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April 28, 2004

City Council  
Sacramento, California

Honorable Members in Session

**SUBJECT:** 2002-03 DATA COLLECTION PROJECT RESULTS

**LOCATION AND COUNCIL DISTRICT:** Citywide

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the attached Resolution to:

- Direct the Sacramento Police Department to continue to seek grant funding to continue the data collection project for two years beyond Fiscal Year 04; and
- Support the new direction the project has taken in regard to the analysis and use of the Community Racial Profiling Commission.

**CONTACT PERSONS:** Albert Nájera, Chief of Police, 433-0800  
Rick Braziel, Deputy Chief of Police, 433-0800

**FOR COUNCIL MEETING OF:** May 11, 2004

**SUMMARY:**

In February 2000, City Council approved a Police Department proposal to develop a study based upon the collection and analysis of demographic information related to traffic stops. This staff report summarizes the third year (FY02-03) data collection report and activities related to the Department's efforts to address the national issue of racially biased policing.

*The mission of the Sacramento Police Department is to work in partnership with the Community to protect life and property, solve neighborhood problems, and enhance the quality of life in our City.*

**COMMITTEE/COMMISSION ACTION:** None

**BACKGROUND:**

Beginning in February 2000, the Police Department began pro-actively addressing the national issue of racially biased policing by implementing a comprehensive strategy to collect data and to involve the Sacramento community in discussions regarding the issue.

Following presentation of the report prepared by the consultant (University of Southern California) in FY00-01, City Council directed the Police Department to continue with data collection and analysis for an additional two years to ensure continuity and credibility of the data. An advisory committee was also formed to assist with discussions involving the analysis. Analysis for FY01-02 sought to bring the community further into the discussion and to provide clearer explanations of the data as compared to the analysis for FY00-01. The report presented for FY01-02 provided greater detail of the situational, community, and crime related issues that contributed to disproportionate traffic stops. The report also made recommendations as a result of the analysis that were consistent with national guidelines that were developed to address racially biased policing beyond data collection and analysis.

The report for FY02-03 yields results consistent with the report for FY01-02. The conclusions include:

- Among drivers in Sacramento, African-Americans are stopped more often (in proportion to their representation in the population of the city of Sacramento) than white drivers;
- Hispanic drivers are stopped no more often than whites, but when stopped are asked to exit their cars, subject to search, and detained for longer periods of time more often than whites;
- Asian/Pacific Islander drivers are stopped and detained less often than whites.<sup>1</sup>

**Highlights**

In addition to its commitment to ongoing data collection and analysis, the Sacramento Police Department has continued to serve as pioneers in the evolving study of racially biased policing. Following are a few highlights over the past year:

1. In June 2003, the Police Department hosted an Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) funded workshop for several agencies that were also collecting and analyzing data. Featured presenters included national practitioners and researchers who are considered experts in the evolving study of racially biased policing.
2. During the 2002-03 study year, the Police Department tested a hand-held unit to capture traffic stop data. Unfortunately, the unit did not work as well as anticipated, however, the Department's mobile data computers will be reconfigured to capture the information. This will eliminate the need for Scantron forms and allow information to be downloaded in real time.
3. In November 2003, Chief Nájera presented Sacramento's approach to addressing racially biased policing at the Third National Symposium on Racial Profiling in Chicago, Illinois, hosted by Northwestern University.

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<sup>1</sup> Vehicle Stop Data Collection Report 2002-2003

4. In February 2004, the Police Department hosted the COPS funded Western Regional Racially Biased Policing Summit. This very successful day and a half Summit attracted nearly 200 participants from law enforcement agencies, research institutions, civil rights agencies, and communities across the nation. Featured speakers included Keenan Keller from Congressmen Conyers office (which is authoring new racial profiling legislation), Chief Charles Moose (who spoke of his experience as chief during the 2002 Washington D.C. sniper incidents) and Rafi Ron (who gave an international perspective on profiling, particularly as it is associated with terrorism). The Police Department received numerous compliments from participants and presenters for such a well-organized and informative conference. In particular, participants thought the summit should have been longer. If given the opportunity, the Police Department would be pleased to host another summit.
5. The Police Department recently previewed and purchased an interactive training module from the Simon Wiesenthal's Museum of Tolerance, Tools for Tolerance. Staff will be trained to facilitate interactive training and discussions on racially biased policing to law enforcement agencies and community groups. Meanwhile, the Police Department has continued to train officers on the state mandated training for racial profiling.
6. In April 2004, the Community Racial Profiling Commission was approved and formed as a Council-appointed commission. This fifteen-member commission will report its progress to City Council. Membership includes three standing positions (Deputy Chief of Police, Office of Police Accountability, and the Sacramento Police Officers Association), eight residents who will represent their council districts, and four members who may be appointed at-large. Although the Commission has yet to appoint members, it is anticipated that the Commission will begin meeting in early Summer 2004 and one of its first tasks will be to assist in the selection of the new researcher.

#### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Expenditures for activities associated with the Department's effort to address racially biased policing have been funded through grants. Staff is actively seeking grant funds to continue to support its efforts that would include the implementation of a contract for services with a new researcher who will evaluate data for the next few years.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

This report concerns administrative activities that will not have any significant effect on the environment, and that do not constitute a "project" as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) [CEQA Guidelines Sections 15061(b)(3); 15378(b)(2)]

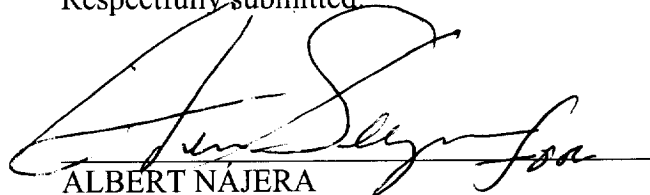
#### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:**

Support of the data collection study is consistent with the City Council's strategic goal to enhance and preserve neighborhoods and to establish and strengthen community and regional partnerships.

**ESBD CONSIDERATIONS:**

Goods and services purchased for this project are in accordance with the Emerging and Small Business Development program requirements.

Respectfully submitted:



ALBERT NAJERA  
Chief of Police

RECOMMENDATION APPROVED:



ROBERT P. THOMAS  
City Manager

AN:tdj  
REF: COP 4-31

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# RESOLUTION NO.

ADOPTED BY THE SACRAMENTO CITY COUNCIL

ON DATE OF \_\_\_\_\_

## RESOLUTION REGARDING THE 2002-03 RACIAL PROFILING DATA COLLECTION PROJECT RESULTS

WHEREAS the City of Sacramento desires to provide the best, unbiased professional service to every segment of the community;

NOW THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO THAT THE CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZES THE CITY MANAGER, OR A DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE, TO:

- Direct the Sacramento Police Department to continue to seek grant funding to continue the data collection project for two years beyond Fiscal Year 04; and
- Support the new direction the project has taken in regard to the analysis and use of the Community Racial Profiling Commission.

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY CLERK

\_\_\_\_\_  
**FOR CITY CLERK USE ONLY**

RESOLUTION NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_

**Police Vehicle Stops in Sacramento, California:**  
*Third of Three Reports*

Howard P. Greenwald, Ph.D.  
Professor of Management and Policy  
School of Policy, Planning, and Development  
University of Southern California

April 19, 2004

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# Executive Summary

## DRAFT REPORT

### ON

## POLICE VEHICLE STOPS IN SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

This document presents findings from the University of Southern California's continuing study of race and vehicle stops made by officers of the Sacramento Police Department. The present report is the third and final of three planned by the University of Southern California (USC) under a contract from the Sacramento Police Department.

Data presented in this report are based primarily upon records of 34,839 vehicle stops completed by Sacramento police officers during a year-long study period, from July 1, 2002, to June 30, 2003. Extensive use has also been made of data from the 2000 US Census and police department records of suspect descriptions and parolee and probationer residence locations. Supplementary data from the US Census and the Sacramento Police Department provide a context for racial patterns observed in vehicle stops.

During study period reported here, members of the USC team and officers from the Sacramento Police Department met regularly to review preliminary findings. Unlike previous years, the USC team did not share preliminary results with community members. Formerly, a Traffic Stop Analysis Advisory Committee, whose members included diverse community representatives, provided regular input. During the study period reported here, the Committee was in a state of organizational transition, and did not meet. Analysis of the data, however, has made use of several suggestions made by community members in previous years. The USC team accepts full responsibility for the results presented here.

The study's key objective has been to assess the degree to which, between July 1, 2002, and June 30, 2003, "racially-biased policing" or "racial profiling" may have taken place in vehicle stops carried out by Sacramento police. Racial profiling is understood according to the following definition:

*"Any police-initiated activity that relies on the race, ethnicity or national origin of an individual rather than the behavior of an individual or information that leads the police to a particular individual who has been identified as being or having been engaged in criminal activity. Race, ethnicity, or national origin can be used only as a descriptive factor along with others, but cannot be given undue weight."*

Analysis of data collected in this study clearly indicates that Sacramento police officers stop African-American drivers more often than their representation in the driving-age population would suggest. This observation, however, does not mean that officers of the Sacramento Police Department stop drivers only because they are African-American. As in the first two reports produced from this study (October, 2001, and January, 2003), several observations suggest that the Sacramento Police Department does not differentially stop, detain, or search



members of any racial group due to their race alone. Reasons for this conclusion include the following:

- Relative to their percentages in the population, people reported as crime suspects by citizens, and who thus risk being stopped by police, are more likely to be African-American.
- African-American officers are about as likely as non-African-American officers to stop African-American drivers
- Officers in vehicles with cameras were found to stop minorities no less frequently than officers in vehicles without cameras.

These basic facts, which are similar to those reported in 2001 and 2003, also emerge from the third year study:

- While African-Americans are over-represented among individuals stopped by Sacramento police, Asian/Pacific Islanders and whites are underrepresented; Hispanics are stopped in the approximate proportion in which they are found in the driving-age population.
- African-Americans and Hispanics are more likely to be searched when stopped than whites.
- When stopped, African-Americans and Hispanics are more likely to be subject to long detention (thirty minutes or longer) than whites, almost always due to a search, arrest, or tow.
- The fact that African-Americans are over-represented both among suspects and victims of crime, as well as among probationers and parolees, offers a potential explanation of overrepresentation of African-Americans among drivers who are stopped.

The reader should bear several technical points in mind while reviewing this report's findings. Proportions of specific minority groups among drivers stopped are compared with the percentages these minorities represent in the City of Sacramento's population over 15 years of age according to the 2000 US Census. But the census constitutes only an approximation of the individuals driving within the City of Sacramento during the study period. The census may differ from the driving population because:

- Not all Sacramento residents age 15 and over drive or have vehicles
- The census undercounts the population, and is believed to undercount minorities by the greatest magnitude.

Another source of error may be that drivers of different races have different likelihood of committing traffic violations: there exists at this writing no definitive information on inter-racial differences in obedience to traffic laws among drivers on city streets.

The number of stops reported in the final study year (34,839) differs from that reported in both the first year (36,854) and the second year (24,451). The diminution in the second

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study year was explained, in part, by underreporting of stops by officers. In the final study year, the number of stops reported approximated the number for the first year.

As in the first and second study years, the research reported here found that the greatest overrepresentation of minorities occurred in “high-discretion” stops. Officers often carry out such stops as pretexts for investigation of criminal activity. Almost without doubt, a substantial number of African-American drivers who are not connected with criminal activity are stopped by officers as part of patrol or investigative work. Experienced as obtrusive and even accusatory episodes, such stops promote a sense of alienation between communities and police.

The public must decide whether policing policies which lead to investigative or “pretext” stops, those in which African-Americans are most likely to be represented, are worthy of their costs in terms of inconvenience and emotional consequences for law-abiding drivers. Police officers must receive training and encouragement to reduce the challenge to privacy and dignity often experienced by law-abiding individuals when stopped.

# Overview

In 2000, the University of Southern California (USC) School of Policy, Planning, and Development began a study for the Sacramento Police Department to determine: (1) whether vehicle stops made by officers of the Department over-represent minority drivers; (2) where and under what conditions over-representation of minorities is likely to take place; and, (3) whether any overrepresentation of minorities among drivers stopped in Sacramento reflects racial profiling or racially-biased policing. This work has also sought to determine whether minority drivers are more often subject to intrusive procedures associated with stops. These include requests that drivers and passengers exit the car, vehicle searches, and stops lasting longer than usual for a particular type of detention. The City of Sacramento and the USC have undertaken this work as a pro-active step toward addressing the national issue of "racial profiling." The present document represents findings obtained in the third year of a three-year study.

"Racial profiling" and "racially-biased policing" are generally understood to mean law enforcement activities (e.g., detentions, arrests, searches) that are inappropriately initiated on the basis of race. The Sacramento Police Department has a policy that expressly prohibits bias-based policing. Racial profiling and racially-biased policing are recognizable by overrepresentation of minorities among drivers stopped by police officers in a manner which cannot be explained by traffic patterns, area demographics, or police practices strictly intended to control crime in particular communities.

Procedures used in the research reported here included the following:

- Compiling computer files including data on vehicle stops, police officer characteristics, area demographics, suspect description broadcasts, and crime report demographics.
- Performing data analysis to see whether apparent overrepresentation of minorities in vehicle stops can be explained by neighborhood-level crime-relevant demographics.
- Determining whether members of minority groups who are stopped experience a greater likelihood of intrusive procedures such as longer-than-average stops, requests to exit the car, and searches.

The research team was headed by Professor Howard P. Greenwald and included USC personnel Richard Callahan and Paul Danczyk. During the project's first two years, activities of the project team included meeting with police and citizens, directly observing police officers at work, making independent observations of traffic, and periodically discussing observations with the Police Department's leadership to obtain their comments and suggestions for additional analyses.

The present report contains analysis of data obtained between 1 July 2002 and 30 June 2003.

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# What Are Racial Profiling and Racially Biased Policing?

The data on police stops collected for this report must be interpreted according to conceptions of acceptable and unacceptable police practices regarding race. Although this study was originally framed in terms of “racial profiling,” the term has fallen into widespread disfavor among police and citizens. “Racially-biased policing” appears to be applicable to a broader range of activities than “racial profiling.”

## THE “RACIAL PROFILING” CONCEPT

Racial profiling is a term most often associated with vehicle stops by police officers. The term originates from policies historically developed for interception of illicit drugs. The practice was said to be intensely employed on interstate routes in the eastern United States known to be used for drug distribution. According to alleged profiling policies, race was a key criterion in determining which cars were stopped. The practice of racial profiling became controversial as members of the public came to believe that race was being used as the predominant or sole criterion according to which drivers were stopped. Racial profiling of this kind was said to result in numerous stops and searches of innocent people, perceived by many as intrusive and humiliating.

Today, observers of law enforcement often refer to racial profiling as a pattern of police behavior, deliberate or accidental, in which contact with a citizen is initiated primarily because of the citizen’s race. The concept of profiling may also include nationality, age, sexual orientation, gender, religion, or disability.

As currently viewed by analysts, the central feature of racial profiling is its use of race as the predominant motivation for stopping, questioning, searching, or detaining a citizen. A US Department of Justice publication defines racial profiling as:

Any police-initiated action that relies on the race, ethnicity, or national origin rather than the behavior of an individual or information that leads the police to a particular individual who has been identified as being, or having been, engaged in criminal activity.<sup>1</sup>

A University of Minnesota study arrives at a highly similar definition.<sup>2</sup>

It is noteworthy that both the federal and University of Minnesota definitions characterize racial profiling as a practice which “relies on” race rather than using it exclusively for deciding to initiate a citizen encounter. It would appear that many more police officers “rely upon” race – that is, use it as a factor of predominant importance — rather than employ race as the sole criterion for stopping a citizen. Racial profiling according to this standard is more inclusive than the “sole reason” test.

## **“RACIALLY-BIASED POLICING” AND THE “APPROPRIATENESS” TEST**

More recent thinking about race and law enforcement has come to reflect the complexity involved in a police officer’s decision to initiate an encounter with a specific citizen. The term “racially biased policing” goes beyond the criterion of sole or predominant reliance upon race in initiating police action. A recent Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) document states that racially-biased policing occurs when “law enforcement inappropriately considers race or ethnicity in deciding with whom and how to intervene in an enforcement capacity.”

This definition is more flexible than the traditional definitions of racial profiling. As considered by PERF in its discussion of racially-based policing, sole use of race and reliance upon race are set aside in favor of appropriateness of race as the test of whether bias does or does not exist. Emerging from this discussion is the possibility that a police officer may use race as an important – though not exclusive — reason for stopping a citizen. The PERF document cites these instances as examples of conditions under which race is an appropriate criterion for helping identify an individual to approach or question:

- A white college student observed making a late-night visit to an inner-city apartment building at which drug trafficking is known to occur
- A Hispanic observed exchanging goods for cash in the vicinity of a school whose students have reported gun sales carried out by a Hispanic individual

The document explicitly excludes the following case from the criterion of appropriateness:

- A poorly dressed African-American male seen walking through an upper-class, white neighborhood.

Initiating an encounter due, in part, to a citizen’s race, is appropriate only when the total picture indicates that people of the specific race, at a specific location, and at a specific time, might be considered suspicious for a clearly identifiable act.

Generally, the PERF document indicates the appropriateness of race as a criterion for initiating an encounter with a citizen as a situation in which “trustworthy, locally relevant information links a person or persons to a particular unlawful (incident or incidents).” This criterion is consistent with the theories of probable cause and reasonable suspicion appearing in the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the US Constitution and subsequent, legal interpretation of these amendments.

Under this rule, it would appear that a police officer may use race as a reason to stop a citizen if race is a feature of the totality of crime patterns in a locality. In the third instance cited by PERF, the poorly-dressed African-American male cannot be considered suspicious for an identifiable crime. If it were the case, though, that a rash of burglaries involving African-American suspects had recently occurred in the neighborhood where he was seen, then police might well be justified in stopping him.

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Stopping a driver who fits a suspect description is the most obvious application of the “appropriateness” principle. But the principle implies that race may be used as a criterion in other situations as well, when, in combination with other factors, race suggests reason for suspicion. Suspicion may be justified, for example, regarding a driver whose race is that which predominates among perpetrators of a widely-observed crime, and who is observed in an area in which the crime frequently takes place and at a time of day or night when the crime typically occurs.

#### **THE “SACRAMENTO COMMUNITY DEFINITION”**

Considerable controversy has surrounded attempts to define racially biased policing or racial profiling. In discussion of the first study report, many participants expressed unease with definitions emerging from the national debate, such as that of PERF. In early 2002, the Sacramento Police Department convened a retreat involving both police officers and individuals active in minority and law enforcement issues. The participants were presented with several definitions of racial profiling, and asked to select the definition they believed best or to formulate an original alternative. Although there was not unanimous agreement, consensus emerged around the following definition of racial profiling:

*Any police-initiated activity that relies on the race, ethnicity or national origin of an individual rather than the behavior of an individual or information that leads the police to a particular individual who has been identified as being or having been engaged in criminal activity. Race, ethnicity, or national origin, can be used only as a descriptive factor along with others, but cannot be given undue weight.*

The first sentence in the consensus definition will be recognized as that cited above by the US Department of Justice. The second sentence was added by the retreat participants to clarify when race might appropriately be used in the decision to stop a driver.

#### **APPLICATION TO STUDY DATA**

Findings from this or other studies that demonstrate an observed overrepresentation of minority drivers among those stopped do not necessarily reflect racial profiling or racially-biased policing stemming from department policy or an individual officer’s motivation. An observed overrepresentation of this kind might reflect greater likelihood among members of a particular race of committing violent or property crime. The stopping of individuals of this race may be said to result from “information (leading) the police to a particular individual,” even if the individual actually stopped may not be the one (or one of the ones) sought. This criterion would not justify a practice by police officers of stopping people of a given race just because others of that race commit crimes. The Sacramento Community Definition, on the contrary, specifies that race be only one factor that leads police officers to a given individual.

Unless the Sacramento Community Definition is interpreted with the utmost strictness, observed overrepresentation of minorities among stopped drivers cannot in itself be interpreted as racial profiling if the representation of minorities correlates with patterns of crime

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incidence. Rather, such a correlation would suggest that police officers work in a manner consistent with “community policing” principles or in a “mission-driven” or “consumer-oriented” fashion. Responsive police departments deploy officers to areas whose citizens or representatives request resources to apprehend criminals. High-crime areas are often minority areas, and the predominance of minorities among victims of crime is well known.<sup>4</sup> Overrepresentation of minorities among drivers stopped might be an undesired but inevitable consequence of appropriate police activity.

Potential correlation of minority overrepresentation among drivers who were stopped during the study period with local crime patterns receives significant attention in analysis and interpretation of the data. Assuming that driving at a particular time or place constitutes an element of individual “behavior,” observed overrepresentation of a minority should be considered an outcome of racially-biased policing only if that overrepresentation occurs:

- outside areas in which large numbers of crimes are shown to be perpetrated by that minority;
- during hours in which the crime or crimes in question are low in incidence.
- in a proportion significantly higher than local criminal activity is observed by members of the minority group.

# Research Methods

## **Data Collection Procedures**

This study was based primarily on machine-scanned forms distributed to police officers and completed soon after each vehicle stop. A copy of the form used is appended to this report (see Appendix I, Instruments). The data forms were scanned at the Police Department Headquarters. The resulting data were given to Dr. Greenwald. To these data, Dr. Greenwald added several new variables for analysis derived indirectly from items on the form. "Derived variables" of this kind include, for example, degree of officer discretion associated with each stop.

The working data set also included data on individual police officers, such as race, age, and assignment (organizational unit). These data were provided to Dr. Greenwald as a file which contained the officer's badge number, allowing matches to be made of officer characteristics and data from each vehicle stop.

Data from the 2000 United States census (released in July, 2001) made possible comparison of characteristics of individuals stopped in specific locations with surrounding population characteristics, such as age and race. The 2000 United States Census remains the most accurate large-scale data set on population in both large and small areas. Although the United States Census does collect new data on race between decennial census enumerations, appropriate data of this kind were not available in time to be included in this report.

Data on victim and suspect characteristics, as well as probationer and parolee residence, were provided by the Police Department. Probation and parolee status are important variables in this study for two reasons. First, many people on probation and everyone on parole has agreed to submit to searches in exchange for release from incarceration. Second, the presence of probationers and parolees in a given neighborhood suggest a risk of crime in that location, because probationers and parolees are known to often recidivate.

During the study's first year, the USC team carried out an intensive procedure to confirm accuracy of data reported by officers making vehicle stops. Team members conducted a telephone survey of drivers to validate the accuracy of information reported by police officers on the machine-scanned forms. A high degree of compatibility was observed between information provided by the drivers and the police officers who had stopped them.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis consisted of descriptive and bivariate statistical runs, which demonstrate the relationship between pairs of variables. Distributions on key variables, such as race of driver, are displayed in this report. Cross-tabulations are also presented to indicate differences in characteristics of stops by race of driver.

Numerical findings presented here do not include the familiar "statistical significance" criterion. In a data set of the size available here, statistical significance is not a meaningful

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concept. In instances where large numbers of cases are compared (for example numbers of African-American and Hispanic drivers stopped), even small differences are likely to be statistically significant (that is, numerically unlikely to have been discovered by chance). These small differences would have little impact on the lives of actual people. For example, a one percent difference between two ethnic groups in the likelihood of being stopped would make little difference to the actual populations involved.

In the study reported here, a “rule of thumb” is recommended for judging whether percentage differences are important or not. It is suggested that readers apply a “Five Percent Rule,” assuming that a difference of five percent or greater should be considered as of potential, practical importance. In part, this recommendation is made because of possible errors in the study methodology. Police officers, for example, may err in identifying driver race. The US Census is known to undercount the US population by about 1.2 percent; since undercounting is most likely among minorities, it must be assumed minorities represent a larger percentage of the US (and Sacramento) population than is indicated in reported figures. Because the sum of all such error seems unlikely to exceed five percent, differences greater than five percentage points should be taken as substantive.

In addition to statistical presentations, this report contains a series of density maps produced through the Sacramento Police Department’s Geographic Information System (GIS). These maps provide visual representations of patterns indicated by the statistical data.

#### **STUDY LIMITATIONS**

The most important limitation of this study concerns the “baseline” against which patterns of vehicle stops should be compared. This study, like most others of its kind, compares the racial distribution of police stops in a given locale with demographic characteristics of the residents of that locale. For each observation, it is unknown whether the driver resided in the area where the stop was made or not. Likewise, it is not known whether drivers in different racial groups have differences in their likelihood of committing traffic violations. Although at least one study is widely believed to demonstrate that African-Americans and Caucasians are equally likely to violate speed limits on highways, no comparable findings address driver conduct on city streets.

In addition, several limitations arise from limits on available geographical data. The form in which data have been made available to the public by the US Census requires estimation of demographic characteristics according to “census tracts,” geographical units which do not usually correspond to actual neighborhoods. It should be acknowledged that some areas of Sacramento have probably changed markedly even in the short time since the 2000 census enumeration.

# Principal Findings

Data were collected through machine-readable forms completed by officers using police vehicles between July 1, 2002, and June 30, 2003. A total of 34,893 non-duplicated cases were provided to the research team in time for the analysis reported here. This total omits about 200 additional cases that were recorded on hand-held computers by traffic officers. Software difficulties prevented these cases from being used. Statistical findings are presented in Figures 1-6 below, as well as in Tables 1-20.

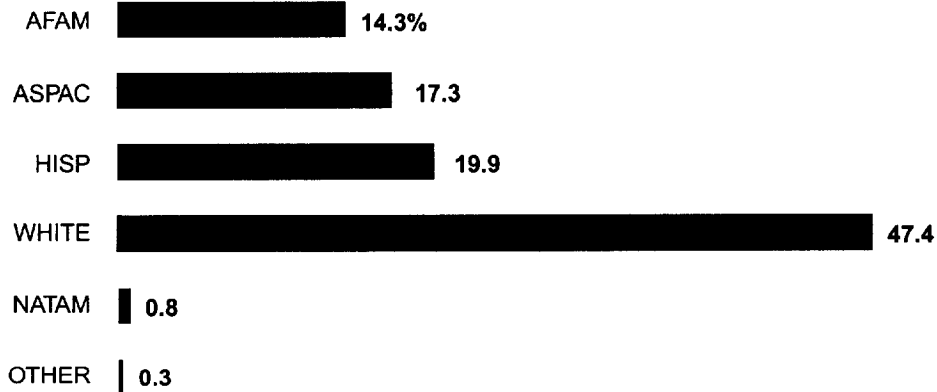
## WHO IS STOPPED?

### Overall Findings.

Figures 1 and 2 provide a basic picture of the racial distribution of vehicle stops by Sacramento police during the study period. The first figure presents the percentages represented by each race within the population of legal driving age (over age 15), according to the 2000 US Census. The second figure presents the percentages represented by each race among all vehicle stops.

FIGURE 1

### Residents 15 Years and Older



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FIGURE 2

**Drivers Stopped in Sacramento**

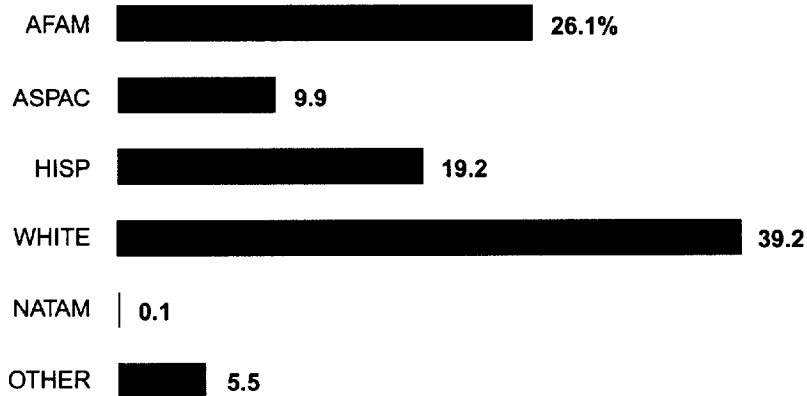


Table 1 compares numbers of drivers stopped within each major racial group with the population of Sacramento. "Percentage of Each Race," presented for comparison with drivers stopped, is based on characteristics of Sacramento residents 15 years of age and older. For perspective, the table includes percentages of drivers stopped represented by each race during all three study periods.

**Table 1.** Racial Distribution of Sacramento Residents Age 15 and Over, and Drivers Stopped by Police in Sacramento, California, 1 July 2000 – 30 June 2001, 1 July 2001 – 30 June 2002, and 1 July 2002-30 June 2003

	Percentage of Each Race (2000 US Census)	Percentage of Drivers Stopped 7/1/00-6/30/01	Percentage of Drivers Stopped 7/1/01-6/30/02	Percentage of Drivers Stopped 7/1/02-6/30/03
Hispanic/Latino	19.9	18.9	18.8	19.2
White, non-Latino	47.4	40.9	40.8	39.2
African-American, non-Latino	14.3	26.8	26.2	26.1
Native American/Alaska Native	.8	.2	.1	.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	17.3	9.9	9.8	9.9
Other	.3	3.4	4.3	5.5
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>301,488</b>	<b>36,854</b>	<b>24,451</b>	<b>34,839</b>

Note: Racial distribution in this table is based on 2000 US Census, and includes only individuals age 15 years and over, who identified themselves as belonging to one racial group only. In this table, people who identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino are represented only as Hispanic/Latino and not members of other races in which they may have classified themselves. Census total for Asians includes Hawaiian and Pacific Islander. The table omits 4.4 percent of Sacramento residents who, according to the US Census, classified themselves as members of multiple races.

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**Table 2.** City of Sacramento Police Officers, September, 2003

<b>Officer Race</b>	<b>Percentage of Force</b>
Hispanic/Latino	9.9
White, non-Latino	73.8
African-American, non-Latino	5.6
Native American/Alaska Native	.6
Asian/Pacific Islander	8.3
Other	1.8
<b>Total Officers</b>	<b>664</b>

Table 1 indicates that Hispanic drivers are stopped about as often as the proportion of Hispanics 15 years of age and older in Sacramento's population would suggest. By this criterion, non-Latino whites and Asian/Pacific Islanders are underrepresented. Too small a number of Native Americans/Alaska Natives were found in the study or by the US Census to allow analysis here.

It is important to note that the percentage represented by each race among drivers stopped was about the same in all three study years. Generally, this was true for most of the tables presented below.

For reader interest, Table 2 presents the percentage distribution of race among Sacramento police officers during the early part of the study. The police officer data file was updated at the end of the study for data analysis purposes.

The research team paid special attention to reasons given by police officers for the stops they made, characteristics of the individuals stopped other than their race, and the time at which stops were conducted. It was believed that these factors would provide clues to why stops were made.

**REASONS FOR STOPS.** Table 3 includes only drivers stopped for "non-hazardous" reasons, namely for equipment and registration violations. Police officers have more discretion in stopping drivers for non-hazardous violations which, unlike failing to stop at a red light or stop sign, pose no immediate danger to other people. Police department personnel have commented that officers often stop people for non-hazardous reasons for investigative purposes, suspecting, for example, that a driver had come from a drug-dispensing venue, burglary scene, etc. Occasionally referring to these actions as "pretext stops," officers hope to apprehend perpetrators or collect evidence through them. Officers deployed to neighborhoods and blocks where violations have occurred pay close attention to cars whose drivers they believe may have been involved in crimes of local concern.

**Table 3. Racial Distribution of Sacramento Residents Age 15 and Over, and Drivers Stopped by Police for Non-Hazardous Reasons in Sacramento, California, 1 July 2002 – 30 June 2003**

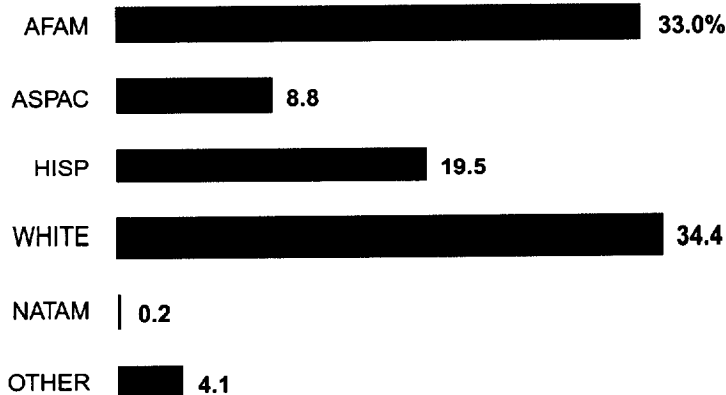
	Percentage of Each Race (2000 US Census)	Percentage of Drivers Stopped
Hispanic/Latino	19.9	19.5
White, non-Latino	47.4	34.4
African-American, non-Latino	14.3	33.0
Native American/Alaska Native	.8	.2
Asian/Pacific Islander	17.3	8.8
Other	.3	4.1
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>301,488</b>	<b>12,635</b>

The table indicates that African-American drivers are more strongly over-represented among those stopped than they are in Table 1. Representation of Latino drivers is unchanged, while representation of white and Asian/Pacific Islander drivers declines.

Figure 3 presents the racial distribution of stops made for non-hazardous violations in a manner easily comparable with the census data in Figure 1 and the racial percentages of all vehicle stops presented in Figure 2.

**FIGURE 3**

**Drivers Stopped for Non-Hazardous Violations**



**AGE OF DRIVER.** Table 4 includes only drivers between ages 15 and 34, and Sacramento residents in this same age range. It was believed that drivers in this age range would be at special risk of being stopped. Because many younger drivers are less experienced and potentially less cautious, drivers between 15 and 34 appear more likely to commit violations than

(21)

older drivers. It is well-known that a high percentage of people who commit crimes are between the ages of 15 and 34, predisposing this group to investigative stops.<sup>4</sup> Within this age group, only African-Americans are over-represented in comparison with the numbers in the age 15 through 34 population (see Table 4). The degree to which African-Americans are over-represented in Table 4 is about the same as in Table 1. Among African-American drivers of age 21 and over (see Table 5), the likelihood of being stopped relative to white drivers is also similar to Table 1.

**Table 4.** Racial Distribution of Sacramento Residents Ages 15 – 34, and Drivers 15-34 Stopped by Police in Sacramento, California, 1 July 2002 – 30 June 2003

	Percentage of Each Race 15-34 (US Census)	Percentage of Drivers Stopped, 34 And Under
Hispanic/Latino	27.8	22.7
White, non-Latino	39.1	33.9
African-American, non-Latino	15.6	25.8
Native American/Alaska Native	.9	.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	16.0	11.4
Other	.6	6.1
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>114,689</b>	<b>19,882</b>

**Table 5.** Racial Distribution of Sacramento Residents Ages 21 and Over, and Drivers 21 and Over Stopped by Police in Sacramento, California, 1 July 2002 – 30 June 2003

	Percentage of Each Race 21 And Over (US Census)	Percentage of Drivers Stopped, 21 And Over
Hispanic/Latino	19.4	18.7
White, non-Latino	48.5	40.2
African-American, non-Latino	14.1	26.5
Native American/Alaska Native	.8	.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	17.0	9.2
Other	.3	5.4
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>261,665</b>	<b>30,870</b>

**COMMUNITY CONTEXT**

The information presented above must be understood against the background of the Sacramento Police Department’s mission: responsiveness to community needs. Planning and deployment of resources is intended to take place in a community-driven manner. Directly and through elected representatives, the community transmits its desire for crime to be controlled. Figures 1 through 3, and Tables 1, 3, 4, and 5 must be viewed in the context of characteristics of the surrounding neighborhoods and the city as a whole. It is crucial, for

example, to assess racial and residence patterns which may explain overrepresentation of African-Americans among drivers in Sacramento who are stopped, particularly for non-hazardous reasons.

Based on police department records, Figures 4 through 6 present the racial breakdown of parolees residing in Sacramento, suspects of crime, and victims of crime. Table 6 presents this comparison numerically. Figures 4 through 6, and Table 6, enable the reader to compare racial breakdowns of parolees, suspects, and victims with percentages of drivers stopped for all and for non-hazardous violations. It is apparent that percentages of suspects among African Americans exceeds their representation in the population, and by significantly more than the proportion of drivers stopped for any reason.

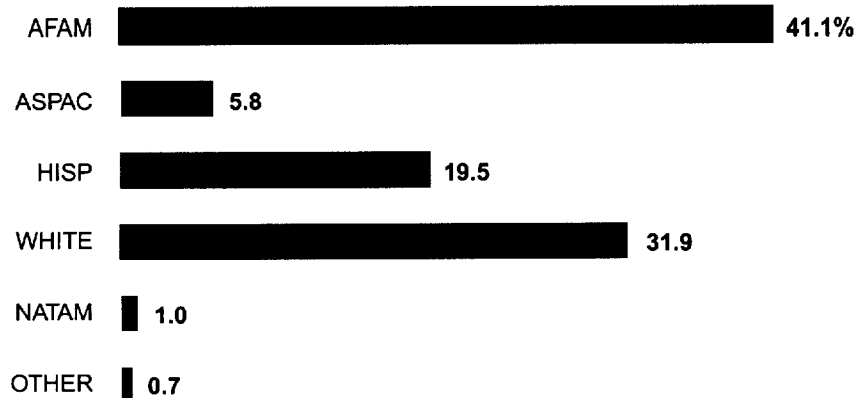
**FIGURE 4**

**Victims of Crime by Race**



**FIGURE 5**

**Suspects of Crime by Race**



**FIGURE 6**

**Parolees by Race in Sacramento**



Note: For parolees, the Native American/Alaska Native and Asian/Pacific Islander categories have been merged with "other."

**Table 6. Racial Distribution (Percentages) of Reported Victims, Reported Suspects, Probationers and Parolees, Sacramento, California, 1 July 2002 – 30 June 2003**

	Persons on Probation	Parolees	Reported Suspects	Reported Victims
Hispanic/Latino	21.5	19.3	19.5	19.1
White, non-Latino	25.0	31.6	31.9	46.8
African-American, non-Latino	38.8	43.7	41.1	21.6
Native American/Alaska Native <sup>1</sup>		1.0	.9	
Asian/Pacific Islander <sup>2</sup>	7.0		5.8	10.4
<b>Other</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>.7</b>	<b>1.1</b>

1. For persons on parole, the Native American/Alaska Native category has been merged with "other."
2. For parolees, the Native American/Alaska Native and Asian/Pacific Islander categories have been merged with "other."

It is also important to note that citizens, not police officers, generate suspect reports. In reporting crimes to the police, citizens often provide descriptions of perpetrators to the police. The racial distribution of suspects presented in this report are compiled from these citizen-provided descriptions.

Tables 7-10 focus on individual Sacramento census tracts. The city comprises 79 census tracts lying wholly within its boundaries and about 40 more which straddle the city line (so-called "split tracts"). To simplify presentation, only census tracts wholly within Sacramento and in which 100 or more stops were known to have been made during the study year are presented in Tables 7-10. It is assumed that many stops in the split tracts would have been made by non-Sacramento officers, distorting the comparison of stops with census data.

Unfortunately, information from census tracts cannot be readily matched with specific neighborhoods. Census tracts in Sacramento tend to be split across most areas recognized as neighborhoods, and neighborhoods usually include parts of several census tracts. A few Sacramento neighborhoods, though, coincide with specific sets of census tracts, and a selection of these neighborhoods, along with the census tracts they comprise, are presented to facilitate illustrative comparisons. These are: Central Oak Park (tracts 27, 28); Meadowview (42.01, 42.02, 42.03, 43, 96.01), Land Park (23, 24), and Hagginwood (63, 66).

Table 7 presents several features of each of the census tracts with the characteristics outlined above, with reference to African-Americans. For each such census tract, Table 7 includes:

- The percentage of residents who are African-American and age 15 and over;
- The percentage of crime suspects reported to be African-American;
- The percentage of drivers stopped who are African American;
- The percentage of drivers stopped for non-hazardous violations.

Table 8 presents the same information for Hispanics, Table 9 for Asian/Pacific Islanders, and Table 10 for whites.

In Tables 7 through 10, relationships are noticeable between the population characteristics of each tract and the racial distribution of drivers stopped. In addition, the racial distribution of suspects identified by members of the public in each census tract appears related to the racial distribution of drivers stopped in that census tract.

A statistic known as the *coefficient of correlation* summarizes relationships not readily visible within the data presented in Tables 7 through 10. The coefficient of correlation is calculated as a decimal between 0 and 1. Coefficients of correlation in a range between .400 and .600 are considered moderate. Correlation coefficients (sometimes referenced as “correlations”) of .800 or above are considered to reflect very strong relationships).

The correlation between the percentage of residents in a census tract who are African-American and the percentage of drivers stopped (for any reason) who are African-American is .885. The correlation between the percentage of residents in a census tract who are African-American and the percentage of drivers who are stopped (for non-hazardous offences) who are African-American is .835. The correlation between the percentage of suspects reported within a census tract who are African-American and the percentage of drivers stopped (for all reasons) who are African-American is .825. The corresponding correlation with the percentage of drivers stopped for non-hazardous offences is .845. All these correlations are very strong.

**Table 7. Percentage African-American Among Persons Age 15 and Over, Suspects, and Drivers Stopped by Police by Sacramento Census Tract, 1 July 2002 – 30 June 2003**

Census Tracts	Percentage Residents Who Are African-American (15 and over)	Percentage Suspects Who Are African-American	Percentage Drivers Stopped Who Are African-American, All Stops	Percentage Drivers Stopped Who Are African-American, Non-Hazardous Violations
4.00	6	24	14	14
5.00	7	47	18	28
7.00	27	35	31	26
10.00	14	44	34	41
11.00	12	29	19	26
13.00	6	33	15	25
14.00	5	26	14	18
15.00	2	32	14	21
17.00	7	36	20	24
18.00	22	67	47	46
19.00	10	39	28	35
20.00	6	33	22	24
21.00	10	39	28	32
23.00	2	41	18	19
24.00	2	24	15	20
27.00	31	58	41	47
28.00	36	67	48	51
29.00	5	25	24	25
30.00	6	31	29	29
31.01	7	34	15	13
31.02	7	36	26	33
32.01	12	43	18	24
32.02	5	27	18	24
34.00	16	45	30	48
35.01	11	36	22	29
35.02	3	21	21	27
36.00	8	26	20	24
37.00	17	50	32	36
38.00	35	55	34	40
40.09	11	27	22	24
41.00	15	29	31	36
42.01	33	53	43	58
42.02	29	54	41	49
42.03	25	55	42	44
52.02	4	15	6	5
63.00	8	24	21	25
65.00	37	64	55	63
66.00	18	46	32	37
67.02	29	48	42	44
68.00	10	32	24	26
69.00	9	41	26	33
70.14	17	45	25	27
96.06	28	64	44	53
96.07	27	55	41	47
96.10	23	45	30	31

Note: Only tracts wholly within the City of Sacramento, and in which at least 100 stops were recorded, are presented in this table and the table to follow.

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**Table 8.** Percentage Hispanic Among Persons Age 15 and Over, Suspects, and Drivers Stopped by Police by Sacramento Census Tract, 1 July 2002 – 30 June 2003

Census Tracts	Percentage Residents Who Are Hispanic (15 and over)	Percentage Suspects Who Are Hispanic	Percentage Drivers Stopped Who Are Hispanic, All Stops	Percentage Drivers Stopped Who Are Hispanic, Non-Hazardous Violations
4.00	19	23	15	14
5.00	29	17	17	18
7.00	19	22	29	32
10.00	16	12	15	7
11.00	11	11	13	7
13.00	15	19	13	14
14.00	11	13	15	13
15.00	8	13	13	14
17.00	13	19	15	16
18.00	22	14	17	17
19.00	19	20	18	15
20.00	16	22	20	18
21.00	20	25	26	28
23.00	10	19	16	19
24.00	8	26	16	6
27.00	29	20	24	21
28.00	34	19	20	19
29.00	20	35	29	34
30.00	28	32	20	23
31.01	40	26	27	26
31.02	33	28	26	23
32.01	26	15	23	26
32.02	25	24	23	20
34.00	15	19	13	11
35.01	21	27	17	21
35.02	21	23	27	33
36.00	45	49	41	36
37.00	47	31	30	30
38.00	23	22	25	26
40.09	12	16	11	19
41.00	29	31	28	26
42.01	26	19	19	16
42.02	25	25	20	18
42.03	33	18	22	23
52.02	10	15	6	8
63.00	20	18	21	17
65.00	16	10	12	10
66.00	23	15	17	17
67.02	19	13	20	22
68.00	42	26	27	30
69.00	26	18	20	22
70.14	26	25	29	29
96.06	25	16	18	18
96.07	25	16	15	15
96.10	18	23	12	15

**Table 9.** Percentage Asian/Pacific Islander Among Persons Age 15 and Over, Suspects, and Drivers Stopped by Police by Sacramento Census Tract, 1 July 2002 – 30 June 2003

Census Tracts	Percentage Residents Who Are Asian/PI (15 and over)	Percentage Suspects Who Are Asian/PI	Percentage Drivers Stopped Who Are Asian/PI, All Stops	Percentage Drivers Stopped Who Are Asian/PI, Non-Hazardous Violations
4.00	4	3	5	4
5.00	5	2	4	2
7.00	15	4	4	2
10.00	4	2	5	4
11.00	4	1	5	4
13.00	5	2	5	2
14.00	4	2	5	4
15.00	3	3	3	5
17.00	4	6	8	5
18.00	11	4	8	7
19.00	10	2	7	5
20.00	46	4	9	9
21.00	36	4	8	9
23.00	8	9	11	19
24.00	8	18	20	17
27.00	7	4	6	6
28.00	14	5	7	6
29.00	5	4	7	1
30.00	6	1	10	8
31.01	6	5	17	17
31.02	8	3	9	10
32.01	44	18	35	23
32.02	39	13	25	23
34.00	19	9	16	7
35.01	17	7	16	12
35.02	25	8	12	8
36.00	12	2	7	4
37.00	19	8	9	7
38.00	14	7	13	13
40.09	33	13	25	24
41.00	32	14	14	16
42.01	13	5	10	9
42.02	26	12	13	12
42.03	23	11	15	15
52.02	11	4	5	3
63.00	5	3	7	7
65.00	16	5	5	5
66.00	11	5	6	5
67.02	30	15	12	12
68.00	18	4	5	5
69.00	4	1	4	2
70.14	10	4	4	4
96.06	19	6	11	9
96.07	27	15	19	17
96.10	31	12	21	23

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**Table 10. Percentage White Among Persons Age 15 and Over, Suspects, and Drivers Stopped by Police by Sacramento Census Tract, 1 July 2002 – 30 June 2003**

Census Tracts	Percentage Residents Who Are White (15 and over)	Percentage Suspects Who Are White	Percentage Drivers Stopped Who Are White, All Stops	Percentage Drivers Stopped Who Are White, Non-Hazardous Violations
4.00	69	49	61	67
5.00	58	34	57	51
7.00	37	37	33	39
10.00	63	38	43	45
11.00	71	57	59	60
13.00	72	43	61	54
14.00	78	56	61	61
15.00	86	50	64	56
17.00	74	38	51	60
18.00	43	15	25	24
19.00	60	36	41	40
20.00	32	40	44	46
21.00	33	29	29	27
23.00	80	29	50	33
24.00	82	32	42	51
27.00	32	16	25	25
28.00	15	9	20	19
29.00	69	36	38	39
30.00	60	34	35	37
31.01	47	34	34	36
31.02	51	31	31	27
32.01	17	20	20	22
32.02	40	34	27	26
34.00	50	26	38	33
35.01	51	30	38	34
35.02	50	47	37	30
36.00	34	20	28	32
37.00	15	10	25	24
38.00	27	16	19	16
40.09	44	41	40	29
41.00	23	23	18	15
42.01	27	21	21	14
42.02	19	8	19	17
42.03	18	10	15	13
52.02	74	27	76	78
63.00	66	54	45	48
65.00	29	20	25	22
66.00	46	33	42	38
67.02	20	22	22	22
68.00	30	36	40	36
69.00	59	40	45	40
70.14	45	26	33	33
96.06	28	12	18	14
96.07	21	11	15	14
96.10	28	17	28	23

Relationships between resident racial characteristics, suspect descriptions, and stops for all and for non-hazardous reasons differ among the racial groups under consideration here. Relationships between census tract characteristics and vehicle stops of Hispanics, for example, differ from those found for African-Americans. Correlation coefficients based on stops of Hispanic drivers are generally lower. The percentage of residents within a census tract who are Hispanic is still strongly related to the percentage of drivers stopped who are Hispanic (correlation coefficient = .723). The percentage of crime suspects reported as Hispanic is less strongly related to the percentage stopped for all reasons who are Hispanic (correlation coefficient = .557). The correlation between the percentage of crime suspects reported as Hispanic and the percentage of drivers stopped for non-hazardous reasons is .657.

Table 9 provides information by tract on Asian/Pacific Islanders. Percentage of Asian/Pacific Islander residents and crime suspects are both related to the percentages of individuals stopped who are Asian/Pacific Islanders. The strongest relationship found regarding Asian/Pacific Islander drivers is the one between the percentages of Asian/Pacific Islanders identified as suspects and the percentage of Asian/Pacific Islanders stopped for non-hazardous (correlation coefficient = .809).

Table 10 makes the same comparisons for whites. Both percentage of residents who are white and percentage of suspects who are white are strongly related to the percentage of drivers stopped who are white. A strong relationship exists between the percentage of suspects in a census tract who are white and the percentage of drivers stopped for non-hazardous reasons who are white (correlation coefficient = .753).

Generally, the figures and tables referenced above suggest a pattern of stops consistent with both population and crime suspect characteristics. The patterns indicated here are illustrated in GIS-produced density maps. Relevant maps are displayed below (see Maps 1-4). Within each set of maps, the display on the left-hand side depicts the density of police vehicle stops in specific parts of the city (darker color indicates more frequent stops). On the right-hand side are displayed frequency by locale of citizen calls for service (Map 1), reported crimes (Map 2), residential location of individuals on probation (Map 3), and residential locale of individuals on parole are displayed (Map 4). Inspection of these maps indicates a consistent correspondence of vehicle stops made by police with places in which crime and people with criminal histories are concentrated.

### **INTRUSIVENESS OF STOPS**

Events which may occur during a vehicle stop constitute an important dimension in the controversy over racial profiling. The citizen's recollection of being stopped, and his or her assessment of whether the stop may have been inappropriate, is likely to be influenced by perceived intrusiveness of the encounter. Tables 11 through 14 address three possible events which can occur in a stop and increase its intrusiveness as perceived by the driver: (a) being asked to exit the car; (b) being searched; and, (c) being subject to long detention.

It is apparent that both African-American and Hispanic drivers are subject to more intrusive stops than white drivers. Tables 11 through 14 indicate that African-American and Hispanic drivers are asked to exit their cars, searched, and detained for 30 minutes or longer about twice as often as white drivers. A comparison of Tables 13 and 14 indicates that duration of a stop is strongly related to whether a search or seizure of property was carried out (including tow of the vehicle). In stops not involving search or seizure, drivers of any race (whites, African-Americans, or Hispanics) are seldom subject to stops 30 minutes or longer (see Table 14).

Because searches are a key factor in the intrusiveness of a vehicle stop, detailed analysis of the reasons for and outcomes of searches is warranted. Categories cited by officers as authority for conducting searches during the study year were as follows: arrest (12.0 percent of those searched), consent (14.0 percent), cursory or "Terry" search (9.2 percent), and parole or probation (37.8 percent). No reason was reported in the remaining searches. In past study years, about 15 percent of stops reported by Sacramento Police Department officers resulted from tows. Due to technical problems in processing tow data, cases in which searches resulted from tows could not be identified in this year's study.

Parole and probation, the most frequent authority for the search, affected the racial distribution of drivers searched. When percentages are computed omitting individuals searched due to parole or probation status, the percentage of African-Americans searched drops from 27.5 percent (see Table 12) to 16.2 percent; the percentage of Hispanics searched drops from 24.3 percent to 19.9 percent; the percentage of whites searched drops from 12.3 percent to 8.0 percent; the percentage of Asian/Pacific Islanders searched drops from 9.6 percent to 6.4 percent. When searches due to probation or parole status are omitted from the computation, the percentage point difference between African-American and white drivers who are searched is approximately halved.

Relationships are detectable between race and authority cited for a search. Among drivers searched, African-Americans are less likely than others to be searched on the basis of consent. About 11.8 percent of African-Americans searched had given consent, compared with 18.6 percent of Asian/Pacific Islanders, 15.2 percent of whites, and 14.5 percent of Hispanics. Asian/Pacific Islanders were, when searched, most likely to have been subjected to cursory searches (12.3 percent of those searched), compared with 8.5 percent of whites, 11.4 percent of Hispanics, and 7.8 percent of African-Americans. Among drivers searched, African-Americans were most likely to have been searched due to parole or probation status (49.1 percent), followed by whites (38.2 percent), Asian/Pacific Islanders (35.7 percent), and Hispanics (22.3 percent).

When searches due to all forms of search authority were analyzed together, race generally did not affect the likelihood that contraband was found (see Table 15). Only the "other" category stood out in this table, contraband being found on people in this category more often than on members of any specific racial group.

## **OFFICER CHARACTERISTICS**

Several characteristics of the officer involved in the vehicle stop were examined in an attempt to detect patterns of excessive stopping of minorities. Of particular interest was the race of the officer him or herself. Tables 16 through 18 indicate the racial distributions of stops made by white, African American, and Hispanic officers.

According to Table 16, white officers are about as likely to stop African Americans than non-white officers. The difference between white and non-white officers in the percentage of African-Americans among those stopped by each is under three percentage points. The percentages of Hispanics stopped by white and non-white officers are almost identical.

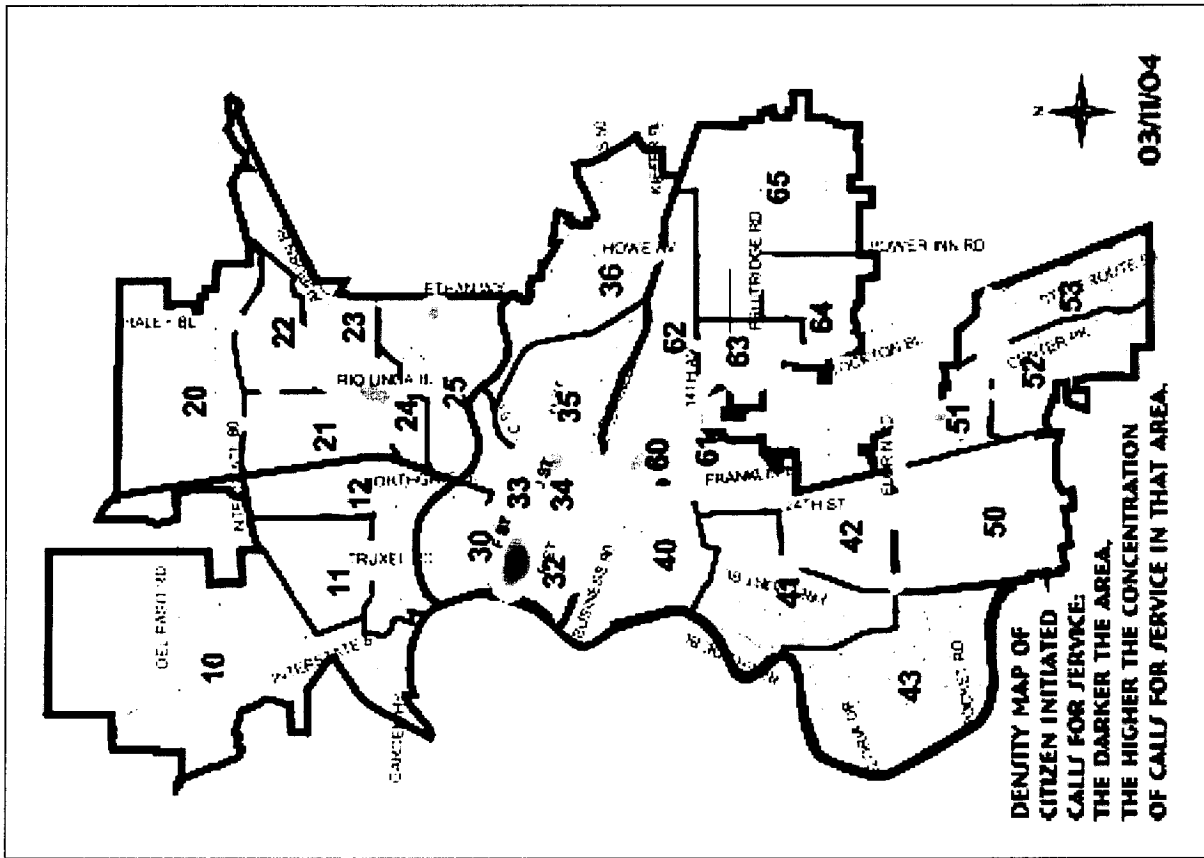
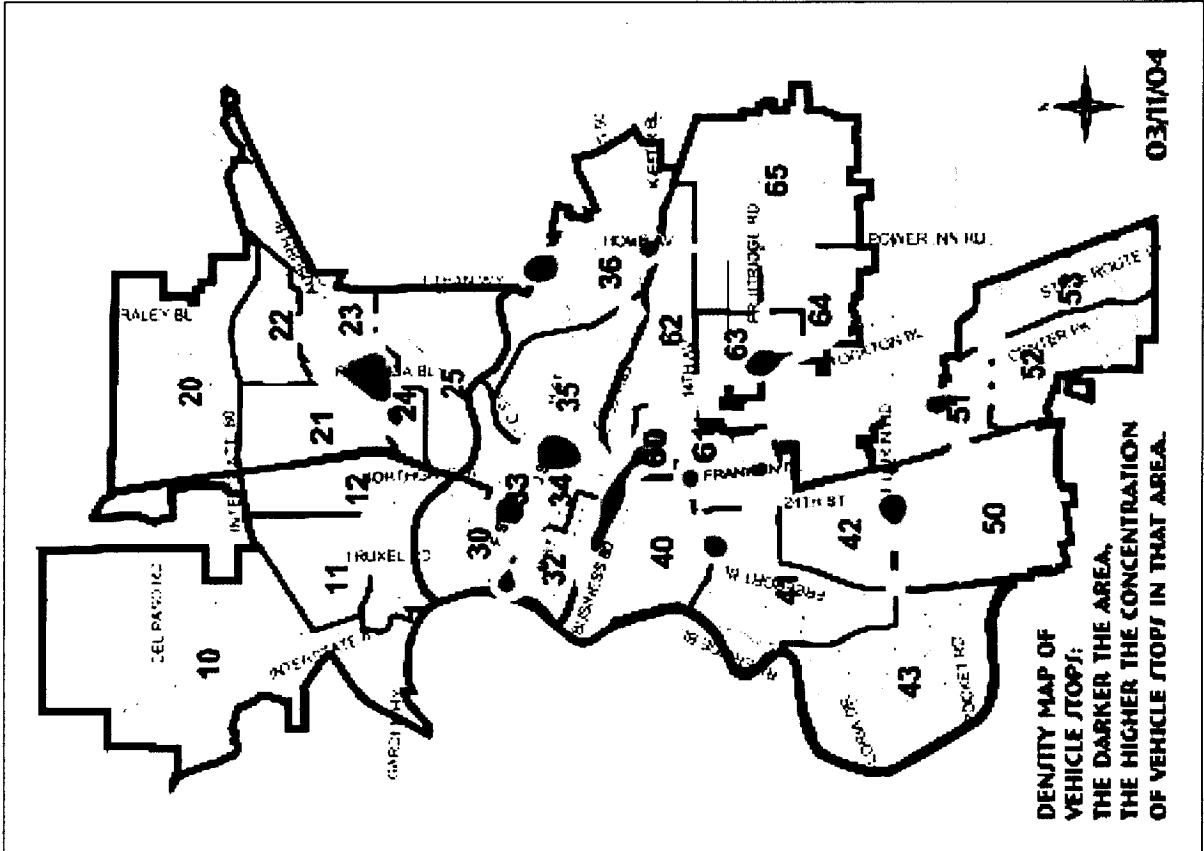
Table 17 indicates that African-American and non-African American officers are about equally likely to stop both African-Americans and Hispanics. Non-African-American officers appear marginally more likely to stop Asian/Pacific Islanders, a difference 4.4 percentage points.

In Table 18, it appears that Hispanic and non-Hispanic officers stop identical percentages of African-American and Hispanic drivers.

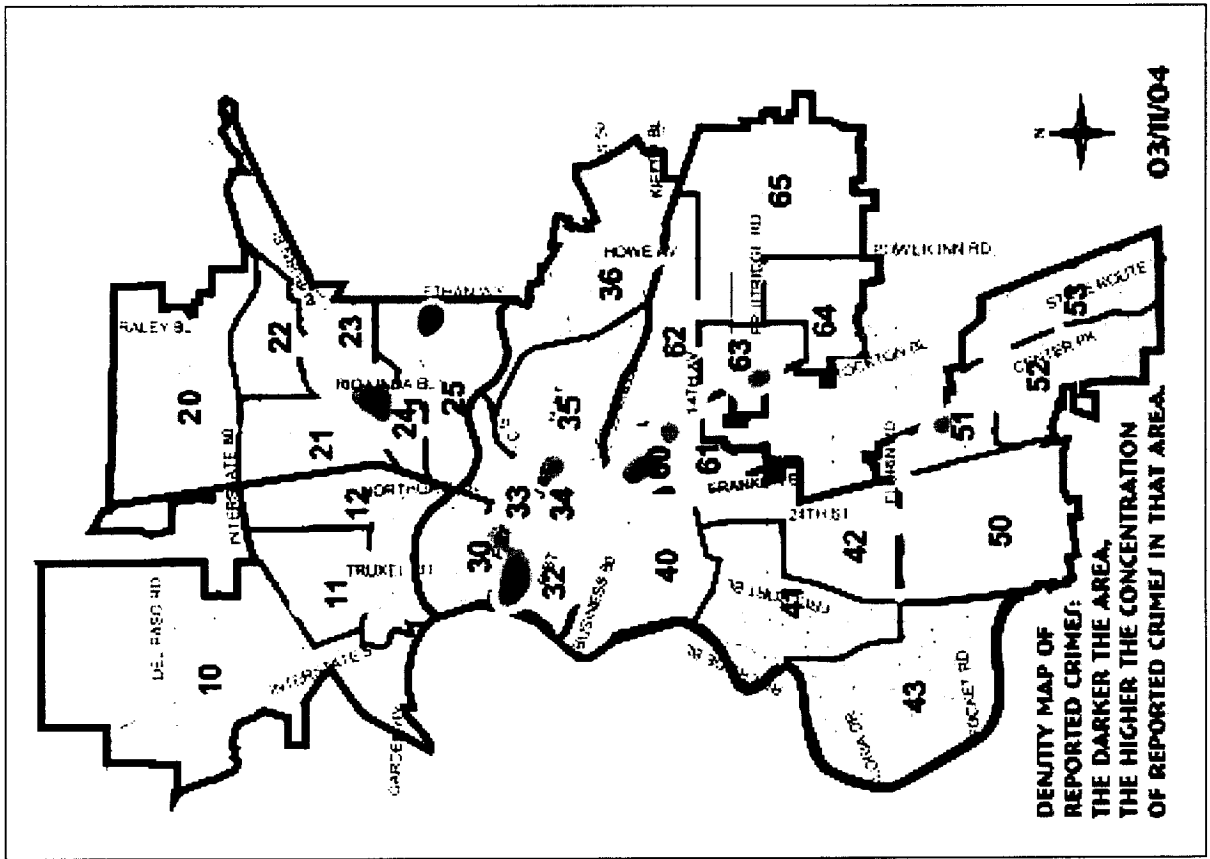
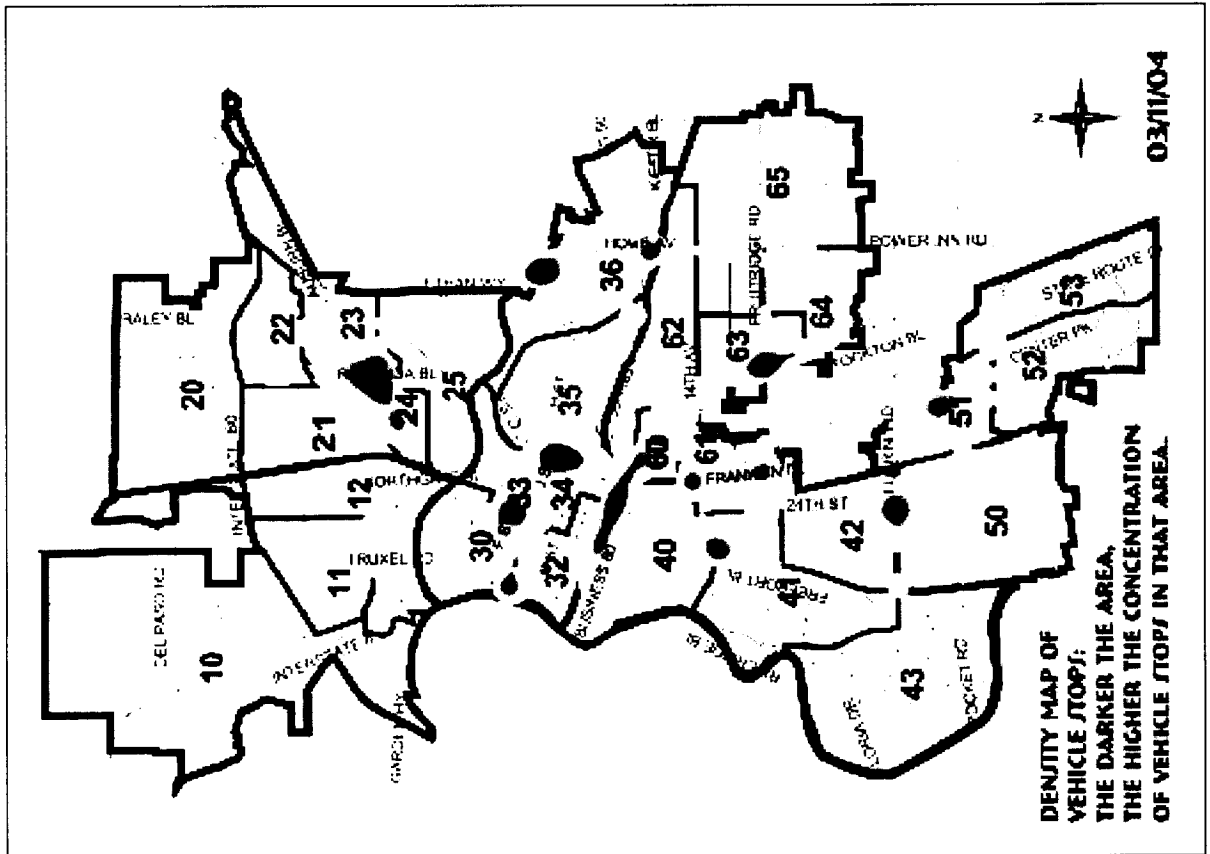
Table 19 is intended to assess the influence of monitoring of police work via camera on the percentage of drivers of each race stopped by individual officers. About half of all stops reported in this study were made by officers in cars equipped with cameras. Officers in cars with cameras reported stopping a higher percentage of African-American drivers than officers in cars without cameras.

The detail or organizational unit in which an officer worked appeared to affect the racial distribution of stops made by that officer. Table 20 presents a key example. Officers assigned to traffic duty stop a smaller percentage of African-American drivers than those assigned to other duties.

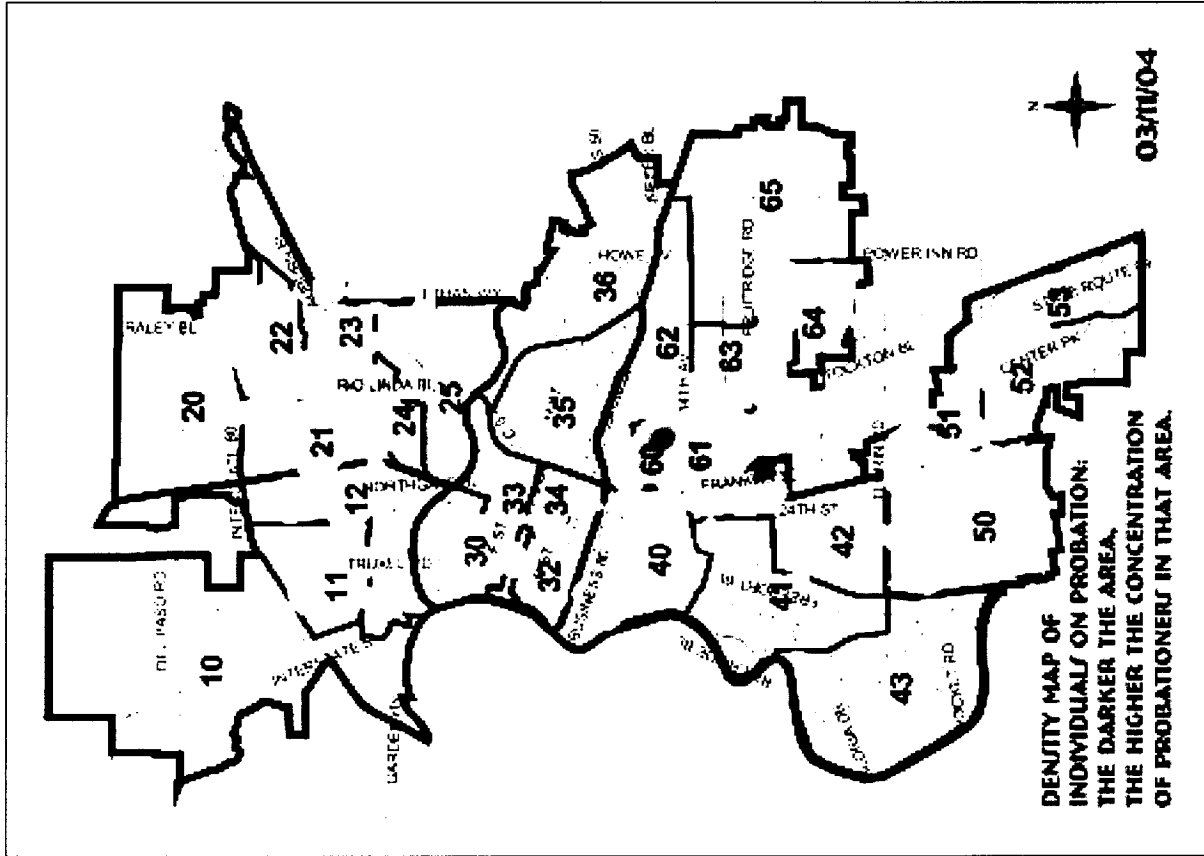
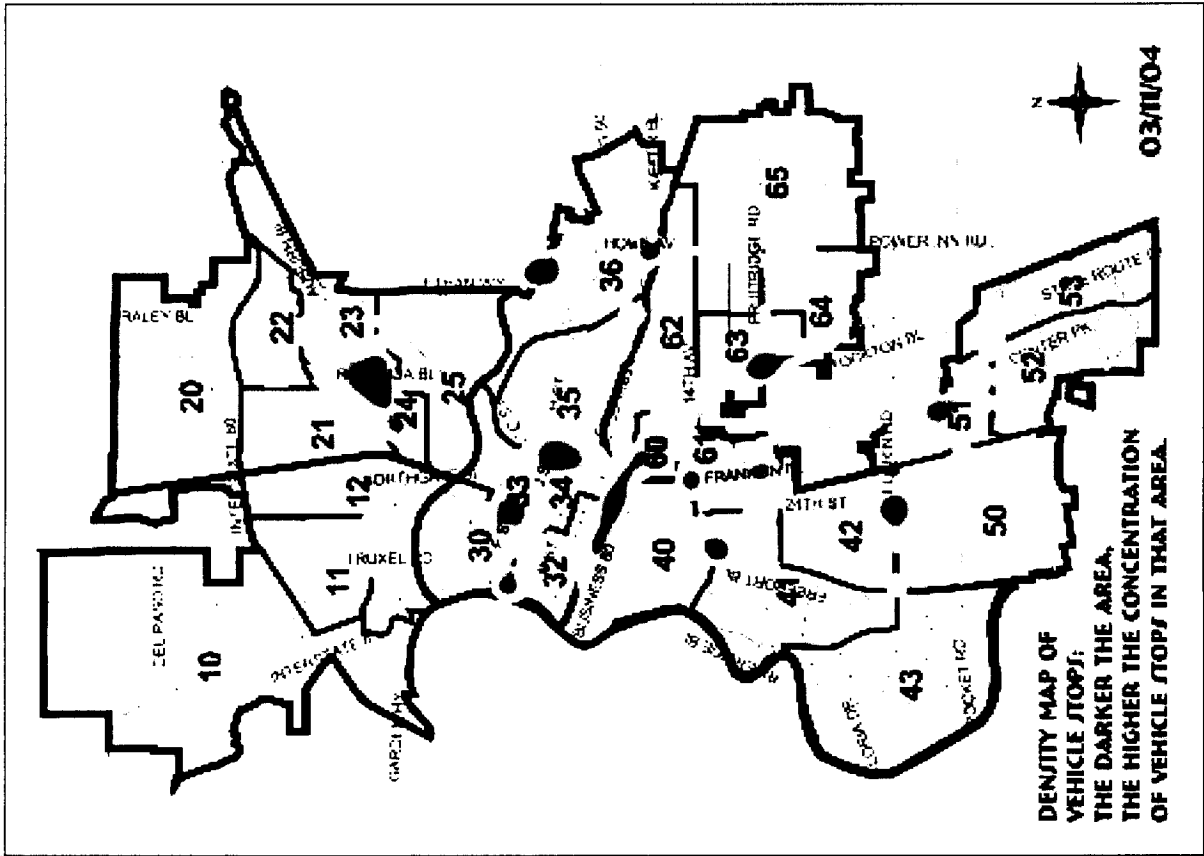
MAP 1  
ALL VEHICLE STOPS and CITIZEN INITIATED CALLS FOR SERVICE



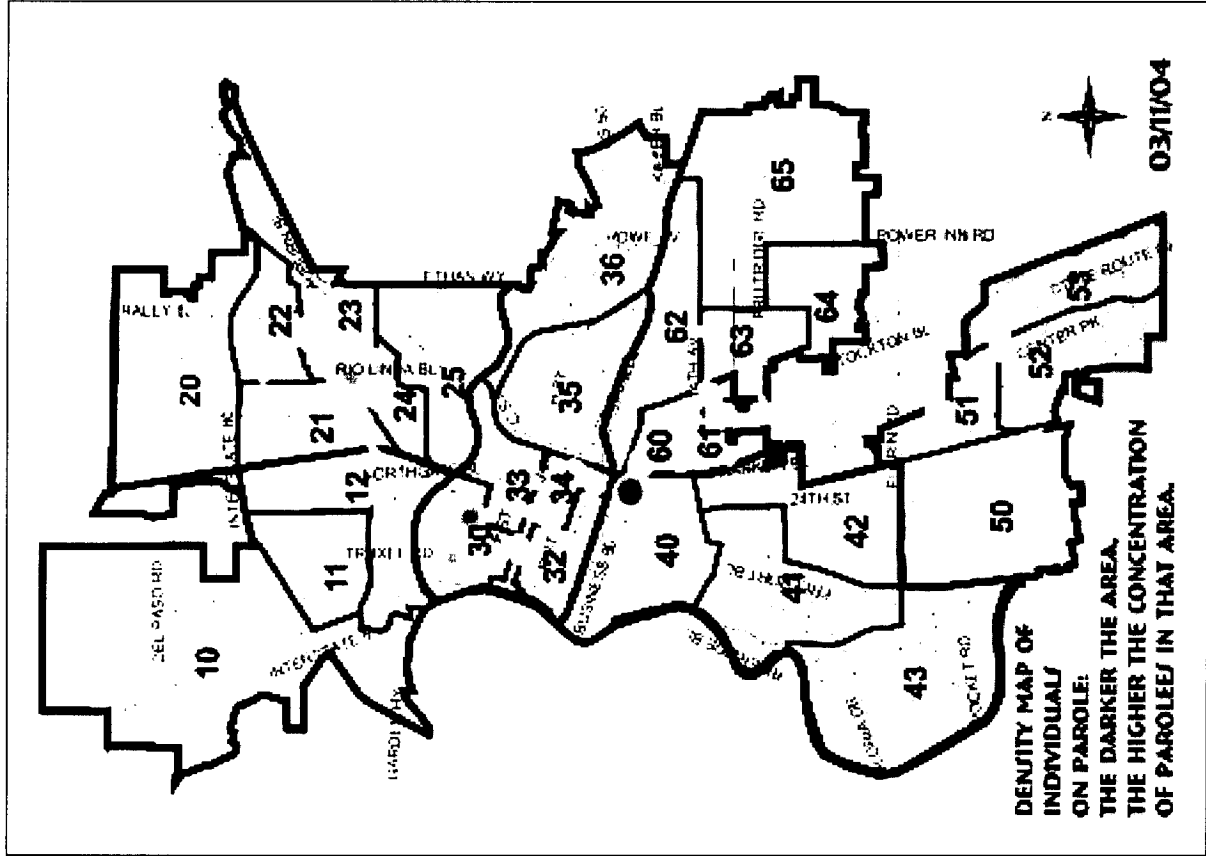
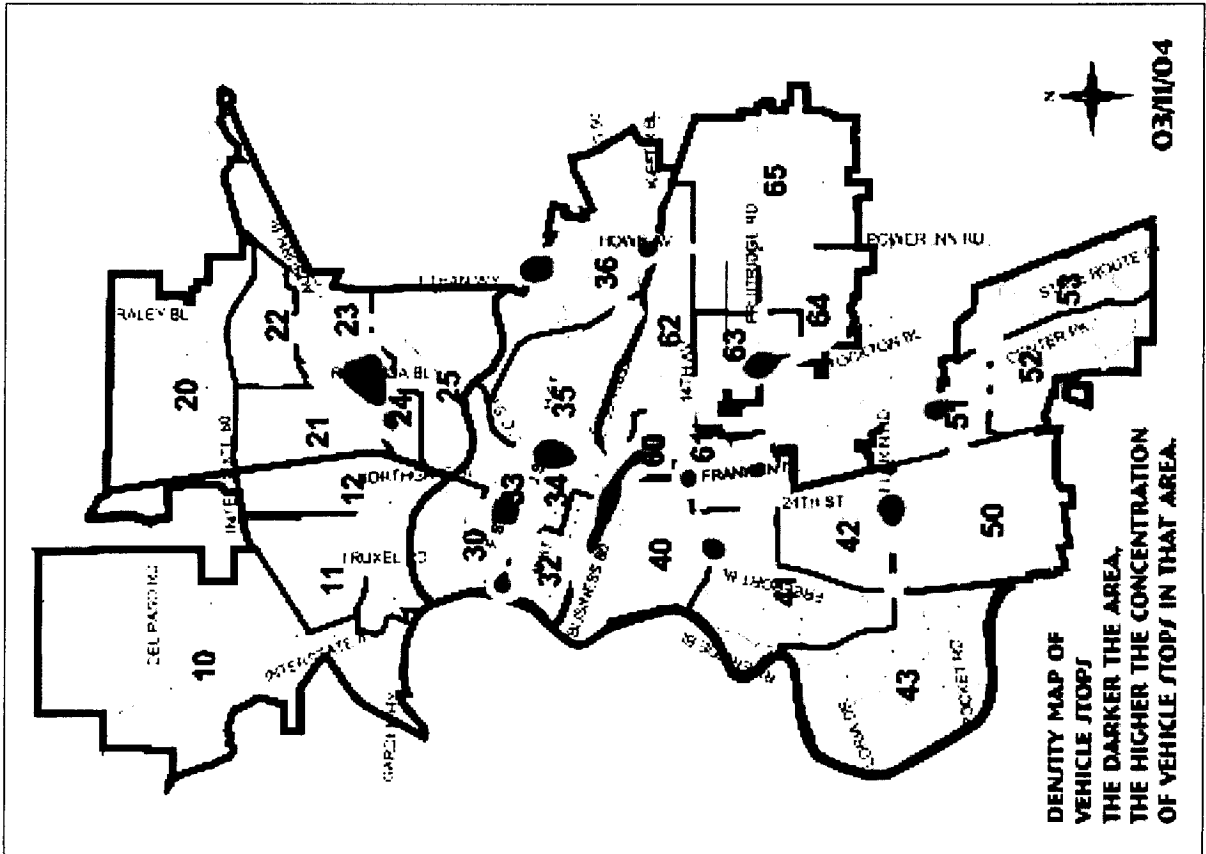
MAP 2  
ALL VEHICLE STOPS and REPORTED CRIMES



MAP 3  
ALL VEHICLE STOPS and INDIVIDUALS ON PROBATION



MAP 4  
ALL VEHICLE STOPS and INDIVIDUALS ON PAROLE



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# Accuracy of Data

The research team carried out several procedures designed to assess the accuracy of data obtained from the procedures used here. Since no foolproof method of ensuring that officers reported all the stops they made could be conceived, the possibility of bias due to underreporting cannot be ignored. Two pieces of evidence, though, make the presence of bias seem unlikely. First, findings from data obtained in each of the three study years are remarkably similar. This suggests that, although the study data may be better characterized as “samples” than enumeration, the successive samples are equally accurate.

Second, during the second study year, the research team compared findings obtained from the forms submitted by police officers with records in the Sacramento Police Department’s citation data base. During the second study year, a markedly lower number of forms were received than during either the first or third years. A comparison was made for the month of June, 2002, a month in which underreporting to the study seemed pronounced. About the same racial percentages appeared in the citation file as in the file of machine-readable forms submitted by the police officers.

## **STUDY CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the data presented here, the following conclusions are supported:

- Among drivers in Sacramento, African-Americans are stopped more often (in proportion to their representation in the population of the city of Sacramento) than white drivers.
- Hispanic drivers are stopped no more often than whites, but when stopped are asked to exit their cars, subject to search, and detained for long periods of time more often than whites.
- Asian/Pacific Islander drivers are stopped and detained less often than whites.
- High rates of African-Americans among persons reported as suspects in crimes seem likely to have contributed to the overrepresentation of African-Americans among drivers stopped.
- Although the percentage of African-American and Hispanic drivers searched is higher than the percentage of white drivers searched, contraband is found with similar frequency in cars driven by people of all three races, suggesting that police officers assess African-American, Hispanic, and white drivers as holders of contraband with equal accuracy.

# Discussion

Data collected and analyzed in this, the third of a three-year study, clearly indicate an overrepresentation of African-American drivers among those stopped by Sacramento police officers. Statistical findings in this report are highly similar to those obtained in the first and second study years. Near-replication of the study findings in three successive observation periods confirms the validity of the information reported.

As in the first two years, the preponderance of data obtained provides no clear indication of significant racial profiling as defined by the community. Still, as in any major social issue, the data and the definition of racial profiling itself are open to varying interpretation. As additional data have been collected and analyzed, moreover, the challenges regarding race and policing in Sacramento have become clearer.

Several facts argue against the presence racial profiling to any significant degree. There is no evidence that police officers are inappropriately searching African-American drivers, since the rate at which contraband is found is similar for African-Americans, Hispanics, and whites. African-American officers stop African-Americans about as often as do white officers. Surveillance of officers via cameras does not decrease the overrepresentation of minority stops, as would seem likely if police officers of any race were stopping drivers for reasons other than the practice of good law enforcement according to department standards. The highest rates at which African-American drivers are stopped occur in locations where a high percentage of crimes reported are believed by citizens to have been committed by African-Americans.

Readers must view data presented here in the broader historical and social context. Patterns of residence and incidence of crime have original causes outside the day-to-day mandate of the Sacramento Police Department. Sacramento police officers respond to rather than create these conditions. The type of crime that directly concerns Sacramento police officers, moreover, reflects only part of the crime problem in the United States. Corporate wrongdoing, for example, constitutes a major challenge to crime fighters, and clearly involves demographics different from those encountered by city police.

## **PUBLIC CHOICES AND CONCERNS**

Resolution of the question of whether racial profiling is a discernible problem in Sacramento depends, to some extent, on the strictness with which the Sacramento Community Definition is interpreted. Terms such as the "behavior of an individual" or "information that leads the police to a particular individual" are imprecise. If one assumes that driving late at night in an area known for drug dealing, or on a route leading to or from such an area, qualifies as "behavior leading ... police to a particular individual," then much of what is observed in this report cannot be interpreted as racially biased. If one interprets the word "information" in the definition to mean only the description of a subject at large, then bias may indeed be viewed as present.

Of key importance in interpreting the data presented here is the degree to which the public chooses to trade off proactive policing in exchange for more effective crime control. Fewer stops would be made of any race if police focused only on individuals who met specific descriptions of suspects. But fewer wrongdoers to whom, as individuals, police may not be alerted, might be apprehended.

Less directly addressed through data of the kind presented here is a sense among many minority individuals of alienation from police officers and their work. Being stopped by a police officer is a frequent experience for many minorities throughout the United States. Law-abiding individuals who, intentionally or unintentionally, are made to feel like suspects, are tempted to view police officers as individuals who threaten their dignity. The frequency with which minority group members are stopped, even in a progressive community such as Sacramento, is partially explained by patterns of living and travel. Those who live in or traverse neighborhoods where crimes by members of their ethnic group are prevalent are at elevated risk of being stopped. The ensuing process of detention and questioning is often perceived as racial bias, particularly by individuals for whom being stopped is a regular experience.

Negative interactions between police officers and minority individuals undermines efforts to build alliances crucial to crime control. A person who witnesses a crime will be unlikely to share information with authorities if he or she expects to be seen as a suspect. Long-term solutions to suspicion between police and minorities are also threatened. The Sacramento Police Department, for example, has expended significant effort in recruitment of minority individuals as officers, particularly African-Americans. Members of the advisory committee noted, however, that promising young minorities, having grown up in an atmosphere of suspicion regarding police, are disinclined to consider law enforcement as a career.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The material presented in this report supports recommendations made earlier, first, for law enforcement management and policy, and second, for the public in general.

On the level of police management and policy, training to reduce any tendency of officers to view a specific ethnic group as criminally inclined should continuously occur. Policies against racial profiling must be reaffirmed and repeatedly publicized. To the degree possible, technology and training must be advanced to better enable police officers to distinguish between drivers associated with criminal behavior from those who are not.

Recruitment, retention, and promotion of minority police officers is clearly an important step in building the required alliance between police and communities. The recruitment problem is cited above. In addition, it appears important to assess the degree to which minority officers find the Sacramento Police Department a positive career venue. As an advisory board member noted, the number of minority officers who serve long enough to retire should be reviewed and remedies applied should retention according to this criterion be found inadequate.

Procedures already initiated to promote accurate monitoring and analysis of police vehicle stops should be maintained and strengthened. This should include contemporaneous monitoring of submission of machine-readable forms by officers and comparison with other police data bases to ensure maximum validity of the data accrual process.

Most importantly, police training and procedures must emphasize respect for the privacy and dignity of the law-abiding citizen who is stopped. Citizens who respect the work of police and sympathize with their mission are too often made to feel like "part of the problem." Every needlessly negative encounter weakens the potential alliance between law enforcement and the community. As a member of the community who advised this study stated the issue, he wished to be "unsuspected" at the conclusion of a police stop; that is, to leave with the feeling that he was now viewed as a cooperative peer by the police officer rather than a potential law-breaker.

The public faces a more profound challenge than does the police department: to find the appropriate balance between proactive policing and intrusion of police on citizens' lives. Support for intensive policing in high crime neighborhoods enjoys widespread public support. But just as minorities face greater chances of victimization than non-minorities, they themselves face a greater likelihood of being stopped by the police officers assigned to help reduce their victimization.

Improved training and technology can help reduce stops of law-abiding individuals of every ethnicity and mitigate the intrusiveness of such stops. Every American should seek ways to reduce the disparity in life chances that give rise to the concentration of crime in some minority communities. But it is unlikely that these measures will eliminate overrepresentation of minorities in vehicle stops by police in the near future. Until the hoped-for technical and social transformations take place, the public's greatest challenge will be to maintain the visibility of racial profiling as an issue, and to promote reasonable balance between the safety of the community and respect for the individual.



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# Appendix II

## STATISTICAL TABLES

**Table 11.** Race of Driver By Being Asked to Exit Car

	Percentage Each Race Asked to Exit Car		Total
	No	Yes	
Hispanic/Latino	72.0	28.0	6706
White, non-Latino	85.8	14.2	13640
African-American, non-Latino	70.4	29.6	9078
Native American/Alaska Native	50.0	50.0	36
Asian/Pacific Islander	87.8	12.2	3460
Other	90.7	9.3	1919
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>79.6</b>	<b>20.4</b>	<b>34,839</b>

**Table 12.** Race of Driver By Being Searched

	Percentage Each Race Search Conducted		Total
	No	Yes	
Hispanic/Latino	75.5	24.3	6706
White, non-Latino	87.8	12.3	13640
African-American, non-Latino	72.5	27.5	9078
Native American/Alaska Native	61.6	38.9	36
Asian/Pacific Islander	90.4	9.6	3460
Other	93.9	6.1	1919
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>82.0</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>34,839</b>

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**Table 13. Race of Driver And Duration of Stop**

	Percentage Each Race Stopped For			Total
	Less Than 15 Minutes	15-29 Minutes	30 Minutes or Longer	
Hispanic/Latino	61.0	25.2	13.7	6706
White, non-Latino	75.0	17.8	7.2	13640
African-American, non-Latino	56.9	28.7	14.4	9078
Native American/Alaska Native	44.4	30.6	25.0	36
Asian/Pacific Islander	76.1	18.4	5.4	3460
Other	78.7	17.7	3.6	1919
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>67.9</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>34,839</b>

**Table 14. Race of Driver And Duration of Stop (No Search Conducted)**

	Percentage Each Race Stopped For			Total
	Less Than 15 Minutes	15-29 Minutes	30 Minutes or Longer	
Hispanic/Latino	76.2	21.4	2.4	5078
White, non-Latino	83.7	14.9	1.4	11963
African-American, non-Latino	73.9	23.5	2.6	6583
Native American/Alaska Native	72.7	22.7	4.5	22
Asian/Pacific Islander	82.7	16.1	1.2	3127
Other	82.8	16.4	.8	1802
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>80.0</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>28,575</b>



**Table 15. Race of Driver By Anything Found in Search**

	Percentage Each Race Contraband Found		Total
	No	Yes	
Hispanic/Latino	79.1	20.9	1628
White, non-Latino	77.4	22.6	1677
African-American, non-Latino	82.9	17.1	2495
Native American/Alaska Native	78.6	21.4	14
Asian/Pacific Islander	81.1	18.9	333
Other	61.5	38.5	117
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>79.9</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>6264</b>

**Table 16. Race of Driver By Whether Officer is White or Not White**

	Percentage Each Race Stopped For		Total
	Non-White Officers	White Officers	
Hispanic/Latino	19.7	19.1	6076
White, non-Latino	39.9	38.9	13640
African-American, non-Latino	24.7	26.6	9078
Native American/Alaska Native	.1	.1	36
Asian/Pacific Islander	9.9	9.9	3460
Other	5.7	5.4	1919
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34,839</b>

**Table 17. Race of Driver By Whether Officer is African-American or Not African-American**

	Percentage Each Race Stopped For		Total
	Non-African American Officers	African American Officers	
Hispanic/Latino	19.2	20.5	7607
White, non-Latino	39.1	40.8	13,640
African-American, non-Latino	26.1	25.7	9078
Native American/Alaska Native	.1	0.0	36
Asian/Pacific Islander	10.2	3.2	3460
Other	5.3	9.7	1919
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>99.0</b>	<b>34,839</b>

**Table 18. Race of Driver By Whether Officer is Hispanic or Non-Hispanic**

	Percentage Each Race Stopped For		Total
	Non-Hispanic Officers	Hispanic Officers	
Hispanic/Latino	19.2	19.8	6706
White, non-Latino	39.1	39.7	13640
African-American, non-Latino	26.1	26.1	9078
Native American/Alaska Native	.1	.2	36
Asian/Pacific Islander	10.0	8.8	3460
Other	5.5	5.4	1919
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34,839</b>

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**Table 19. Race of Driver By Whether Police Car Was Equipped With Camera**

	Percentage Each Race Stopped For		Total
	Officers in Cars Without Cameras	Officers in Cars With Cameras	
Hispanic/Latino	18.8	20.1	6706
White, non-Latino	40.0	34.3	13640
African-American, non-Latino	22.8	31.6	9078
Native American/Alaska Native	.1	.1	36
Asian/Pacific Islander	9.8	10.1	3460
Other	6.5	3.8	1919
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34,839</b>

**Table 20. Race of Driver By Officer Assignment (Traffic vs. Other)**

	Percentage Each Race Stopped For		Total
	Non-Traffic Officers	Traffic Officers	
Hispanic/Latino	20.2	17.7	6706
White, non-Latino	34.4	46.7	13640
African-American, non-Latino	32.1	16.5	9078
Native American/Alaska Native	.1	.1	36
Asian/Pacific Islander	9.6	10.4	3460
Other	3.6	8.5	1919
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>34,839</b>