Herman Goldstein Award Selection Committee
Police Executive Research Forum
1120 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 930
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Sir:

Enclosed please find eight copies of the program description of an Illinois State Police initiative called ADEPT (Aggressive Driving Enforcement Program Team). Implemented in response to public complaints about road rage, the program from conception used the SARA model to systematically analyze the problem, evaluate possible solutions, design a response, and assess the results.

I am happy to nominate this project for the Herman Goldstein Problem-Oriented Policing Award. The Illinois State Police, District Chicago, are excited about the positive impact the ADEPT project has in its short life. I hope you share our enthusiasm and thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Sam W. Nolen
Director
Submission for Herman Goldstein Award
for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing

1. PROJECT: ADEPT

(AGGRESSIVE DRIVER ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM TEAM)

In response to increasing complaints about aggressive driving on Chicago expressways, District Chicago launched an intensive enforcement and education campaign. The Aggressive Driving Enforcement Program Team (ADEPT) responds to public concerns and enlists individual motorists, private organizations, and the public sector in problem-solving.

**Scanning.** In February 1998, the District surveyed the community, other law enforcement agencies, and the media. They concluded: 1) Police and private citizens both could easily identify the aggressive driver; 2) law enforcement training on aggressive driving was not available; and, 3) the metropolitan community needed to be tapped to address the problem.

**Analysis.** Further analysis revealed:

- Aggressive driving was generally identifiable as a combination of several violations, later called the "FATAL FIVE."

- Six areas on Chicago expressways were identified as RED ZONES with a high incidence of aggressive driving and related crashes.

- More than half of the motorists arrested for reckless driving had criminal histories for other violent offenses.

- Many of the most aggressive drivers were reported to be traveling in excess of 90 mph in a 55 mph zone.

- Court sanctions for aggressive driving were lenient and did not deter recidivism.

- The media, public, and courts could be enlisted to assist police to educate the public, apprehend violators, and increase the effectiveness of enforcement.

- Covert patrol vehicles, equipped with in-car video- cameras would be more effective than marked squad cars.
Response. The plan involved other agencies and the general public:

- Seven line officers and a supervisor were assigned specially-equipped covert cars and dedicated to six RED ZONES in October 1998.

- ISP took a zero tolerance approach to the FATAL FIVE: speed, reckless driving, improper lane change, following too closely, and failure to signal (this last offense was later replaced by drunk driving).

- Two new public service announcements and several special television segments on aggressive driving were aired.

- The public helped by tripling their reports of aggressive driving from 11 to 32 daily.

- Local departments increased their use of multiple citations to identify aggressive drivers.

- Prosecutors and judges were enlisted. Bimonthly meetings are conducted to track progress.

Assessment. The 12-month accomplishments supported program continuation and expansion:

- 297 "aggressive drivers" brought to court, with a 100 percent conviction rate.

- There were 61 DUI arrests.

- Penalties more than doubled.

- 4,522 citations were issued in the six RED ZONES by the ADEPT squad.

- Fatalities in the RED ZONES decreased from 18 to 8.
2. Description

Reckless and aggressive driving usually involves several violations and a willful disregard for the safety of others. On Chicago expressways, speeds for these drivers often exceed 90 mph. Aggressive and reckless drivers impact the entire community. Their actions cause everyone to pay a substantial price, including personal safety and increased insurance premiums.

Scanning

District Chicago knew its community was concerned about reckless drivers. In February 1998, the district averaged 11 calls per day from frustrated motorists about aggressive drivers. It is important to consider this number includes only those motorists who had immediate access to a car phone and knew where to call. Additionally, the number of calls for police response due to aggressive and reckless driving was only second to calls for crash assistance. The District Chicago community expected a response, specifically immediate and increased enforcement, higher fines and penalties, and programs that increase awareness.

The public had good reason to be concerned. According to the National Highway Safety Administration, of the 6.8 million crashes that occur each year nationally, more than one half may be directly related to some form of aggressive driving. In Illinois, speeding, following too closely, and improper lane usage are leading contributory causes listed for most crashes. The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety referred to aggressive drivers as the single largest threat to the motoring public. According to NHTSA, initiatives that intend to increase compliance need to use a combination of creative enforcement and techniques to raise public awareness levels. ADEPT accomplished both.

The officer who initiated the community policing project discovered aggressive driving was crime-related, affected the orderliness of the area's highways, and imposed significant problems not only for the motoring public and patrol officers, but for emergency service workers and trauma
centers. Coupled with officer observations and a growing national awareness of the dangers and fatalities associated with "Road Rage," ISP officers were determined to increase efforts to reduce this deadly behavior.

- District Chicago, like many urban police departments, received significant complaints from the public about reckless drivers. In 1998, District Chicago received 4,015 calls from drivers complaining of the aggressive and reckless driving behavior of others on the roadways under State Police jurisdiction.

- Chicago crashes constitute about 35-40 percent of the total crashes handled by ISP. Troopers there were very familiar with the types of factors which led to most of these crashes: speed, lane changes, and following too closely.

Analysis

What were the violations? First looking to define what constituted road rage, the initiating officer formed a committee, which conducted some preliminary research, surveyed callers, and consulted with citizen groups. Under Illinois statute, there was no offense called "aggressive driving". Further, while there were many opinions about the driver's state of mind at the time, there was a need to examine the problem in terms of illegal behaviors - at least from the police perspective. Aggressive driving for purposes of observable violations included:

- speeding,
- following too closely,
- improper lane usage,
- failing to signal,
- reckless driving, and
- running red lights.
These conclusions were borne out for the crashes handled by troopers. The Illinois State Police handled more than 56,039 crashes in 1997. District Chicago responded to and handled 21,157 of these crashes. Speeding, following too closely, and improper lane usage were the causes most often cited as playing a significant role in these events. While many of these crashes involved reckless driving, the drivers were not usually cited for this offense. Further, since most of ISP activity and the complaints received by the District were on expressways, the project was refined to focus on five offenses, now referred to as the FATAL FIVE.'

What environmental factors contributed to aggressive driving behavior? In addition to the obvious problems of traffic volume, the district team concluded there were several other root problems of motorists' frustration and aggressive driving behaviors, including traffic gridlock, road construction delays, and long hours spent in traffic. The locations of these environmental factors could easily be plotted; however, the aggressive driving was seen to be equally likely to occur before and after reaching these highly congested locations. The greatest danger lay where traffic was most congested.

How did the public's reaction affect aggressive driving?

The District Chicago community consists of the hundreds of thousands of motorists who use the Chicago area highways each day. Based on telephone surveys with the general public, ADEPT found most people who traveled on the expressways could easily identify instances of aggressive driving behavior. However, it was also discovered the public lacked safe methods for dealing with aggressive drivers and assistance in addressing the issue systematically. The team also learned the public viewed aggressive driving as isolated incidents, specific to individual motorists, and were largely

- Note that the Fatal Five were later revised to include drunk driving. Failing to signal was related but less critical to the overall mission of the team.
unaware of the magnitude and seriousness of the problem beyond their own personal experiences. This lack of awareness contributed to a general sense that aggressive driving was not an important public safety issue. As a result, the problem was not being fully addressed by police, the court system, and media.

How could other agencies and organizations be utilized?

Courts. The courts historically treated aggressive or reckless driving arrests on the same level as mere traffic tickets. The conviction rate for aggressive driving offenses was just 72 percent. Further, the project team discovered the average penalty for aggressive or reckless driving consisted of a $125 fine, which could include court supervision, meaning the violation would not appear on the driver's permanent record. Recidivism of aggressive drivers was also found to be very high.

News Media. The team recognized the news media as essential in raising public awareness and support on any social issue in today's society. They also discovered generic "Safe Driving" public service announcements were not going to be well received by the Chicago media market. New marketing strategies were needed to entice media attention in an area where many issues competed for copy space and air time.

Law Enforcement Training. The team knew the District wanted to concentrate resources on problems where officers could have the most impact. However, little in-service training was available at the Academy or District level regarding reckless driving enforcement. Even less existed for cadets and recruits in the training academies. District Chicago called various other state police agencies and determined none had a block of instruction related to reckless driving enforcement as a permanent part of their curriculum.
Equipment. The team also explored various equipment options for capturing the dangerous nature of aggressive drivers in action. Officers uniformly felt that a high performance covert vehicle, maneuverable in heavy traffic would help with apprehension. Several credible alternatives were tested before the team decided video and audio taping presented the best opportunity to graphically capture the reckless driving event as it unfolds.

Where was the problem occurring? ADEPT contacted the ISP Highway Safety Analysis Team in Springfield to identify the areas in Chicago with the highest incidence of arrests and crashes related to aggressive driving. They also examined times and dates of personal injury crashes occurring in the district's jurisdiction, vehicle color, and age and zip code of offenders. Density maps were created based on the FATAL FIVE offenses.

Six RED ZONES were identified which would benefit the most from increased enforcement. Most of the reckless driving complaints received from the public also emanated from these zones.

**RED ZONE Locations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RED ZONE</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RZ1</td>
<td>194 W 11th St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RZ2</td>
<td>I-90/94 between Broad &amp; Prairie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RZ3</td>
<td>I-290 between Hermitage &amp; IL-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RZ4</td>
<td>I-290 between Halsted &amp; Sacramento</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RZ5</td>
<td>I-57 between 99th &amp; 111th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who were the offenders? Based on national figures, it was estimated that aggressive drivers constitute only one-half of one percent of motorists. For a short period, the analytical team also conducted criminal history checks on those arrested in the RED ZONES and discovered that more than half of
these violators had criminal histories related to other violent offenses. This new information proved to be an added safety alert to officers, helped to emphasize to the public to avoid, not engage, these drivers, and also provided more evidence to prosecutors that aggressive drivers needed to be seriously sanctioned.

Response

Implementing the response was challenging. A clear strategy was articulated which attempted to make creative use of public and private resources. Quicker response to complaints, decreasing fatalities in the Red Zones, and higher conviction rates were the project's objectives and evaluation criteria. Implementation began in February 1998, with the assignment of one covert vehicle and the gradual addition of seven more high performance covert vehicles dedicated to patrol in the six designated RED ZONES. The response also included specific strategies for law enforcement, the courts, the media, and the general public.

Enhanced Enforcement Procedures. First, the program targeted law enforcement. Seven officers and a supervisor were assigned covert vehicles and dedicated to the six RED ZONES. The Department adopted a 'zero tolerance' policy for the fatal five violations; no written warnings were to be issued by ADEPT members in the six RED ZONES. A reckless driving enforcement block of instruction was added to academy training. Equally important, an in-service training was delivered to all district personnel. There was an immediate increase in the number of reckless driving citations. Later, drunk driving was added to the FATAL FIVE related offenses (failure to signal was considered of secondary importance); DUI arrests between April 1999 and April 2000 tripled as a result.

Enhanced Equipment. Eight high performance covert vehicles were assigned to the team. These included several Chevrolet Camaros and Ford Mustangs, which improved the ability of the
officers to observe and apprehend the violators. Video cameras were mounted in these cars to capture the actions of aggressive drivers on videotape. A wireless microphone was worn by the officer to provide a running narrative as the event unfolds and to record the conversation at the time of the traffic stop. Procedures were developed with prosecuting supervisors for video and audio recording the violators to strengthen prosecution and add consistency. The team confirmed it had the legal authority to make simultaneous video and audio records of conversations between officers and motorists stopped for reckless or aggressive driving violations.

A secondary benefit of the videotapes was the impact on other police, prosecutors and judges. The tapes created an awareness and a sense of urgency to address the issue. In fact, those familiar with the taped evidence usually agree that aggressive drivers are every bit as much a threat as drunk drivers.

**Involving the Courts.** Presentations were made to prosecutors, judges, and the Illinois Bar Association. More attorneys are now more acutely aware of the need to address aggressive driving in order to protect the vast majority of drivers. The team continues to meet with the Chief Justice bimonthly to track progress and identify issues.

Meetings with the Cook County State's Attorney's Office led to development of a standard operating procedure for processing those charged with reckless driving. Paperwork was standardized for all District Chicago personnel. This, too, has enhanced success in court by eliminating confusion when handling reckless driving arrests.

**Public/Media Involvement.** The next phase presented the greatest challenge. For enforcement efforts to be considered truly successful, the district needed to develop community support and modify the reckless behavior of those predisposed to aggressive driving. The media became an invaluable
partner in communicating the message. The wide media coverage was especially noteworthy, given competing demands for air time and copy space in the Chicago area. This strategy was designed to enlist the public as partners in the overall initiative.

- The addition of covert vehicles fully equipped with state-of-the-art technology resulted in many ride-aways by the media.

- A considerable amount of information was targeted to the general motoring public advising how to avoid becoming a victim of aggressive driving and road rage. Every contact by ADEPT officers with the media emphasized safety tips for our community and raised awareness levels.

- District Chicago participated in the production of educational videotapes dealing with aggressive driving and which are marketed to schools and driver training programs nationally.

- Safe motorists were encouraged to take ownership by using their cellular phones and dialing a special Illinois State Police hot line to report reckless drivers.

- Relationship building with the media resulted in the development of two public service announcements (PSAs) produced by local stations which emphasized ADEPT’s efforts and allowed the community to get involved.

ADEPT officers also personally participated in community forums and local cable programs to get the message out and avoid any misconceptions of a "big brother policing effort." The public was enlisted to phone in complaints by emphasizing that District Chicago's proactive efforts are aimed at the one-half of one percent who make driving dangerous for everyone else.

Assessment

ISP continues to work with the public and courts to identify better ways to effect this problem. Within ISP, the evaluation focused on crash location fatality statistics, conviction rates, officer perceptions, and officer activity levels. The following statistics point the project's success in the first year alone:
• 297 "aggressive drivers" were brought to court.
• Convictions rose to 100 percent.
• Penalties more than doubled.
• Fatalities in the RED ZONES decreased from 18 to 8. For the first time in its history, the Kennedy expressway had no fatalities in 1999; it typically averaged 1 or 2 per month.
• Three weekends which are typically very dangerous for motorists were free of fatalities in District Chicago in 1999: New Year's, Super Bowl, and Labor Day!!
• Officers embraced the effort; arrests for reckless driving increased for all patrol squads in the district.

**Lives saved.** The occurrence of fatalities and serious personal injuries within the six RED ZONES has declined. Fatalities and serious personal injuries for the 1999 New Year's holiday period were nonexistent for the roads under District Chicago jurisdiction. The same is true for the second most dangerous driving holiday of the year, Super Bowl Sunday, when no fatalities or serious injuries were reported on our roadways. In addition, there has been a dramatic decrease in the number of fatalities at the target locations:

**Public perception.** The ADEPT momentum is growing. Public support has been far-reaching. Rarely does a community get behind an enforcement program like this with such encouragement and approval.

• Complaints have increased from 11 to 32 each day. The motoring public in the Chicago metropolitan area is aware and appreciative of these efforts. It is common for ADEPT members to hear honking and see thumbs up from relieved motorists after they see a reckless driver pulled over and arrested.
Amazingly, some cited drivers have thanked troopers for stopping them and helping them to realize the threat they posed to others (see attachments).

**Training and emphasis.** As a direct result of this initiative, a reckless driving class is now a permanent part of the cadet and recruit curriculum at the Illinois State Police Academy. New police officers are learning that aggressive and reckless driving enforcement is important, in part because the Department considers it enough of a priority to have it included and give it special attention.

Police officers are more knowledgeable about the offense of reckless driving and are making more arrests. They are also spreading the message to other law enforcement officials and motorists that aggressive driving can be reduced by becoming involved. Officers are encouraged by the added emphasis expressed by judges and prosecutors.

**Enforcement, prosecution, and conviction.** Arrests have increased and troopers not assigned to the team are identifying and arresting reckless drivers more frequently and having much greater success in court. Thanks to the efforts of ADEPT, most judges, prosecutors, and defense lawyers are now aware these dangerous offenses should be handled seriously by the courts. With the added evidence of videotaped driving, fines and penalties are up. Our conviction rate stands at 100 percent.

Fines have increased from $125 with supervision possible to $425 with no supervision. Serious offenders have been sentenced to community service, others have had their license revoked, and some individuals have received jail time.

**Adaptation.** An important part of this initiative is the ongoing adaptation of the strategy as new information emerged. ADEPT was implemented in a dynamic context and was modified as new needs and partners emerged. One very important adaptation has been made in the program as a result of the assessment-Drunk Driving has been added to the FATALFIVE and the team's name has been changed to reflect this new emphasis. The program is now called ADDEPT: Aggressive and Drunk
Driving Enforcement Program Team.

Conclusion

ADDEPT works because it systematically analyzed a problem and available resources in designing a response. ADDEPT follows the SARA model of problem solving and can be adapted to a variety of communities, large and small, with similar results. Citizens feel like they are a part of the solution and have a partner in the Illinois State Police—exactly what community policing is all about.

Future Directions

The Illinois State Police ADDEPT officers continue to work with local municipalities, police agencies, and traffic courts to explain and promote this strategy. Coupled with other enforcement and education efforts, ADDEPT has proven to be a real life saver, and will be continued and adapted to shifts in traffic and aggressive patterns.

- The project will be improved by equipping the fleet with more covert vehicles with in-car video cameras, and ensuring all department personnel are trained on effective enforcement and prosecution strategies.
- The problem does not appear to have migrated to other parts of the expressways, probably because the RED ZONES were not publicized and the covert vehicles gave an appearance of police omnipresence.
- The District is working with the judiciary to explore the possibility of having those convicted of reckless driving attend victim impact panels and behavioral counseling as part of their sentence. It is important the violator is aware of just how much of a danger they are to others on the roads.
- The department has assisted a number of communities expressing interest in ADDEPT. We have offered solutions, ideas, and resources to other departments and assisted them in adapting our experiences to their specific needs.
3. Agency and Officer Information

1. ADDEPT is a project specific to District Chicago. A project which was initiated as a team of seven officers and a supervisor has carried over to enforcement efforts of all patrol officers in the District. In addition, the findings and achievements are replicable anywhere in the state. Some important aspects of the program have been adopted statewide in all 21 districts:

   • Enforcement, citation analysis and crash analysis now incorporate the "FATAL FIVE."

   • The covert fleet has been expanded statewide.

   • A private foundation and the Illinois Department of Transportation have equipped all squad cars in the Chicago fleet with in-car video cameras.

2. All affected personnel received POP training prior to project implementation. The SARA model was used to address the problem systematically. Problem-solving has been adopted agency-wide and the Department is working to ensure all personnel receive training in community policing. To date, 1,300 of the 2,100 officers have received at least 12 hours of community policing or 4 hours of training in problem-solving. Recently, the department has recommitted to service, one of three core values of the department, by adopting the philosophy of:

   "engaging in interactive partnerships to proactively identify problems, developing solutions, and strengthening relationships between citizens and police."

This commitment translates community policing into daily activity of every officer, including patrol. As such, each officer is held accountable for identifying problems specific to his/her assignment, and addressing the underlying conditions or causes, either by handling it themselves or by initiating a project to cooperatively address it.
3. Officers are encouraged in several ways to integrate problem-solving into their daily routines. ISP has incorporated community policing into its performance rating for officers. The rating instruments are being refined further to reflect officer development and use of problem-solving and partnerships in daily activities. The Department also sponsors a statewide POP conference, modeled after the annual conference in San Diego. A Problem-Oriented Project certificate of recognition can be awarded for significant accomplishments.

4. In addition to the basic training, the team used a POP form designed by the department to guide the process. The problem had to be recurrent and of major interest to the public, considered part of the public safety mandate, or pose significant threat to the general public. Analysis and assessment incorporated mapping, public surveys, consultation with NHTSA, and team-building to ensure the problem was addressed both tactically and systemically.

5. No problems were identified.

6. The ADDEPT squad consisted of seven line officers and a supervisor. There was considerable command involvement, and the Highway Safety Analysis team was utilized for crash and citation data analysis. The project was fully funded with the general revenue funds of the department.

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Individual Officer Activity Comparisons

Individual officer activity was compared before and after receiving covert vehicles. Table 3 illustrates enforcement activity for all 25 officers' pre- and post covert vehicle assignment for the eight selected, citation-types and multiple offenses. Table 4 illustrates the amount of speeding citations written by covert vehicle officers in 55 and 65 m.p.h. speed zones and the traveling speed of the offender pre- and post covert vehicle assignments. Many factors can affect officer activity, including assignment to specialty details (cadet class supervisor, FTO), vacation, illness, etc. These issues should be kept in mind when interpreting the following graphs.

A majority of the dramatic increase in reckless-driving citations can be attributed to District Chicago. Covert vehicles assisted District Chicago officers in generating 247 reckless-driving citations in 1999, up from 8 in 1997, an almost 3,000% increase. District 2 officers wrote 350.0070 more reckless driving citations, aided by the use of the covert vehicles. Overall, the presence of covert vehicles had a significant impact on the ability of officers to apprehend aggressive-driving offenders as evidenced by the 117.90% increase in aggressive-driving citations written by officers after receiving their covert vehicles.

As indicated in Table 4, covert vehicles are not only serving to apprehend speeders, but are instrumental in apprehending the worst speeding violators. In District Chicago, where excessive speed is a chronic problem in congested areas, speeding citations written for speeds in excess of 100 m.p.h. increased 1,316.67% after the introduction of covert vehicle patrols. Other districts experiencing significant increases in speeding citations in excess of 100 m.p.h. are Districts 2, 6, 9, and 11.

Covert vehicle officers wrote nearly one-and-one-half times (140.96%) more seatbelt citations in 1999 than in 1997. This increase leads to the assumption that individuals are still reluctant to wear seatbelts and covert vehicles are allowing officers to apprehend more violators, due to the invisible nature of these squads.
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<th>Reckless Driving</th>
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<th>Zero Tolerance</th>
<th>Lane Change</th>
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NC = Not Calculable
## Individual Officer 1997 - 1999 Comparison by Citation Type

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<th>Speeding Citations</th>
<th>Multiple Citations</th>
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<td>27.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 16</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oct-98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 17</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oct-98</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>500.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Group Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NC = Not Calculable

Total citations includes reckless driving, DUI, zero tolerance, lane change, following too closely, meatball, child restraint, and speeding. Multiple citations were not included to avoid double counting.