

Executive Summary

House Bill 2355 (2017) mandated that by 2021, all Oregon law enforcement agencies must submit data regarding officer initiated traffic and pedestrian stops to the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, so the Commission could analyze the submitted data for evidence of racial or ethnic disparities on an annual basis. To accomplish these ends, the Commission, along with the Oregon State Police and the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST), created the Oregon Statistical Transparency of Policing (STOP) Program. This is the first annual report to the Oregon Legislature by the STOP Program examining data received pursuant to HB 2355.

Since the passage of HB 2355, the STOP Program developed a standardized method for data collection, developed and offered data collection software to law enforcement agencies, and is receiving data from more than fifty Oregon law enforcement entities. As required by the Bill, this inaugural report includes results for analyses examining the largest twelve law enforcement agencies in the state. In 2020, the STOP Program will report on the 65 largest agencies in the state and by 2021 it will report on all law enforcement agencies in Oregon.

Table E1 reports descriptive statistics for the first year of stop data, which represents stops made from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, for the twelve reporting agencies. Across all agencies, the vast majority of the reported data were for traffic stops, although there was significant variation across agencies regarding the share of traffic versus pedestrian encounters. With regard to race the majority of stops in Oregon involved White individuals, which, in and of itself, is not surprising given the demographic makeup of Oregon as a whole. Overall, a little over one-fifth of stops involved a non-White individual. Finally, males were stopped more often than females and non-binary individuals.

Once the stop had been initiated, stopped individuals either were subject to no further action or merely given a warning in a little over 60 percent of stops. Other outcomes, including receiving a citation or being arrested, varied widely across agencies and are discussed in detail in the main body of the report. Finally, with regard to searches, approximately 3 percent of all stops resulted in a search of some type.

To examine the traffic and pedestrian stop data acquired by the STOP Program for racial/ethnic disparities, STOP Program researchers utilized three methods. The first method, which is used to examine the initial decision to stop an individual, was the Veil of Darkness Analysis (VOD). The VOD Analysis takes advantage of natural variations in daylight and darkness throughout the year and is based on the assumption that it is easier for an officer to discern race/ethnicity during the day when it is light versus the night when it is dark. Accordingly, the VOD Analysis compares stop rates for minority individuals to those for White individuals during the time

Table E1.
Descriptive Statistics for
Aggregate Tier 1 Stop Data

Variable	Percent
Traffic Stop	97.2%
Race/Ethnicity	
White	77.4%
Black	5.1%
Hispanic	12.1%
Asian/PI	3.4%
Native American	0.6%
Middle Eastern	1.4%
Gender	
Male	66.5%
Female	33.1%
Non-Binary	0.5%
Age	
Under 21	10.1%
21 – 29	24.4%
30 – 39	24.8%
40 - 49	16.8%
50 and Older	23.9%
Stop Disposition	
None	2.9%
Warning	57.3%
Citation	37.0%
Juvenile Summons	0.0%
Arrest	2.9%
Search Conducted	2.9%

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windows surrounding sunrise and sunset. If, as demonstrated by the statistics that result from the VOD Analysis, minority individuals are more likely to be stopped in the daylight when race/ethnicity is easier to detect, then there would be evidence of a disparity.

The second analytical method employed by the STOP Program is the Predicted Disposition Analysis, which examines matched groups using a statistical technique called propensity score analysis to explore whether disparities exist in stop outcomes (i.e., citations, searches, or arrests). If, after matching on all available data points in the stop data (e.g., time of day and day of the week the stop was made, reason for the stop, gender, age), minority individuals are either cited, searched, or arrested more often than similarly situated White individuals, then there would be evidence of a disparity.

Finally, the STOP Program utilized the KPT Hit Rate Analysis, which compares relative rates of successful searches (i.e., those resulting in the seizure of contraband) across racial/ethnic groups. It is based on the assumption that if search decisions by officers are made based on race/ethnicity neutral criteria, then success rates should be similar, if not identical, across different racial/ethnic categories. If, however, search success rates differ and the search success rates for minority individuals are significantly lower than those reported for White individuals, then there would be evidence of a disparity.

To determine if disparities identified in this report warrant additional in-depth analysis and/or technical assistance from the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST), STOP Program researchers reviewed the results of each of the three analyses conducted on the STOP Program data. For each individual analysis, an estimated disparity must meet the 95 percent confidence level for it to be statistically significant. Further, following best practices, for a law enforcement agency to be identified as one requiring further analysis as well as DPSST technical assistance, it must be identified as having a statistically significant disparity in two of the three analytical tests performed on the STOP data.

Using the above mentioned analyses and thresholds, the STOP Program identified one agency that had statistically significant results across two of the tests performed on the data: Portland Police Bureau. Specifically, results indicated that Portland Police Bureau had disparities in the Predicted Disposition Analysis with regard to searches and arrests involving Black individuals and in the KPT Hit Rate with regard to searches of Black individuals. Thus, it is recommended that Portland Police Bureau be examined in greater detail by STOP Program researchers and receive technical assistance from DPSST.