

Abstract

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Project Title: Operational Research Project for Anti-Drunk Driving

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Substantial proportion (44%) of traffic injury cases seeking emergency services in public hospitals had blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.1% or more. To reduce alcohol related traffic injuries and deaths, a law was enacted setting criminal per se legal blood alcohol limit at 0.05% in 1994.

However, not until 1997, an active public education program has been undertaken at national scale to raise awareness against drink driving and to support law enforcement. This includes dissemination of knowledge through multiple channels e.g., roadside posters; stickers on the back of vehicles; sporadic radio and TV programs or spots; public announcements; the press reports. In 1999, highly visible sobriety check points have been set up as a measure for law enforcement.

In order to systematically assess the campaign, multiple methods were used to collect relevant data. This report focused on the outcomes of the campaign based on hospital surveillance data in the emergency room of 4 public hospitals during Jan 2000 to December 2001 on alternate months.

It was found that the campaign succeeded in raising public awareness and support for law enforcement against drink driving. However, the proportion of road victims with illegal BAC seeking emergency care has not declined during the study period taking place after 17 months of the campaign.

Limitation of the campaign was scanty number of sobriety check points. As a result, it failed to induce sufficient degree of attitudes and practices conducive to driving without drinking. Barriers to adequate implementation of the check points were inappropriate plan of actions, insufficient allocation of resources and cumbersome procedure of prosecution. These altogether reflected absence of strong political will to curb drink driving. Hence, it is recommended that civil society movements should be strengthened in order to mobilize political commitment. Training of responsible personnel in planning and deploying law enforcement against drink driving is also recommended. Future studies to identify new determinants of drink driving behaviors are worthwhile in order to design alternatives to law enforcement. In addition, macro policy interventions might be explored to curb alcohol consumption.

Keywords: (3-5 keywords)

Drink driving, law enforcement, Thailand, evaluation