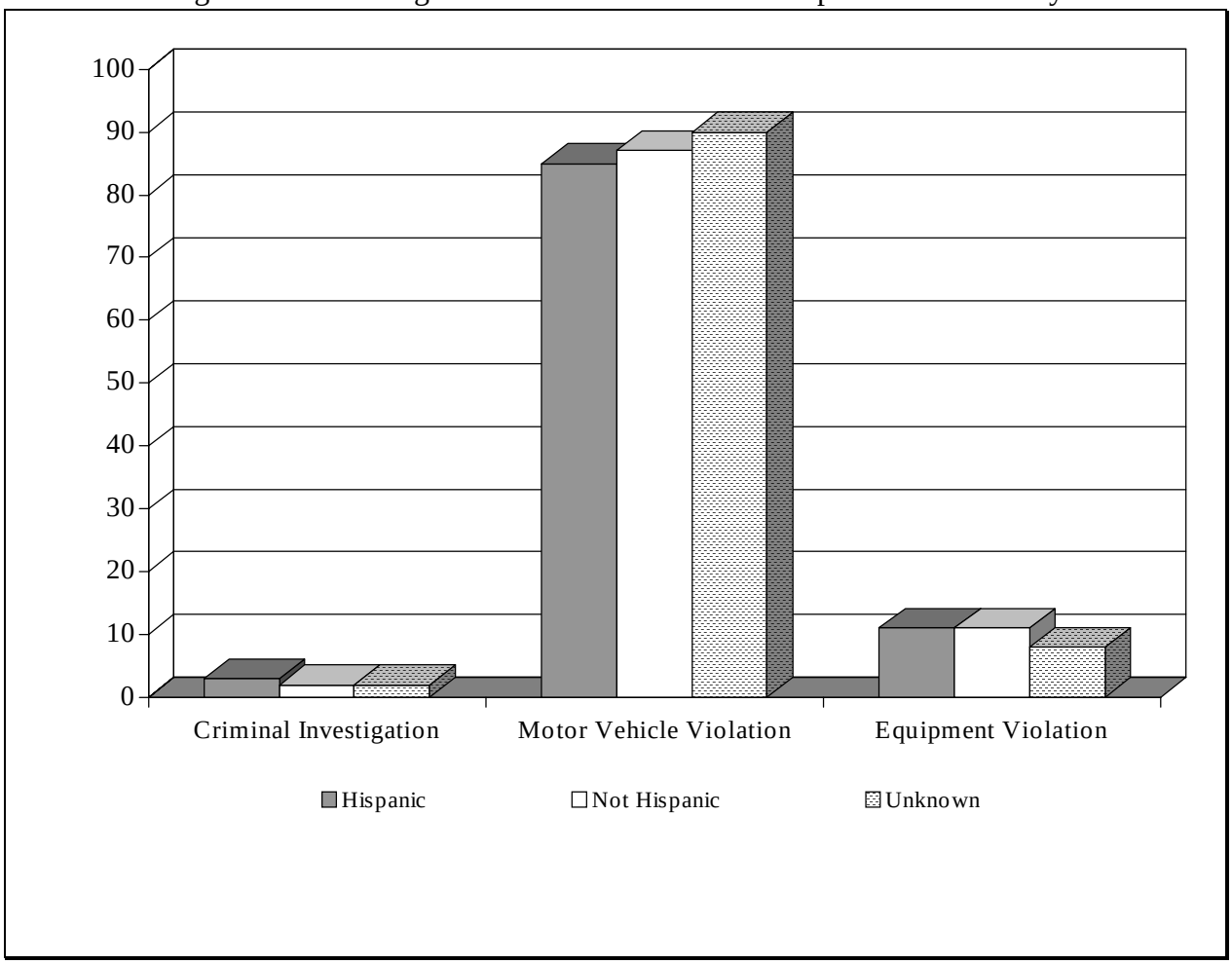


Figure 3 presents the same type of comparisons for the nature of traffic stops within ethnicity. Of all traffic stops involving Hispanic motorists, 3% were for criminal investigations, 85% were for motor vehicle violations, and 11% were for equipment violations (these percentages do not total 100% due to rounding). For non-Hispanic motorists, 2% were stopped for a criminal investigation, 87% for a motor vehicle violation, and 11% for an equipment violation. Drivers of unknown ethnicity had almost the same percentages as Hispanic and non-Hispanic drivers (2% criminal investigations, 90% motor vehicle violations, and 8% equipment violations).

Figure 3. Percentages of the Nature of Traffic Stops Within Ethnicity



Tables 5 and 6 gives the numbers and percentages of the six dispositions of traffic stops by race and ethnicity. The traffic stop racial and ethnic distribution within each disposition followed the same general pattern as the racial and ethnic distribution of the state population. However, the black and Hispanic percentages for uniform arrest reports and misdemeanor summons were higher than the black and Hispanic percentages for infraction tickets, written warnings, verbal warnings, and no dispositions.

Table 5. Racial Summary of Traffic Stops Dispositions*

	Dispositions of Traffic Stops (Number and Percentage)					
	Uniform Arrest Reports		Misdemeanor Summons		Infraction Tickets	
White	2,256	**62.7%**	16,886	**76.6%**	118,824	**84.2%**
Black	1,047	**29.1%**	4,328	**19.6%**	15,454	**10.9%**
American Indian	8	**0.2%**	47	**0.2%**	265	**0.2%**
Asian/Pacific Islander	22	**0.6%**	251	**1.1%**	3,035	**2.2%**
Unknown	263	**7.4%**	525	**2.5%**	3,573	**2.5%**
Totals	3,596	**100.0%**	22,037	**100.0%**	141,151	**100.0%**

(*Note: All percentages are column percentages of the Total.)

Table 5 Continued*

	Dispositions of Traffic Stops (Number and Percentage)					
	Written Warning		Verbal Warning		No Disposition	
White	71,951	**87.7%**	48,554	**82.0%**	6,273	**76.6%**
Black	7,357	**9.0%**	8,582	**14.5%**	1,504	**18.4%**
American Indian	178	**0.2%**	143	**0.2%**	24	**0.3%**
Asian/Pacific Islander	1,032	**1.3%**	927	**1.6%**	154	**1.9%**
Unknown	1,479	**1.8%**	977	**1.7%**	233	**2.8%**
Totals	81,997	**100.0%**	59,183	**100.0%**	8,188	**100.0%**

(*Note: All percentages are column percentages of the Total.)

Table 6. Ethnic Summary of Traffic Stops Dispositions*

	Dispositions of Traffic Stops (Number and Percentage)					
	Uniform Arrest Reports		Misdemeanor Summons		Infraction Tickets	
Hispanic	841	**23.4%**	3,909	**17.7%**	11,817	**8.4%**
Not Hispanic	2,083	**57.9%**	14,774	**67.0%**	92,913	**65.8%**
Unknown	672	**18.7%**	3,354	**15.3%**	36,421	**25.8%**
Totals	3,596	**100.0%**	22,037	**100.0%**	141,151	**100.0%**

(*Note: All percentages are column percentages of the Total.)

Table 6 Continued*

	Dispositions of Traffic Stops (Number and Percentage)					
	Written Warning		Verbal Warning		No Disposition	
Hispanic	4,641	**5.7%**	5,219	**8.8%**	925	**11.3%**
Not Hispanic	66,500	**81.1%**	48,077	**81.3%**	6,136	**74.9%**
Unknown	10,856	**13.2%**	5,887	**9.9%**	1,127	**13.8%**
Totals	81,997	**100.0%**	59,183	**100.0%**	8,188	**100.0%**

(*Note: All percentages are column percentages)

Tables 7 and 8 displays the numbers and percentages of motor vehicle searches by race and ethnicity. The majority of motor vehicle searches were conducted with white (72%) and non-Hispanic motorists (60%); 22.7% of all searches involved black drivers and 21.2% involved Hispanic motorists.

Table 7. Racial Summary of Motor Vehicle Searches

	Vehicle Searches (Number and Percentage)	
White	8,684	**72.5%**
Black	2,725	**22.7%**
American Indian	19	**0.2%**
Asian/Pacific Islander	113	**0.9%**
Unknown	443	**3.7%**
Totals	11,984	**100.0%**

Table 8. Ethnic Summary of Motor Vehicle Searches

	Vehicle Searches (Number and Percentage)	
Hispanic	2,536	**21.2%**
Not Hispanic	7,296	**60.8%**
Unknown	2,152	**18.0%**
Totals	11,984	**100.0%**

Figure 4 graphically displays the percentages of traffic stops dispositions within each of the racial categories. This figure should be interpreted in the same manner as Figure 2. That is, of all white motorists stopped, 1% were arrested, 6% received a misdemeanor summons, 45% were issued an infraction ticket, 27% were given a written warning, 18% were warned verbally, and 2% received no disposition. Of all black motorists stopped, 3% were arrested, 11% received a misdemeanor summons, 40% were issued an infraction ticket, 19% were given a written warning, 22% were warned verbally, and 4% were not given a disposition. The patterns were nearly similar across all racial groups. Most motorists received infraction tickets followed by written warnings, verbal warnings, misdemeanor summons, no dispositions, and arrests. The one exception was that black motorists were given a higher percentage of verbal warnings than written warnings.

Figure 4. Percentages of Traffic Stops Dispositions and Motor Vehicle Searches Within Race

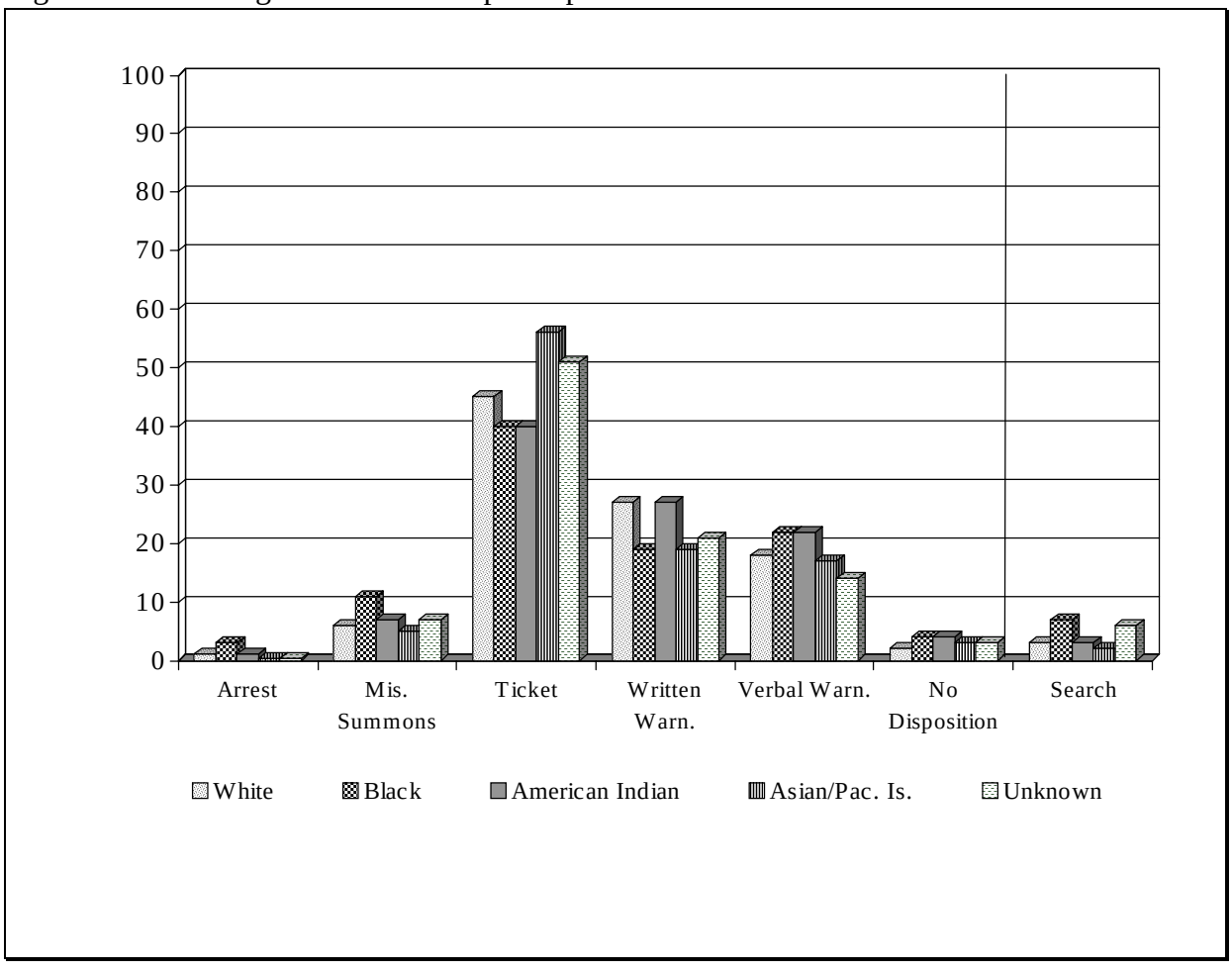
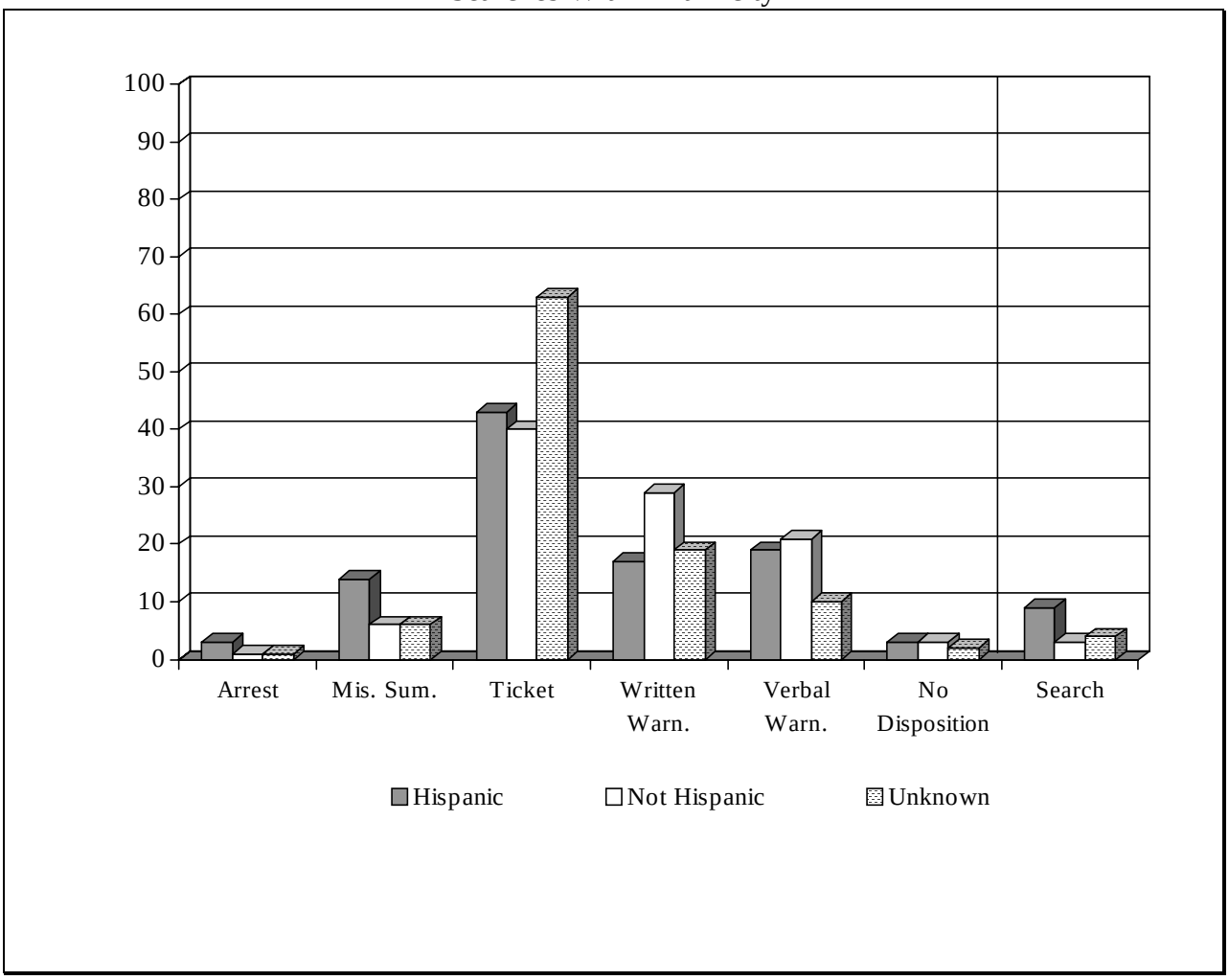


Figure 4 also includes the percentages of searches within each race. A higher percentage of black motorists (7%) and motorists of unknown race (6%) had their vehicles searched than whites (3%), American Indians (3%), or Asians (2%).

Figure 5 presents the disposition and search percentages within ethnicity. The trends in the frequency of dispositions within ethnicity were similar to the disposition trends within race. The most frequent disposition was infraction tickets followed by written warnings, verbal warnings, misdemeanor summons, no dispositions, and arrests. The exception to these trends was that Hispanic motorists received more verbal warnings than written warnings. In addition, a slightly higher percentage of Hispanic drivers were arrested and received misdemeanor summons than non-Hispanic and drivers whose race was not identified by the reporting police officer. Of Hispanic drivers, 3% were arrested, 14% received a misdemeanor summons, 43% were issued infraction tickets, 17% were given written warnings, 19% were warned verbally, and 3% did not receive a disposition. Of non-Hispanic drivers, 1% were arrested, 6% received a misdemeanor summons, 40% were issued infraction tickets, 29% were given written warnings, 21% were warned verbally, and 3% did not receive a disposition. Of all drivers with no ethnicity reported, 1% was arrested, 6% received a misdemeanor summons, 63% were issued infraction tickets, 19% were given written warnings, 10% were warned verbally, and 2% received no disposition.

Figure 5 also presents the percentages of motor vehicle searches within ethnicity. Searches were conducted in 9% of all motor vehicle stops with Hispanic motorists. These percentages were lower for non-Hispanics (3%) and drivers whose ethnicity was not identified (4%).

Figure 5. Percentages of Traffic Stops Dispositions and Motor Vehicle Searches Within Ethnicity



Analysis of Disproportionality of Traffic Stops

The frequencies and percentages previously discussed provide a descriptive summary of the traffic stops in Connecticut occurring from January 1, 2000 to June 30, 2000. While these descriptive statistics are helpful in developing a basic understanding of the number, nature, and dispositions of traffic stops, they do not fully address issues surrounding the disparate treatment of racial and ethnic minorities by law enforcement agencies. It is misleading to conclude from the earlier statistics that black or Hispanic motorists are more likely to be stopped, arrested, or searched more often than non-black or non-Hispanic drivers based upon the summary of statewide traffic stops. To arrive at this conclusion from the statewide data would lead one to believe that all police agencies in Connecticut treat minorities differently from non-minorities. There are 92 law enforcement agencies making traffic stops. The statewide statistics cannot reveal how many or which police departments may or may not treat minorities differently, nor can they indicate degrees of differential treatment or identify extenuating factors contributing to different treatment.

Additionally, disparate treatment of minority drivers can occur at separate times before and during traffic stops. These times are: (1) the decision to make the traffic stop, (2) the reason for making the traffic stop, (3) the disposition of the traffic stop, and (4) the decision to search the motor vehicle. Accusations of racial profiling have been made at each of these decision points and past research has suggested that disparities tend to occur most often in the decision to make the traffic stop and the decision

to search the motor vehicle (Cordner et al., 2000; U.S. General Accounting Office, 2000; Harris, 1997). However, prior research is limited and has not provided sufficient evidence to definitively support any conclusions of when disparities are most prevalent.

We attempt to create a quantitative measure of disproportionality at each of the four traffic stop decisions points and to explore the potential influence of extraneous conditions that may explain the presence of disparities. The measures of disproportionality were computed for each police department so that we can better comprehend the number of agencies treating minorities differently and the extent of any disparate treatment. We then conducted a statistical regression analysis to identify extraneous influences on disproportionality (a regression analysis can be used to identify explanatory measures (such as town characteristics) that influence the values of a measure that is dependent on them (such as racial or ethnic disproportionality).

We focused on the disparate treatment of black and Hispanic motorists for these analyses. This decision was based upon prior research and our statewide summaries that have suggested blacks and Hispanics potentially suffer the most disparate treatment during traffic stops. In each of these analyses, blacks were compared to non-blacks and Hispanics were compared to non-Hispanics.

Analysis #1: Disproportion in the Percentages of Traffic Stops

The first step was to create a measure of disproportionality for each town based on percentage differences. The measure for this analysis was computed for blacks by subtracting the percentage of blacks in the town population from the percentage of all traffic stops of black motorists. A similar measure of disproportionality was created for Hispanics. For example, if 20% of the traffic stops in Town A were of black motorists and 15% of the population of Town A were black, Town A would have a measure of disproportionality of 5% for traffic stops of black motorists. Another way to interpret this measure is to state "there is a difference of 5% between blacks stopped and blacks living in Town A." The higher the percentage, the more disparity is present.

Table 9 presents a categorical summary of the measure of disproportionality for the total percentages of traffic stops. Categories were arbitrarily created for display purposes to more clearly present disproportionality (disproportionality scores were rounded to the nearest percentage). The majority of police departments (67.5% of police departments for blacks and 76.4% of police departments for Hispanics) had scores under 5%. The average difference was 5% for blacks and 4% for Hispanics.

Table 9. Town Summary of the Disproportionality Measure for Traffic Stops

	Blacks		Hispanics	
	Number of Police Departments*	Percentage	Number of Police Departments*	Percentage
0 or less	7	7.9%	13	14.6%
1% to 4%	53	59.6%	55	61.8%
5% to 9%	18	20.2%	16	18.0%
10% to 20%	11	12.4%	5	5.4%
Over 20%	0	0%	0	0
Totals	89	100.0%	89	100.0%
Average	5%		4%	
Median	3%		3%	
Standard Error	.005%		.005%	

(*Note: This computation was not performed for the Connecticut State Police, the City of Groton, or Groton Long Point).

Next, we statistically tested for extraneous explanations of disproportionality to determine if specific town characteristics were associated with higher percentages of disproportionality. The number of testable extraneous influences was limited to those that could be easily measured.

Geographic location: The premise of geographic location is that a town that borders other towns with a high percentage of minority residents will have a higher percentage of minority drivers.

Entertainment/tourism or Retail Districts: Towns with entertainment/tourism attractions or retail districts will also attract high numbers of drivers who are nonresidents. This was measured using the per capita retail sales and the per capita lodging facilities for each town (taken from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development report, Connecticut Town Profiles: 1998-1999 Economic and Demographic Outlines of Connecticut's Communities).

Towns Predominately Residential: Residentialness was measured using the percentage of single family housing for each town (taken from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development report, Connecticut Town Profiles: 1998-1999 Economic and Demographic Outlines of Connecticut's Communities). It is believed that towns with a high percentage of single family households are more residential and will have fewer nonresidents driving through them.

Our analysis found that towns bordering against towns with high percentages of blacks and/or Hispanics have higher amounts of disproportionality than nonborder towns. This finding suggests the disparity in stopping of black and Hispanic drivers may be a result of more black and Hispanic nonresidents driving through these towns, thereby, causing differences between the percentage of minorities driving through a town and the percentage of minorities living in the town.

Analysis #2: Disproportion in the Nature of Traffic Stops

This analysis investigates the nature and extent of differential reasons blacks and Hispanics were being stopped. Measures of disproportionality were computed for each traffic stop nature (criminal investigation, motor vehicle violation, and equipment violation) using the following formulas (analogous formulas were used to calculate the disproportion of motor vehicle stops and equipment violations):

Disproportion of blacks stopped for criminal investigations =

$$\frac{\text{Number of blacks stopped for criminal investigations}}{\text{Number of blacks stopped}} \quad \_\_ \quad \frac{\text{Number of non-blacks stopped for criminal investigations}}{\text{Number of non-blacks stopped}}$$

Disproportion of Hispanics stopped for criminal investigations =

$$\frac{\text{Number of Hispanics stopped for criminal investigations}}{\text{Number of Hispanics stopped}} \quad \_\_ \quad \frac{\text{Number of non-Hispanics stopped for criminal investigations}}{\text{Number of non-Hispanics}}$$

Table 10 displays disproportionality for nature of the traffic stops involving black motorists. For criminal investigation and motor vehicle stops, over 50% of the police agencies had "no" disproportionality. For all three types of traffic stops, the majority of police departments had less than 5% disparity. Only one police department had more than 20% disparity for equipment violation stops. In this situation, the small number of equipment stops inflated the disproportionality score. The East Hampton Police Department had a disproportionality score of 46% for equipment violation stops of black drivers (East Hampton conducted 42 equipment violation stops, 5 of these were with black motorists). The average disproportionality across the three types of traffic stops were 1% or less.

Table 10. Town Summary of Black Disproportionality for Nature of the Traffic Stops

	Criminal Investigations		Motor Vehicle Violations		Equipment Violations	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
0 or less	47	51.1%	68	73.9%	39	42.4%
1% to 4%	40	43.5%	16	17.4%	42	45.7%
5 %to 9%	4	4.3%	4	4.3%	6	6.5%
10% to 20%	1	1.1%	4	4.3%	4	4.3%
Over 20%	0	0	0	0	1	1.1%
Totals	92	100.0%	92	100.0%	92	100.0%
Average	.1%		-2%		1%	
Median	.3%		-2%		1%	
Standard Error	.03%		.07%		.07%	

For Hispanic drivers, the amount of traffic stop nature disproportionality is similar to black drivers (Table 11). Nearly all of the police departments (over 94%) had less than a 5% disparity for criminal investigation and motor vehicle violation stops. For equipment violations, 85.9% had less than a 5% disparity, with one department having a disparity of over 20%. Again, the high disproportionality score is a result of a small number of equipment violation stops. The Cromwell Police Department had a disproportionality score for equipment violations of 29.9% (this police department conducted 38 traffic stops for equipment violations, 7 of these stops were with Hispanic drivers).

Table 11. Town Summary of Hispanic Disproportionality for Nature of the Traffic Stops

	Criminal Investigations		Motor Vehicle Violations		Equipment Violations	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
0 or less	54	58.7%	65	70.7%	34	37.0%
1% to 4%	35	38.0%	22	23.9%	45	48.9%
5% to 9%	2	2.2%	3	3.3%	8	8.7%
10% to 20%	1	1.1%	2	2.2%	4	4.3%
Over 20%	0	0	0	0	1	1.1%
Totals	92	100.0%	92	100.0%	92	100.0%
Average	.6%		-3%		2%	
Median	.04%		-2%		2%	
Standard Error	.03%		.06%		.06%	

Regression analysis did not reveal any extraneous influences to explain disproportionality. This is likely due to the low levels of disproportionality in each of the three types of traffic stops. In other words, there was no disproportionality to explain.

Analysis #3: Disproportion in the Dispositions of Traffic Stops

The third analysis explored disproportionality across the six different traffic stop dispositions (uniform arrest reports, misdemeanor summons, infraction tickets, written warnings, verbal warnings, and no dispositions). A measure of disproportionality was computed for each disposition using the following formulas (analogous formulas were used to calculate the disproportion of the other dispositions):

Disproportion of blacks arrested during traffic stops =

$$\frac{\text{Number of blacks arrested}}{\text{Number of blacks stopped}} \_\_ \frac{\text{Number of non-blacks arrested}}{\text{Number of non-blacks stopped}}$$

Disproportion of Hispanics arrested during traffic stops =

$$\frac{\text{Number of Hispanics arrested}}{\text{Number of Hispanics stopped}} \_\_ \frac{\text{Number of non-Hispanics arrested}}{\text{Number of non-Hispanics stopped}}$$

Table 12 displays the disproportionality of dispositions of black motorists. There are low levels of disproportionality for uniform arrest reports, infraction tickets, written warnings, verbal warnings, and no dispositions. For each of these, the majority of police agencies (97.8% to 77.2%) have less than a 5% disparity. While only two departments (Clinton and Plainfield) have more than a 20% disparity in misdemeanor summons, 16 (17.4%) range from 10% to 20%, 28 (30.4%) have between 5% and 9% disparity, and 46 (50%) have fewer than 5% disparity. The high disproportionality scores for Clinton and Plainfield appear to be the result of a limited number of misdemeanor summons (the Clinton Police Department issued 9 misdemeanor summons for black motorists and 43 for all motorists stopped while the Plainfield Police Department issued a total of 78 misdemeanor summons, 3 were issued to black drivers. The Groton Long Point Police Department had more than a 20% disparity in the issuance of ticket infractions. This department stopped a total of 187 motor vehicles and issued 23 infraction tickets, 1 to a black motorist.

Table 12. Town Summary of Black Disproportionality for Dispositions of the Traffic Stops

	Uniform Arrest Reports		Misdemeanor Summons		Infraction Tickets	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
0 or less	47	51.1%	9	9.8%	77	83.7%
1% to 4%	43	46.7%	37	40.2%	7	7.6%
5%to 9%	1	1.1%	28	30.4%	6	6.5%
10% to 20%	1	1.1%	16	17.4%	1	1.1%
Over 20%	0	0	2	2.2%	1	1.1%
Totals	92	100.0%	92	100.0%	92	100.0%
Average	.8%		6%		-5%	
Median	.4%		5%		-5%	
Standard Error	.02%		.06%		.09%	

	Written Warnings		Verbal Warnings		No Dispositions	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
0 or less	71	77.2%	39	42.4%	44	47.8%
1% to 4%	17	18.5%	32	34.8%	41	44.6%
5%to 9%	3	3.3%	11	12.0%	6	6.5%
10% to 20%	0	0	8	8.7%	0	0
Over 20%	1	1.1%	2	2.2%	1	1.1%
Totals	92	100.0%	92	100.0%	92	100.0%
Average	-5%		2%		1%	
Median	-4%		2%		5%	
Standard Error	.09%		.08%		.04%	

Table 13 shows a similar trend in the dispositions of Hispanic drivers. Most police departments (97.8% to 83.7%) have less than 5% disproportionality for uniform arrest reports, infraction tickets, written warnings, verbal warnings, and no dispositions. The higher amounts of disparity are with misdemeanor summons. Only 15.2% of the police departments had "no" disproportionality and 43.5% had less than 5%. The Groton Long Point Police Department had more than a 20% disparity in the issuance of infraction tickets to Hispanic drivers (3 of the 23 infraction tickets were given to Hispanics).

Table 13. Town Summary of Hispanic Disproportionality for Dispositions of the Traffic Stops

	Uniform Arrest Reports		Misdemeanor Summons		Infraction Tickets	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
0 or less	52	56.5%	14	15.2%	56	60.9%
1% to 4%	35	38.0%	26	28.3%	25	27.2%
5% to 9%	3	3.3%	22	23.9%	7	7.6%
10% to 20%	2	2.2%	23	25.0%	3	3.3%
Over 20%	0	0	7	7.6%	1	1.1%
Totals	92	100.0%	92	100.0%	92	100.0%
Average	.9%		8%		-2%	
Median	.2%		7%		-1%	
Standard Error	.03%		.09%		.09%	

Table 13. Continued

	Written Warnings		Verbal Warnings		No Dispositions	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
0 or less	82	89.1%	57	62.0%	58	63.0%
1% to 4%	8	8.7%	20	21.7%	29	31.5%
5% to 9%	1	1.1%	9	9.8%	5	5.4%
10% to 20%	0	0	6	6.5%	0	0
Over 20%	1	1.1%	0	0	0	0
Totals	92	100.0%	92	100.0%	92	100.0%
Average	-7%		-.7%		.5%	
Median	-5%		-.3%		-.08%	
Standard Error	.08%		.08%		.06%	

Even though there were disparities in the issuance of misdemeanor summons for blacks and Hispanics, the regression analysis found that none of the extraneous influences explained this disproportionality. For the other five dispositions, the lack of influences is likely due to the low levels of disproportionality. There may be other town characteristics that explain the disproportionality of misdemeanor summons, however, we can only conclude that the more frequent use of this disposition for black and Hispanic motorists is not associated with geographic location of towns, towns with higher per capita retail sales or lodging facilities, or towns with a high percentage of single family housing.

Analysis #4: Disproportion in Motor Vehicle Searches

The final analysis consisted of determining the amount of disproportionality in motor vehicle searches for blacks and Hispanics. The measure of disproportionality was computed from these formulas:

Disproportion of blacks searched during a traffic stop =

$$\frac{\text{Number of blacks searched}}{\text{Number of blacks stopped}} \quad \_\_ \quad \frac{\text{Number of non-blacks searched}}{\text{Number of non-blacks stopped}}$$

Disproportion of Hispanics searched during a traffic stop =

$$\frac{\text{Number of Hispanics searched}}{\text{Number of Hispanics stopped}} \quad \_\_ \quad \frac{\text{Number of non-Hispanics searched}}{\text{Number of non-Hispanics stopped}}$$

Table 14 provides a categorical summary of the disproportionality measures of motor vehicle searches for black and Hispanic motorists. The majority of police departments have less than a 5% disparity between motor vehicle searches of blacks and non-blacks (83.7%), Hispanics and non-Hispanics (70.7%). No departments had more than a 20% difference between black and non-black searches, while one department did for Hispanics (Coventry had a 26.9% disparity in Hispanic and non-Hispanic searches). However, this disparity appears to be a result of the low number of searches by the Coventry Police Department (this department searched a total of 40 motor vehicles, 9 of which had Hispanic motorists).

Table 14. Town Summary of the Disproportionality for Motor Vehicle Searches

	Blacks		Hispanics	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
0 or less	30	32.6%	18	19.6%
1% to 4%	47	51.1%	47	51.1%
5% to 9%	11	12.0%	22	23.9%
10% to 20%	4	4.3%	4	4.3%
Over 20%	0	0	1	1.1%
Totals	92	100.0%	92	100.0%
Average	2%		4%	
Median	2%		3%	
Standard Error	.04%		.05%	

The regression analysis of extraneous influences found that for motor vehicle searches of black drivers, towns with lower percentages of single family housing had higher amounts of disproportionality. To state this finding differently, towns that are less residential searched black motorists disproportionately more often than non-black motorists. For Hispanics, none of the extraneous influences were associated with disproportional searches.

Summary of Statewide Traffic Stops Statistics

Overall, a small amount of disproportionality was found across the four traffic stop decision points. In regards to traffic stops, the majority of police departments showed a difference of less than 5% between the percentage of blacks and Hispanics stopped relative to their representation in the town population. For the nature of traffic stops, the disproportionality was less than 5% in over 90% of the police departments when looking at criminal investigations. For motor vehicle and equipment violations, 80% of the police departments had a disproportionality of less than 5%. In terms of dispositions, there was slightly greater disproportionality among blacks and Hispanics for misdemeanor summons. The majority of police departments exhibited little disproportionality for the remaining dispositions. Finally, for motor vehicle searches, there was slightly more disproportionality for blacks and Hispanics, yet over 90% of police departments had less than a 10% disparity.

Conclusions

Minority drivers do not appear to be systematically treated differently than non-minority drivers. The analysis of traffic stops statistics for the State of Connecticut revealed that although some disparities were present, these were small and appeared to be limited to a small number of police agencies or associated with low occurrences of traffic stops. Even though disparities between the treatment of black and non-black drivers and Hispanic and non-Hispanic drivers were more prevalent for the issuance of misdemeanor summons and motor vehicles searches, these differences were not extreme.

While we believe that disparate treatment of minority drivers is not prevalent throughout Connecticut, we cannot definitively conclude that individual police officers do not practice racial profiling. The decision to stop a motor vehicle and how to dispose of this traffic stop is ultimately made on an individual basis. Police departments should be proactive in monitoring the activities of individual officers to decrease the possibility that enforcement decisions are solely being based on race or ethnicity. Ramirez, McDevitt, and Farrell (2000) recommend that police departments create a data collection task force and partner with an independent academic or research team who will analyze these data.

The failure to explain why disparities exist other than to suggest that police departments practice racial profiling has been a major limitation of prior studies of traffic stops. We conducted an analysis of extraneous influences in an attempt to better understand why some disparities were present. One important finding was that towns stopping a higher percentage of minority drivers bordered towns or cities having a high percentage of minority residents. The value of this finding is that it supports our belief that outside factors may be associated with disparities in the traffic stops statistics and not systematic racial profiling by law enforcement agencies. We will continue to explore other possible influences to further explain existing disparities.

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SUMMARIES OF TRAFFIC STOPS STATISTICS

The following pages contain summaries of traffic stops statistics for the Department of Public Safety, Division of State Police and every municipal police agency. The first table provides the number and percentages for race and ethnicity of the state population, county population, town/city population, traffic stops, and the nature of traffic stops. Race and ethnicity are tabulated separately using the categories defined by the U.S. Census (race and ethnicity percentages may not total 100% due to rounding to the nearest percentage). Racial profiling research typically compares population race and ethnicity percentages to race and ethnicity percentages of traffic stops. Using the Ansonia Police Department as an example, African-Americans comprised 8% of the state population, 10% of the New Haven County population, 8% of the residents of Ansonia, 10% of the traffic stops, 13% of the criminal investigation stops, 10% of the motor violation stops, and 10% of the equipment violation stops.

The first two figures in each summary present the percentages of the nature of the traffic stops within race and ethnicity. The percentage was calculated within each racial and ethnicity grouping. For example, all Department of Public Safety, Division of State Police traffic stops involving white motorists, 0.3% were for criminal investigations, 93% were for motor vehicle violations, and 7% were for equipment violations.

The table on the second page shows the number and percentages for race and ethnicity of the six dispositions and motor vehicle searches.

The two figures on the second page display the percentages of traffic stops dispositions and searches within race and ethnicity. These figures should be interpreted the same way as the first two figures. Using the Department of Public Safety, Division of State Police as an example, for all traffic stops involving white drivers, 0.2% of the traffic stops ended in an arrest, 4% in a misdemeanor summons, 73% in an infraction ticket, 19% in a written warning, 2% in a verbal warning, and 1% with no disposition. For all traffic stops involving black drivers, 0.3% of the traffic stops ended in an arrest, 7% in a misdemeanor summons, 80% in an infraction ticket, 9% in a written warning, 3% in a verbal warning, and 1% with no disposition.

Caution should be taken when interpreting these numbers and percentages due to the low occurrences of traffic stops in some of the agencies and in some of the racial and ethnic categories. Small numbers can produce percentages that overstate representation. Situations involving small numbers are not statistically significant. Some police agencies may appear to have large percentages differences between minorities and non-minorities across nature, dispositions, and searches when in fact, a small number of traffic stops actually occurred. For example, 30% of the criminal investigation stops conducted by the Brookfield Police Department were with African-American motorists. But in this department, 30% represents three out of ten criminal investigation stops.

NOTES ON THE USE OF THE TRAFFIC STOPS STATISTICS REPORT

The traffic stops statistics for the law enforcement agencies reported on the following pages are formatted on two pages of tables. In presenting the report, the data for any one law enforcement agency are on facing pages.

Data are reported as follows:

State of Connecticut, including the Division of State Police and all municipal police agencies,

Department of Public Safety, Division of State Police, and the

municipal police agencies, in alphabetical order.

Data for municipal law enforcement agencies include references for the county in which the respective municipality is located. Demographic data for the county associated with the municipality is provided for reference.

The demographic data utilized in this report are from the 1990 Census of Population and Housing, to provide the distributions of race and ethnicity populations to the geographic detail associated with the traffic stops statistics of the municipal police departments. Demographic data from the 2000 Census of Population and Housing, with race and ethnicity populations, are not yet available. These data are scheduled for release in the late summer or fall of calendar year 2001.

The reported and analyzed traffic stops statistics data are for a period of six (6) months, from January 1, 2000 to June 30, 2000.

In municipalities where multiple law enforcement agencies serve the same geographic area, the statistics for these law enforcement agencies in the municipality may be aggregated and reported under the name of the municipality. This situation occurs with the aggregated reporting of traffic stops statistics for the City of New Haven and Yale University police departments.