



University Transportation Research Center
RFP Cover Sheet

Title: **Review of NJ Point System**
Proposal Number: 2008-16
Sponsor: NJDOT
Date Issued: September 13, 2007
Pre-Proposal Meeting: Contact NJDOT by Sept. 20, 2007
Draft Budgets Due: Send to Camille Kamga by October 25, 2007
RFP Closing Date: October 31, 2007

If you plan to apply:

1. Please contact Camille Crichton-Sumners (camille.crichton-sumners@dot.state.nj.us) or Stephanie Nock (609-530-5637) to request a pre-proposal meeting, and so that you will receive information about this meeting if it is held. *This meeting will be your only opportunity to ask questions about this proposal.*

2. If you plan to submit a proposal through UTRC, please notify us by email at nadia@utrc2.org and ckamga@utrc2.org. Please indicate whether you are open to teaming up with faculty at other universities on this project.

Proposal submission guidelines:

Please contact Camille Kamga (ckamga@utrc2.org, 212-650-8087) to discuss submission logistics. After UTRC confirms that the proposals' budgets meet UTRC and NJDOT guidelines, we can either provide you with a UTRC cover sheet, or you can send us the printed proposals for hand-delivery to NJDOT.

Proposals must be prepared in accordance with NJDOT's Information and Instructions for Preparing Proposals. Please visit: <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/refdata/research/pdf/techpropresproj.pdf>

For questions about budget preparation, contact: Camille Kamga, ckamga@utrc2.org

NJDOT has not specified a budget or timeline for this project. Please note that matching funds up to \$50k are available from UTRC for projects that are relevant to UTRC's theme of "Planning and Managing Regional Transportation Systems in a Changing World." Decisions about the availability of these funds will be made pursuant to the relevance of the topic and the volume of requests.

New Jersey Department of Transportation
Bureau of Research
RESEARCH PROJECT
Scope and Request for Proposals
2008 Program

Date of RFP
August 15, 2007

Closing Date
October 15, 2007

Review of NJ Point System

Project 2008-16

(Proposals must be prepared in accordance with NJDOT's *Information and Instructions for Preparing Proposals*. Please visit: <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/refdata/research/pdf/techpropresproj.pdf>

Revised Proposal Evaluation Forms are available for your information on the website

Proposals will be based on the merit of the information contained in the proposal. Budgets will be evaluated separately. Please place three (3) copies the budget for this project in a separate sealed envelope.

Comment [T1]: The proposal evaluation form has been revised. Additional consideration will be allowed for joint initiatives amongst universities

1. RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT, BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Comment [T2]: Previously two individual sections.

This proposal is the next logical step after we complete analysis of the impact of plea agreements with no points on removing bad drivers from the roadways.

MVC is seeking opportunities to either "fix" the current points system or adopt a new monitoring system to replace or operate concurrently with the traditional points system. It is understood that laws have been enacted and court practices have compromised MVC's ability to effectively "manage" bad drivers in the current environment.

There is a perception that N.J.S.A. 39:4-97.2, "unsafe operator", which created a new traffic violation, unsafe operation of a motor vehicle has resulted in an unintended impact on the value of the New Jersey driver "point system".

Courts and lawyers are aggressively promoting the "unsafe operator" ticket plea alternative for drivers who want to avoid points. Thus, a driver who is near a threshold point for punitive action based on points may choose the "unsafe operator" to avoid sanctions. Because a third "unsafe operator" results in points, creative lawyers work with overwhelmed prosecutors to use the cell phone as a no point offense.

A driver who would have reached 12 points and be proposed for suspension might now use the "unsafe operator" plea to avoid 4 or more points. It is common for a prosecutor to explain the "unsafe operator" option. There is also evidence that most all drivers making the effort to dispute traffic violations are offered downgrades in lieu of a trial. (Plea Arrangement, 2004) The "unsafe operator" plea agreement results in no points and no sanction by MVC. In effect, the New Jersey point system has an actual threshold to trigger suspension closer to 18 or 20 points when a driver uses two "unsafe operator" pleas.

In one case, a driver who had a 90 mph speeding ticket and later had two "unsafe operator" pleas that were followed by a cell-phone plea ended up killing three people while intoxicated. The driver was described in the press as having had only one speeding ticket.

In May 2004, approximately 17,000 suspended drivers had at least one active suspension for accumulating points or other driving-related reasons. The potential exists that the number of suspended drivers would have been much larger if the "unsafe operator" plea option was not available. (Task Force 2006)

The volume of suspension hearings and attendance at driver improvement courses is also down due to the "unsafe operator" plea.

The Motor Vehicles Affordability and Fairness Task Force, a group of public and government leaders, recommended that key elements of the current system need reform and made specific recommendation as follows. (Task Force 2006)

Conduct a comprehensive review of New Jersey's current point system, program of administrative sanctions and driver improvement programs to determine the effectiveness of the programs relative to ensuring highway safety.

- a. Evaluate the effect of plea bargaining motor vehicle offenses on highway safety. Special emphasis should be given to assessing the impact of N.J.S.A. 39:4-97.2, which created a new traffic violation, unsafe operation of a motor vehicle, for which no points are assessed for first and second offenses. This statute is frequently used by municipal courts to downgrade point carrying moving violations as part of plea agreements.
- b. Examine the effect of various administrative actions taken by MVC (e.g., point advisory notices, mandatory driver improvement programs, notices of scheduled suspension, and license suspension) on recidivism rates and highway safety.
- c. Review MVC sponsored Driver Improvement Programs and Defensive Driver programs approved by MVC but offered by other organizations to rationalize program content, requirements and point reduction benefits.
- d. Investigate programs used in other states to monitor driver behavior to determine if they are more or less effective than New Jersey's current program.

Studies of plea bargaining and the effectiveness of MVC driver improvement programs are currently underway and will support efforts to rehabilitate the state's driver programs. Initial findings suggest that early intervention and less forceful actions may have long term benefits in improving driver behavior.

AAMVA proposes a progressive approach to driver management that puts a focus on "current" behavior as a reflection of a driver's ability to improve over time. Using a sliding window to track and react to convictions/crashes as the factors leading to remedial action. As example, events trigger a progressive series of events from warning letter, on-line classes, restrictions, suspensions, etc. (AAMVA, 1997)

AAMVA, 1997 - Model Driver Improvement Program Retrieved 12/21/06

<http://www.aamva.org/KnowledgeCenter/Driver/At-Risk/ModelDriverImprovementPrograms.htm>

Motor Vehicles Affordability And Fairness Task Force Final Report - February 2006 - Prepared By: Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center Retrieved 12/21/06

<http://www.state.nj.us/mvc/PressReleases/archives/2006/reportAFTF.pdf>

North Jersey News Article, 2003, Retrieved 12/21/06

<http://www.northjersey.com/page.php?qstr=eXJpcnk3ZjcxN2Y3dnFIZUVFeXkyJmZnYmVsN2Y3dnFIZUVFeXk2NDI4MTM4>

Plea Arrangement, 2004 Retrieved 12/21/06 <http://lee.org/blog/archives/2004/12/16/how-to-beat-a-speeding-ticket-in-new-jersey/>

The primary benefits of the study will be creation of a research methodology to evaluate past history and to enable comparable studies in the future. Such research will establish a base line for how effective the New Jersey Driver Management/Driver Review process functions.

The research should produce a summary of the current state of the NJ Point System, as a complement to the current research project looking at the impact of plea agreements with no points and its impact on removing bad drivers from the roadways that can serve as a reference to improve the existing legislation, MVC regulations and expand the current system of MVC sanctions for bad driving to something that results in significant improvements in the behavior of bad drivers.

A reference document for use by those interested in improving driver safety that can be cited as an independent review of the current state. When a bad driver has again maimed or caused the death of others, the study can be referenced as a call for change and improvement to the current system.

This research should go beyond a review of literature and produce a model that compares the current state of points to different systems to monitor and manage drivers based on “events”. As example, if we required drivers with two “events” in a 12 month period to attend a DIP or take an on-line survey, what would we find? The model should allow us to compare the current profile of drivers with traditional points to an event driven system similar to the AAMVA driver improvement program.

2. Tasks

[Provide a listing of appropriate general tasks divided into phases based on types of work (e.g., laboratory, field) or by year (e.g., year 1, year 2) or other appropriate milestones]

Comment [T3]: The Bureau of Research will not suggest tasks appropriate for the research study. Principal investigator must develop this list based upon the research need and the determined approach.

The NJDOT is seeking the insight of proposal responders on how best to achieve the research objectives. Proposers are expected to describe a research effort that can realistically be accomplished as expeditiously as possible. Proposals must present the proposers' current thinking in sufficient detail to demonstrate their understanding of the problem and the soundness of their approach for conducting the required research.

PHASE I – Literature Search

Conduct a literature search of the current state of the practice.

After the award of the project, a more comprehensive literature search should be conducted. At the completion of this literature search, the PI will make a presentation to the Research Project Selection and Implementation Panel to discuss their findings and to discuss the appropriate research approach.

PHASE II – Research Approach and Anticipated Results

Clear description of how you will solve the problem and implement anticipated findings; Work may be divided into phases (e.g., Laboratory, Field or Year 1, Year 2) as necessary to clarify tasks. Exit Criteria must be developed during this phase.

Comment [T4]: New

Comment [T5]: A method of "process control" consisting of a collection of predefined conditions or standards, against which a process or output is compared to ensure that it conforms to acceptable standards of quality.

3. Implementation and Training Plan

The PI must meet with the Research Project Selection and Implementation Panel (RPSIP) and other NJDOT units to present the findings and as appropriate train these personnel in the use the project results.

The PI will develop an implementation plan as per the guidelines provided by NJDOT Research Bureau.

Comment [T6]: Implementation Survey is available on the Bureau of Research Website and through Research Project Managers.

4. Deliverables: [List of minimum deliverables necessary to complete the project]

- Presentation of Summary of Literature Search Results
- Discussion to Support and Refine the Project Tasks
- Project work plan.
- Technical Memorandum on the survey results
- Technical memorandum on the measures that are working or not working
- Technical memorandum on actions taken
- Interim Status reports suitable for Senior Leadership if required
- Quarterly Reports, and

- Final report with appropriate tables, graphs and chart in hard copy version, PDF file format, Word, and on CD ROM. Two copies plus one per RSIP member of each presentation, technical memorandum, draft final report and Final Report (plus 10 copies). The Final Report and Tech Brief are due three (3) months before the end date of the project to allow time for review by the Research Project Selection and Implementation Panel.

5. Contract Time:

The PI must provide anticipated research study duration based on the proposed tasks. Please include 3 months for review and revision of the final report. Final Acceptance will be granted upon receipt of ten copies of the approved final report.

Comment [T7]: New. Research Bureau Staff will no longer provide suggested durations in RFP's. Based on the problem need Principal Investigators must recommend an appropriate project duration which will provide desired results in an expeditious fashion.

6. Contacts:

A Pre-proposal meeting will be scheduled with interested parties after the RFPs are distributed to refine the objectives and deliverables and to promote a better understanding of the research needs. Questions on this topic **shall not** be directed to any Research Project Manager, Research Customer, or any other NJDOT person. All questions and answers will be addressed **during this meeting**. Contact Camille Crichton-Summers (Camille.CrichtonSummers@dot.state.nj.us) on or before September 1, 2007 to confirm your participation in this meeting.

Comment [T8]: A final acceptance memo will be issued for each project once the final report is approved and the designated number of copies are delivered to the Bureau of Research.

Comment [T9]: The pre proposal meeting, will be the only opportunity to ask questions regarding the proposed study.

7. Deadline

Proposals (10 single-bound copies) are due at NJDOT Bureau of Research no later than 4:00 p.m. October 15, 2007

This is a firm deadline, and extensions simply are not granted.

Authorization to Begin Work: January 1, 2008--estimated

8. Delivery Instructions:

For private, paid messenger services such as Federal Express, DHL, UPS, etc., or for hand-carried deliveries:

2008 PROPOSAL-NJDOT
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