

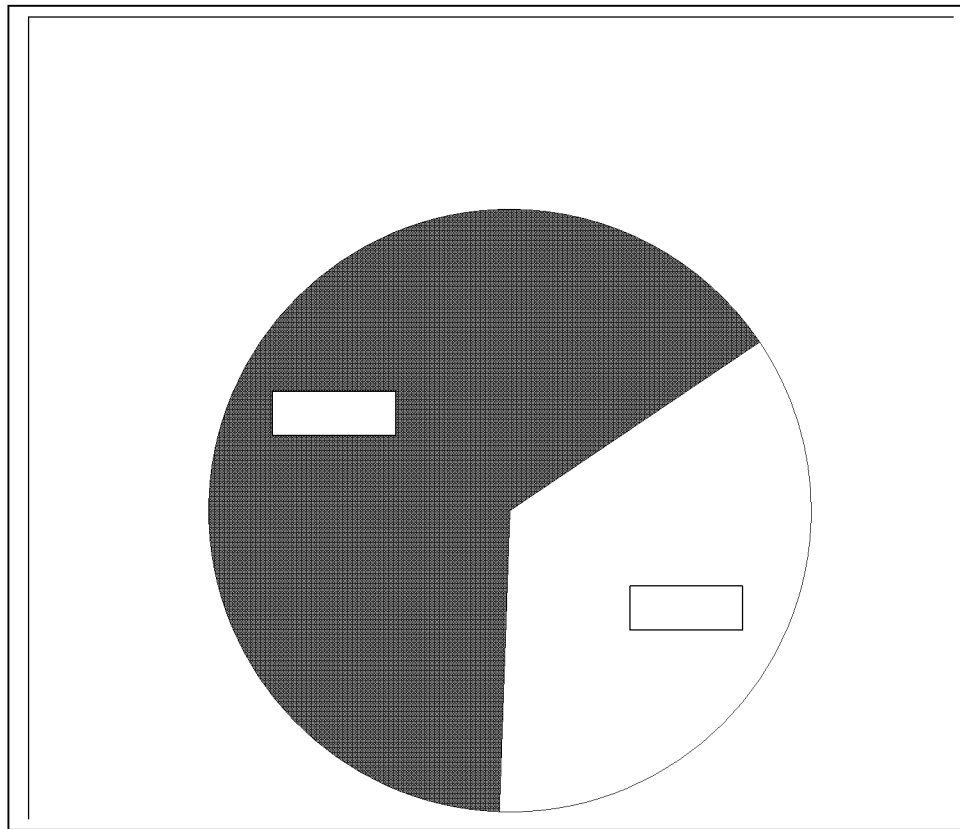
CHAPTER III.

ATTITUDES ABOUT PHOTO ENFORCEMENT DEVICES

PHOTO ENFORCEMENT DEVICES

Nearly two-thirds (65%) of drivers said they had heard of automated photo enforcement devices which photograph and record information about traffic violators. Males (74%) were more likely than females (57%) to have heard about these devices.

FIGURE 3-1



Qx: Some areas have introduced automated enforcement devices which use cameras to identify vehicles that speed or run red lights. A traffic ticket is mailed to the owner of the vehicle along with information about the location, time, date and type of infraction. If the driver or owner pays the fine, no further action is taken. If the ticket is contested, a photo of the offender's vehicle and license plates is presented in court. Have you ever heard of this kind of traffic enforcement that doesn't require police officers to stop and ticket traffic violators?

Base: Total population of drivers.

Unweighted N=3,044

Respondents were asked what effect, if any, photo enforcement devices would have on specific traffic outcomes. Four out of five (80%) believed the devices would have at least some effect on reducing the number of stop signs and red lights that drivers run. Three-fourths (76%) of drivers also thought the devices would have at least some effect on reducing speeding. Two drivers in three believed the devices would have some effect on reducing crashes (65%), and three drivers in five felt it would have at least some effect in getting dangerous drivers off the road (60%).

FIGURE 3-2



Qx: *If photo enforcement of driving was introduced in your community, how much effect do you think it would have on [READ ITEM] --- a lot, some, only a little, or none at all.*

Base: *Total driving population*

Unweighted N=3,044

Nearly eight in 10 (79%) thought using a photo enforcement system on drivers who run red lights would be a good idea. Only slightly fewer (74%) thought using the system against those who don't stop at stop signs would be a good idea. Seventy-one percent thought it would be a good idea to use a photo enforcement system against speeders.

FIGURE 3-3



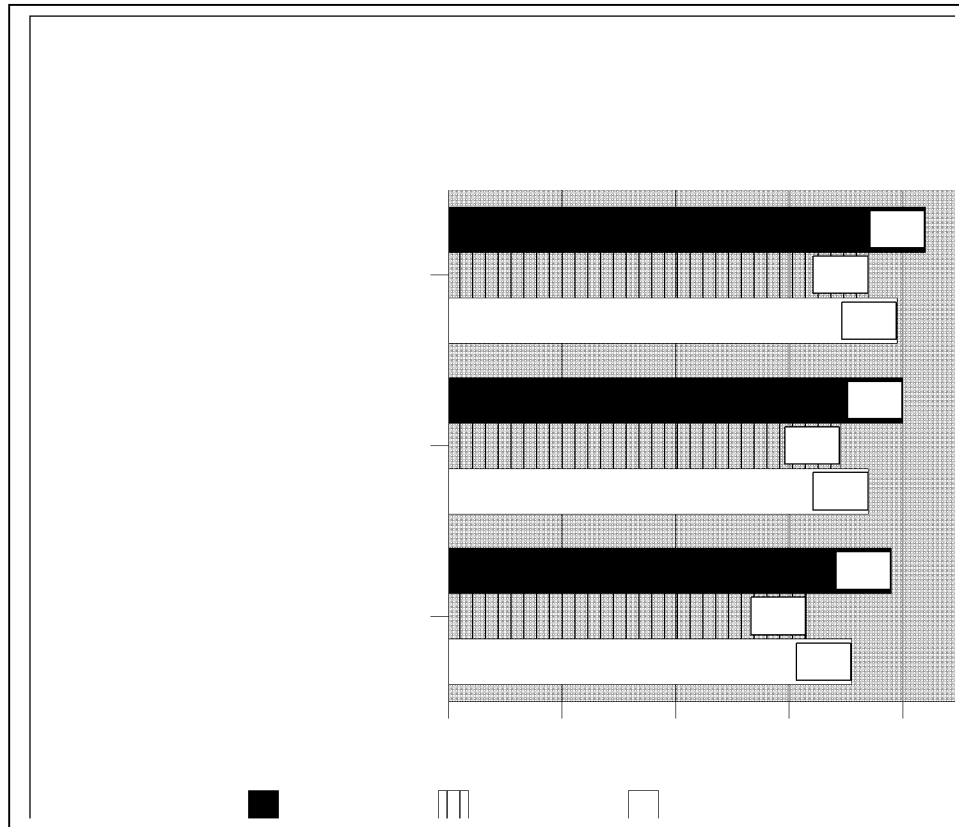
Qx: *Do you think that it would be a good idea or a bad idea to use a photo enforcement system like this to identify vehicles which were ... running red lights, speeding, not stopping at stop signs?*

Base: *National population of drivers*
Unweighted N=3,044

Note: Remainder = "Don't Know"

Females were somewhat more likely than males to endorse the use of photo enforcement devices for the three specific situations mentioned. More females than males thought it would be a good idea to use photo enforcement for: running red lights (84% versus 74%); not stopping at stop signs (80% versus 69%); and for speeding (78% versus 63%).

FIGURE 3-4



Qx: Do you think that it would be a good idea or a bad idea to use a photo enforcement system like this to identify vehicles which were ... running red lights, speeding, not stopping at stop signs?

Base: National population of drivers
Unweighted N=3,044

Using the responses to the previous questions, drivers were classified as thinking photo enforcement was a **good idea** (69% of drivers) if they felt photo enforcement was a good idea to identify vehicles which were running red lights, speeding and not stopping at stop signs. Similarly, drivers were classified as thinking photo enforcement was a **bad idea** (15% of drivers) if they felt photo enforcement was a bad idea in all three cases. Drivers were classified as **both a good and bad idea** (16% of drivers) if their responses were mixed, that is, they felt the use of photo enforcement was a good idea in at least one instance but was a bad idea in at least one other instance. They were then asked why they thought it was a good, bad, or both a good and bad idea (see Tables 3-1 thru 3-3).

One in three (34%) mentioned traffic laws. Specifically, they said there would be fewer traffic violations since drivers would obey traffic laws if they thought they were being watched (18%) and that it was an additional tool for enforcement (12%). About one in

four (27%) mentioned something to do with law enforcement, specifically that fewer police would be needed for traffic enforcement (19%). An almost similar number (25%) mentioned driver related reasons, primarily that photo enforcement would increase driver awareness (19%). In addition, one in five (20%) felt that photo enforcement was a good idea because the picture would prove that the violation had taken place.

TABLE 3-1

Reasons Why Using Photo Enforcement is a Good Idea for Three Mentioned Violations by Opinion of Photo Enforcement	
<i>Qx: Why do you think it is a [good] idea to use a photo enforcement system to identify vehicles committing these violations?</i>	
<i>Base: Felt photo was a good idea in all three instances.</i>	
<i>Unweighted N=2,078</i>	
	Good Idea
Traffic Laws	34%
Fewer traffic violations/drivers will obey traffic laws and regulations	18%
Additional tool for enforcement	12%
Deter speeding	7%
Law Enforcement	27%
Need fewer police for traffic violations	19%
Frees police for other types of enforcement	9%
Driver Related Reasons	25%
Increased driver awareness	19%
Help keep bad drivers off the road	7%
Other	*
All Other Good Idea Mentions	33%
Evidence/photo proves violation	20%
Reduces accidents	9%
Reduces error/more reliable	4%
Other	2%

* Less than 0.5 percent.

- None

Totals do not add to 100% since respondents were allowed to give more than one response.

Reasons why photo enforcement is a bad idea are equally diverse (see Table 3-2). Three in ten (29%) mentioned a reason related to law enforcement primarily dealing with a preference for in-person contact and that a machine could not make an assessment of the circumstances (18%) and, to a lesser extent, a feeling that machines should not do the work of a human (12%). About one in eight (13%) were concerned about camera failure and an equal number (12%) gave a driver related reason. In addition, one in four (26%) felt photo enforcement was an invasion of privacy. Only a very small number (2%) of these drivers gave a reason in favor of photo enforcement.

TABLE 3-2

Reasons Why Using Photo Enforcement is a Bad Idea for Three Mentioned Violations by Opinion of Photo Enforcement	
<i>Qx: Why do you think it is a [bad] idea to use a photo enforcement system to identify vehicles committing these violations?</i>	
<i>Base: Felt photo was a bad idea in all three instances.</i>	
<i>Unweighted N=465</i>	
	Bad Idea
Law Enforcement	29%
Prefer in-person contact/police officer better able to assess situation	18%
Machine should not do police work	12%
Other	*
Camera Failure	13%
Camera-machine error/inaccuracy	10%
Camera- machine/failure/malfunction	3%
Other	2%
Driver Related Reasons	12%
Photographs tag, not driver	6%
Does not allow driver to explain situation	5%
Other	*
All Other Bad Idea Mentions	58%
Invasion of privacy/violation of rights/government interference	26%
Licensee must pay ticket/fine no matter who was driving	14%
Could be ineffective or unenforceable	11%
Other	12%

* Less than 0.5 percent.

- None

Totals do not add to 100% since respondents were allowed to give more than one response.

Drivers who had mixed feelings about photo enforcement gave an equal number (69%) of good or bad reasons (see Table 3-3). On the favorable side, two in five (40%) gave a reason related to traffic laws, with 28% mentioning that there would be fewer traffic violations. An additional 12% gave driver-related reasons. On the unfavorable side 12%

TABLE 3-3

Reasons Why Using Photo Enforcement is Both a Good and Bad Idea for Three Mentioned Violations by Opinion of Photo Enforcement

Qx: Why do you think it is a [both good and bad] idea to use a photo enforcement system to identify vehicles committing these violations?

Base: Felt the use of photo enforcement was a good idea in at least one instance but was a bad idea in at least one other instance.

Unweighted N=471

Good Mentions - 69%		Bad Mentions - 69%	
Traffic Laws	40%	Law Enforcement	11%
Fewer traffic violations/drivers will obey traffic laws and regulations	28%	Prefer in-person contact/police better able to assess situation	8%
Additional enforcement tool	5%	Machine should not do police work	3%
Deter speeding	9%	Other	-
Law Enforcement	5%	Camera Failure	11%
Need fewer police for traffic violations	4%	Camera-machine error/inaccuracy	10%
Frees police other types of enforcement	2%	Camera-machine/failure/malfunction	1%
Driver Related Reasons	12%	Other	1%
Increased driver awareness	8%	Driver Related Reasons	12%
Help keep bad drivers off the road	4%	Photographs tag, not driver	3%
Other	-	Does not allow driver to explain situation	9%
Other Good Idea Mentions	21%	Other	-
Evidence/photo proves violation	9%	Other Bad Idea Mentions	42%
Reduces accidents	8%	Invasion of privacy/violation of rights/government interference	9%
Reduces error/more reliable	2%	Licensee must pay ticket/fine no matter who was driving	6%
Other	2%	Could be ineffective or unenforceable	17%
		Other	15%

* Less than 0.5 percent.

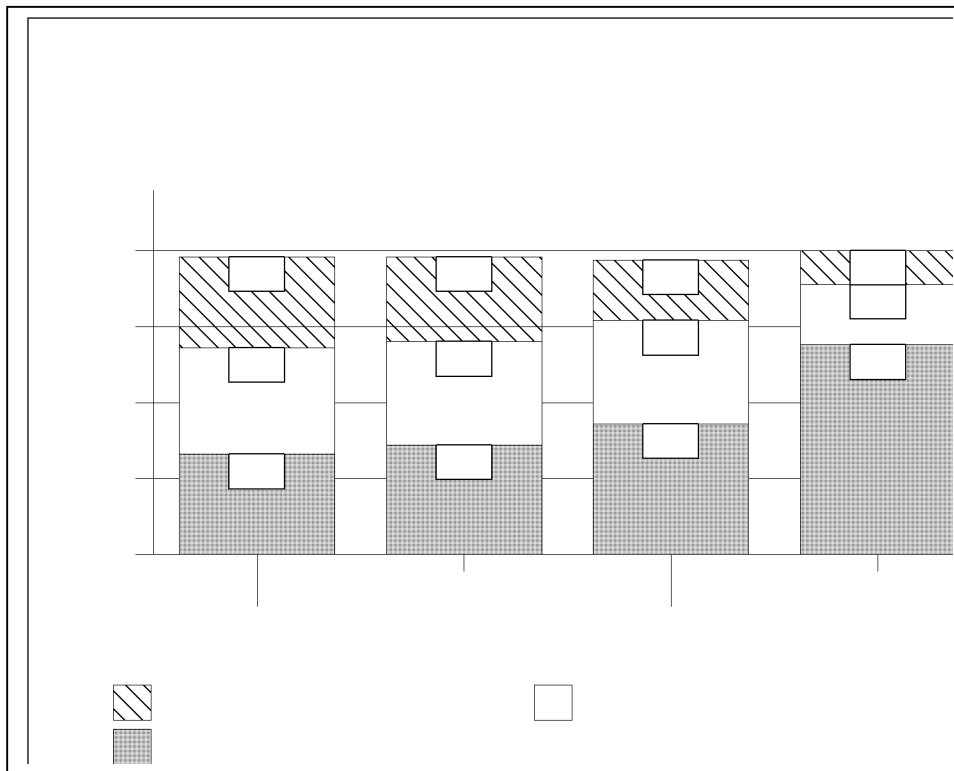
- None

Totals do not add to 100% since respondents were allowed to give more than one response.

mentioned driver-related issues — mostly that the driver has no one to explain the situation to; 11% mentioned camera failure; 11% mentioned law enforcement reasons, mostly a preference for in-person contact; and one in six (17%) suggested photo enforcement could be ineffective or unenforceable.

About two-thirds of the public finds it at least somewhat acceptable to employ photo enforcement devices at locations where, if stopped, would either cause traffic congestion (68%) or would be hazardous to either the driver or the police officer (70%). The acceptability of photo enforcement increases substantially for locations where crashes have occurred (77%) and in school zones (89%).

FIGURE 3-5



Qx: Thinking about locations where photo enforcement might be used, would you find it very acceptable, somewhat acceptable, or not at all acceptable to use it . . . where it could be hazardous to the driver or officer to stop; where stopping a vehicle could cause traffic congestion; where an accident has occurred; in school zones.

Base: National driving population
 Unweighted N=3,044

When asked, about one in seven drivers (14%) mentioned other situations where photo enforcement might be used. Most (6%) mentioned high population areas such as schools, playgrounds, hospitals, and residential areas. About the same percentage mentioned high traffic areas such as intersections, on-off ramps, and areas that experience a large number of complaints or crashes. One percent said there should be no uses other than those previously mentioned.

TABLE 3-4

Other Locations Where Photo Enforcement Might be Used

Qx: Any other places? (thinking about locations where photo enforcement might be used)
 Base: National driving population
 Unweighted N=3,044

Population Areas	6%
· Schools	1%

· Playgrounds, parks, recreational areas	1%
· Residential areas	1%
· Hospitals, clinics	1%
· Parking lots, mall entrances/exits	1%
· Other	1%
High Traffic/Merge Areas	6%
· Intersections/cross streets	3%
· Merge areas, on-off ramps, access roads	1%
· Danger zones, places with frequent complaints or accidents	1%
· High congested traffic areas (unspecified)	1%
High Speed Areas	1%
· Major highways, interstates, parkways	1%
Miscellaneous	2%
None	1%
Don't Know/No Answer	85%

Note: Percentages don't sum to 100% due to multiple responses

SUMMARY

Over two-thirds of all drivers felt it was a good idea to use photo enforcement devices to reduce speeding, not obeying stop signs and running red lights. Those who thought photo enforcement was a good idea said it would decrease the occurrence of these unsafe actions and that it would provide solid proof of the violation. Conversely, those who thought it was a bad idea in these three situations, cited privacy concerns and a preference for personal interaction. When asked about using photo enforcement in specific locations, over two-thirds felt the devices would curtail added congestion from the “pullover” scene, particularly in places where it is hazardous to stop. An even higher number of drivers supported the implementation of the photo enforcement devices in locations where crashes frequently occurred (four in five) and in school zones (nine in ten).