

Traffic Safety Facts

Research Note

March 2004

DOT HS 809 708

Public Perceptions of the July 2003 *You Drink & Drive. You Lose.* Crackdown: Telephone Surveys Show the Media Campaign Reaches Target Audience

Marv Levy, Richard Compton, and Stephen Dienstfrey

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Office of Research & Technology is evaluating the July 2003 impaired driving *You Drink and Drive. You Lose.* crackdown (campaign). This Research Note reports the results of surveys conducted to measure public perceptions of the crackdown.

Background

In 2002, more than 17,000 people lost their lives in alcohol-related crashes. Past research has shown that high visibility enforcement campaigns (combining highly visible enforcement with publicity about the enforcement campaign) can yield substantial reductions in alcohol-related crashes (Lacey et. al., 1986; Lacey et al., 1999; Wells et al., 1991).

Beginning on June 20th, continuing through the July 4th holiday period, and ending on July 13th 2003, NHTSA sponsored an impaired driving crackdown under the banner – *You Drink and Drive. You Lose.* A key feature of the crackdown was the use of paid advertising to support and promote drivers' awareness of the enforcement campaign.

National and State telephone surveys were conducted before and after the crackdown to measure driver awareness, perceptions of enforcement activity, and self-reported drinking and driving behavior change. This Research Note analyzes public perceptions of the crackdown to measure the effectiveness of the media component (both earned and paid media).

The crackdown involved unprecedented use of paid advertising, totaling some \$25M nationwide. Additional information about the level of enforcement activity and the effect of the crackdown on alcohol-related crashes will be reported later.

Earned Media

Many of the States participating in the national crackdown made extensive use of earned media by conducting press conferences, issuing press releases, inviting reporters to sobriety checkpoints, providing weekly information on the results of the enforcement activity, using brochures and posters, and other means to garner news coverage of the crackdown, etc. Market research showed that 309 stories about the crackdown aired on TV (on 140 stations) and that there was fairly extensive radio coverage (with some 9,000 mentions of the crackdown nationwide).

Paid Advertising

For 2003, Congress appropriated eleven million dollars to conduct a paid advertising campaign targeting drinking and driving. NHTSA spent \$500,000 producing an advertisement about the enforcement crackdown on impaired driving, and \$5.5 million to purchase air time on national TV. An additional \$5 million was spent purchasing air time in thirteen Strategic Evaluation States (SES), chosen primarily because of their high alcohol-related fatality numbers or crash rates. Fifteen other States spent approximately \$13 million

Marv Levy is a Research Psychologist in the Office of Research & Technology, Richard Compton is the Director of the Office of Research & Technology, and Stephen Dienstfrey is with Schulman, Ronca and Bucuvalas, Inc.

of State funds or federally appropriated funds for paid media to advertise the impaired driving crackdown, with the preponderance of funding spent in 9 of the States.

National and State Media Message

Due to their heavy involvement in alcohol-related crashes, the focus of the paid advertisement was directed at young males, especially those 18-34 years old. The TV ad, both in Spanish and English, showed males in their 20s and 30s being stopped by law enforcement officers, asked if they had been drinking, and then asked to step out of their car. The drivers are shown taking field sobriety tests, being handcuffed, placed in the back seat of a squad car, and having their mug shot taken. Superimposed at the end of the clip is the logo – *You Drink and Drive. You Lose.*

The paid TV ad was shown nationally, and in addition, in the 13 SES States with the trailer modified to identify the individual States. To maximize potential effectiveness, air time was purchased on TV programs often viewed by males between the ages of 18 and 34 (NASCAR, sporting events, reality shows, late night TV, etc.). The ad ran from June 20th to July 13th, primarily Wednesdays through Saturdays.

National, 13 SES State, and 4 Comparison State Surveys

Representative surveys were conducted nationally, in the 13 SES States, and in four comparison States both prior to and just after the impaired driving crackdown. The SES States were: Alaska, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Montana, New Mexico, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and West Virginia. The Comparison States were: Missouri, New York, North Carolina and Wisconsin. None of the Comparison States supplemented the national buy with State-funded paid ads.

For each pre or post crackdown wave, the National Sample targeted 1250 respondents who met two criteria: 1) they reported driving, and 2) they drank alcohol at least once during the past year. They did not need to be regular drinkers or have driven after drinking. Similar criteria were used for screening 500 respondents in each of the 13 SES States and the 4 Comparison States.

In each of these States, the surveys were conducted in specific counties or parishes (Louisiana) where the enforcement efforts were planned for implementation. For both the national and State surveys, all questionnaire items were identical and conducted randomly using a computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) system. A total of 9,750 respondents were surveyed before and after the crackdown.

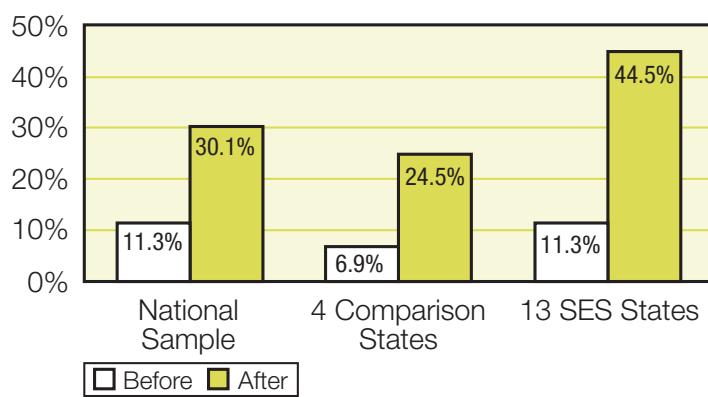
Findings for All Drivers

SES States Show Bigger Gains in Awareness

The survey asked drivers whether they had seen the national ad in the past two weeks. Figure 1 shows that after the crackdown, many more drivers in the 13 SES States had seen the national ad (44.5%) than had drivers in the 4 Comparison States (24.5%) or in the National Sample (30.1%).

In the 13 SES States there was a 33.2% point increase in the percentage having seen the national ad on TV (from 11.3% to 45.5%), compared to an increase of 18.8% points in the National Sample (from 11.3% to 30.1%), and an increase of 17.6% points in the Comparison States (from 6.9% to 24.5%).

Figure 1
Recall Seeing National Ad on TV Recently
Among all drivers

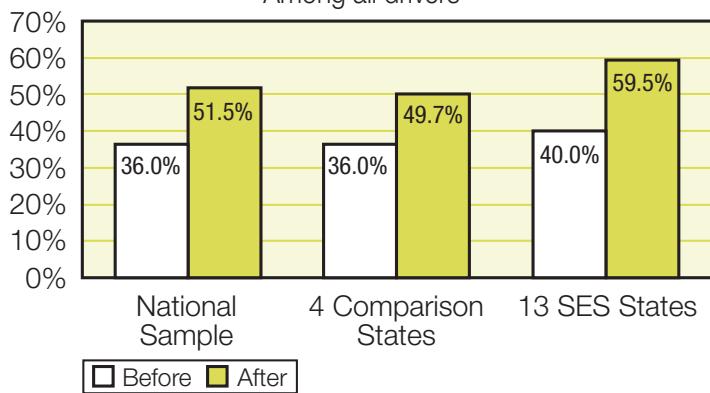


Q20c. I'd like to find out if you recall seeing a particular ad on TV recently. It starts with police pulling over drivers, and asking if they had been drinking alcohol. The drivers are then told to step out of the car, and tested to see if they are breaking the drinking and driving laws. The ad ends with the drivers handcuffed, placed in a police car, and shows their mug shots. Do you recall seeing this ad in the past two weeks?

Base: National: Before=1,272, After=1,261; Comparison: Before=2,001, After=2,007; SES: Before=6,503, After=6,546

Drivers were asked whether they had heard or seen several slogans, including the *You Drink and Drive. You Lose.* slogan in the past 30 days (see Figure 2). Comparing the before and after surveys, the largest increase was found in the SES States with approximately 60% reporting having seen or heard the *You Drink and Drive. You Lose.* message after the crackdown (an increase of 19.5% points). This compares to 52% in the National Sample (a 15% point increase) and 50% in the Comparison States (a 13.7% point increase).

Figure 2
**Aided Recall of National Slogan
*You Drink & Drive. You Lose.***
Among all drivers



- Q21. Do you recall hearing or seeing the following slogans in the past 30 days?

Base: National: Before=1,272, After=1,261; Comparison: Before=2,001, After=2,007; SES: Before=6,503, After=6,546

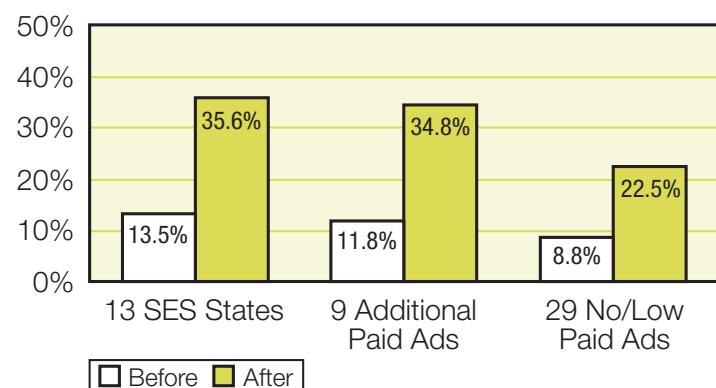
Paid Advertising Increased Awareness

States in the National Sample were partitioned into those where paid advertising for the national ad was supplemented by additional funds or those where no supplemental funds were used. In addition to the 13 SES States (all of which were supported by NHTSA with paid media campaigns), 9 of the other 15 States that spent money on paid ads spent \$88,000 or more on paid advertising (9 Other Paid Ad States). Data from the 6 States where fewer dollars were spent on paid advertising were combined with data from the 22 States and DC where supplemental funding was not used (29 No/Low Paid Ad States).

Respondents were asked whether they had seen the national ad on TV recently. After the crackdown the paid ad States reported higher percentages of drivers having seen the ad, with 35.6% in the 13 SES States

and 34.8% in the 9 Other Paid Ad States, while only 22.5% had seen the ad in the 29 No/Low Paid Ad States (Figure 3). A significant increase was found in the 13 SES States, and the increase in the Other Paid Ad States was in the correct direction but did not reach statistical significance, while no significant increase was seen in the 29 No/Low Paid Ad States.

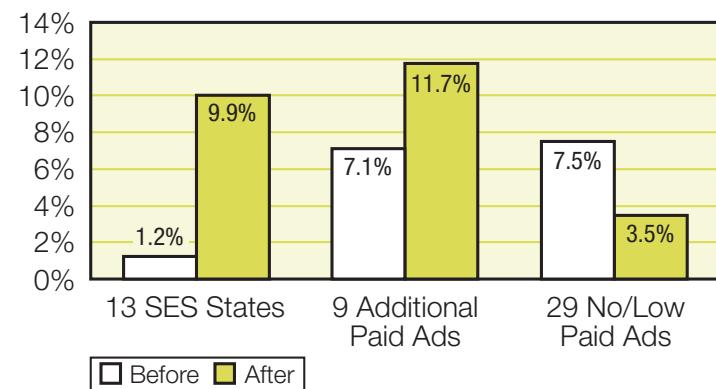
Figure 3
Recall Seeing National Ad on TV Recently
Among all drivers



Q20c. I'd like to find out if you recall seeing a particular ad on TV recently. It starts with police pulling over drivers, and asking if they had been drinking alcohol. The drivers are then told to step out of the car, and tested to see if they are breaking the drinking and driving laws. The ad ends with the drivers handcuffed, placed in a police car, and shows their mug shots. Do you recall seeing this ad in the past two weeks?

Base: SES: Before=536, After=481; Additional Paid: Before=235, After=270; No Paid: Before=501, After=510

Figure 4
Recognized Name of Slogan or Logo Used at End of National TV Ad
Among all drivers who saw national TV ad



Q20d. What was the slogan or logo used at the end of this ad?

Base: SES: Before=71, After=171; Additional Paid: Before=27, After=94; No Paid: Before=44, After=115

When asked if they recognized the national *You Drink and Drive. You Lose.* slogan used at the end of the national ad only the drivers in the SES states showed a significant increase in correctly identifying the slogan (Figure 4). Recognition of the slogan increased in the 13 SES States from 1.2% in the Before survey to 9.9% in the After survey, while the recognition of the slogan was not significantly higher in the 9 Other Paid Ad States (going from 7.1% to 11.2%), and actually declined in the 29 No/Low Paid Ad States (from 7.5% to 3.5%).

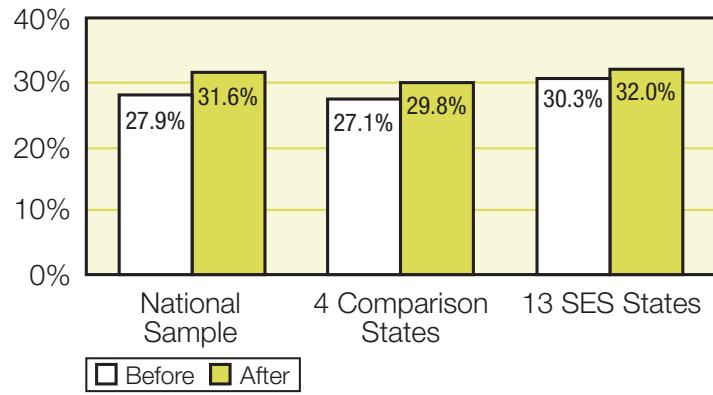
Perceptions of Enforcement Activity and Driving After Drinking Behavior

It was anticipated that an increase in driver awareness of the impaired driving crackdown coupled with an increased law enforcement effort would result in positive changes in perceptions of enforcement activity and in reported driver behavior.

The survey asked whether the drivers had seen or heard about police checkpoints or other enforcement efforts (e.g., saturation patrols) to catch impaired drivers in the past 30 days. Significant increases (from 36% to 43.5%) were obtained after the crackdown in the National Sample, in 9 of 13 SES States, and in 3 of 4 Comparisons States.

**Figure 5
More Likely to Be Stopped by Police After Drinking Compared to Last Month**

Among all drivers



- Q16. Do you think the chances of being stopped have changed in the past month? That is, compared to a month ago, do you think a driver who had been drinking is more likely, less likely or about as likely to be stopped by the police?

Base: National: Before=1,272, After=1,261; Comparison: Before=2,001, After=2,007; SES: Before=6,503, After=6,546

As shown in Figure 5, when the drivers were asked whether they were more likely (compared to the last month) to be stopped by the police for driving after drinking, a small but statistically significant change was reported in the National Sample; however, significant changes were reported in only 2 of the 13 SES States, and in none of the 4 Comparison States.

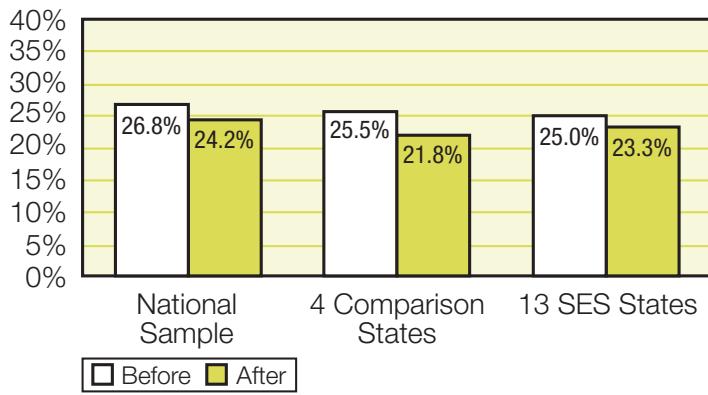
Although there were some positive changes reported in driver perception of enforcement activity, in general there were no positive changes reported in police activity or in driver behavior.

Drivers were asked about the visibility of police on roads they normally drive during the past 30 days. Drivers in the National Sample, 13 SES States, and 4 Comparison States did not report seeing an increase in enforcement activity (Figure 6). One explanation for the lack of an increase in observed enforcement activity is that the before measure may have been elevated by increased enforcement activity associated with a national effort directed at increasing safety belt use in May 2003.

In addition, among the National, SES and Comparison samples only one of 36 pre to post comparisons showed a significant decline in self-reported behavior

**Figure 6
Seen Police on the Road More Often Than Usual in Past 30 Days**

Among all drivers



- Q14. in the past 30 days, have you seen police on the roads you normally drive more often than usual, less often than usual, about the same, or never?

Base: National: Before=1,272, After=1,261; Comparison: Before=2,001, After=2,007; SES: Before=6,503, After=6,546

after the crackdown. A decrease was seen in the number of drivers reporting driving within 2 hours of drinking in only one of the SES States; however, no decreases were reported for driving when they thought they had too much to drink.

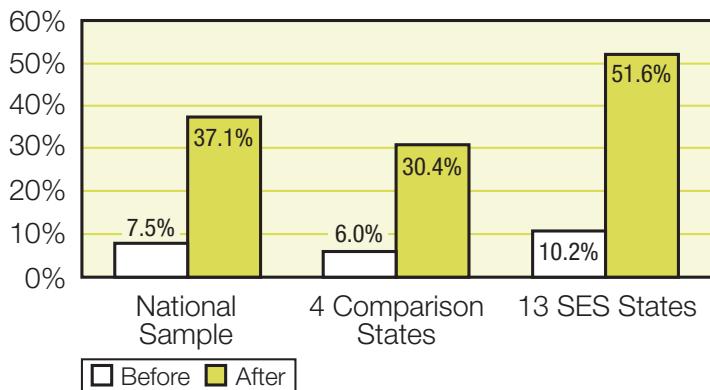
Young Drivers

The national ad targeted young males between the ages of 18 and 34. The survey findings showed that this targeting was successful. For example, in the National Sample, there was greater recall of having seen the ad by 18-34 year old drivers (29.6%) than for older drivers (18.8%).

Figure 7 shows that in the 13 SES States some 51.6% recalled seeing the national ad compared to 30.4% in the 4 Comparison States and 37.1% in the National Sample.

Similarly, when the young drivers were asked whether

**Figure 7
Recall Seeing National Ad on TV Recently**
Among drivers 18-34

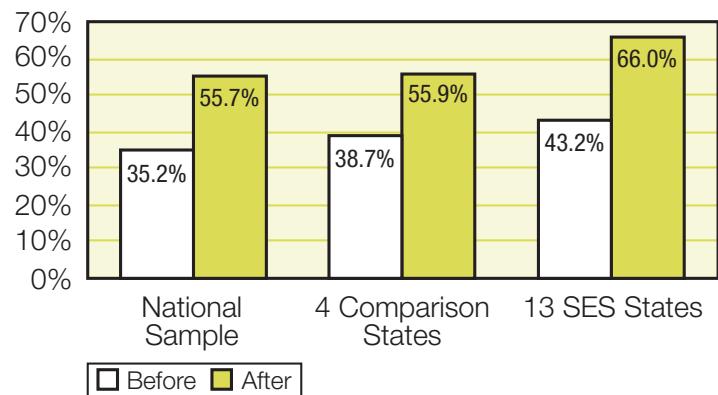


Q20c. I'd like to find out if you recall seeing a particular ad on TV recently. It starts with police pulling over drivers, and asking if they had been drinking alcohol. The drivers are then told to step out of the car, and tested to see if they are breaking the drinking and driving laws. The ad ends with the drivers handcuffed, placed in a police car, and shows their mug shots. Do you recall seeing this ad in the past two weeks?

Base: National All: Before=1,272, After=1,261; US 18-34: Before=355; After=348; Comparison 18-34: Before=589, After=553; SES 18-34: Before=2,068, After=1,963

they recalled hearing or seeing the national slogan in the past 30 days, there was greater aided recall in the 13 SES States at 66.0%, compared to 55.9% in the 4 Comparison States, and 55.7% in the National Sample (Figure 8).

**Figure 8
Aided Recall of National Slogan
*You Drink & Drive. You Lose.***
Among drivers 18-34



Q21. Do you recall hearing or seeing the following slogans in the past 30 days?

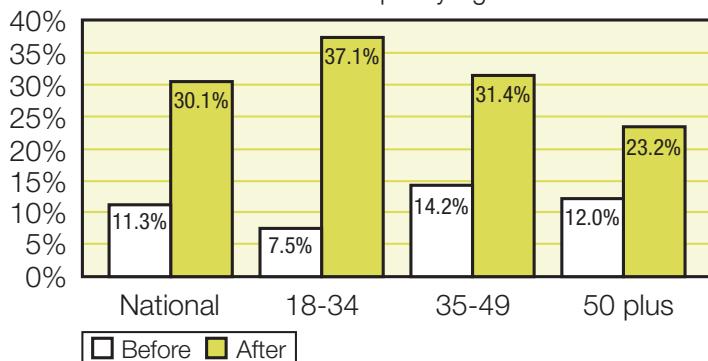
Base: National: Before=355, After=348; Comparison: Before=589, After=533; SES: Before=2,068, After=1,963

Paid Advertising had Bigger Impact on 18-34 Year Olds

In order to assess how effective the targeting of the national ad campaign was in reaching younger drivers, the respondents in the National Sample were grouped into three age categories: 18-34, 35-49 and 50 and older. Since this analysis is based on the National Sample it includes many drivers from States that did not use paid ads and as a result has lower percentages of drivers recalling the national ad (Figure 9).

The results of this analysis clearly showed that there was a greater awareness of the paid ad campaign on the younger drivers than older drivers and the effect decreased as the drivers' age increased (Figure 9).

Figure 9
Recall Seeing National Ad on TV Recently
 National Sample by Age

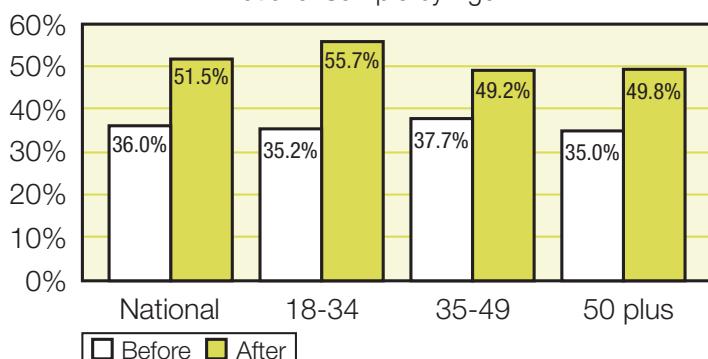


Q20c. I'd like to find out if you recall seeing a particular ad on TV recently. It starts with police pulling over drivers, and asking if they had been drinking alcohol. The drivers are then told to step out of the car, and tested to see if they are breaking the drinking and driving laws. The ad ends with the drivers handcuffed, placed in a police car, and shows their mug shots. Do you recall seeing this ad in the past two weeks?

Base: National: Before=1,272, After=1,261; 18-34: Before=355, After=348; 35-49: Before=438, After=423; 50 plus: Before=457, After=470

After the impaired driving crackdown, 37.1% of 18-34 year old drivers reported seeing the national ad, whereas 31.4% of 35-49 year old drivers and 23.2% of those 50 and older reported seeing the ad. Similarly, a greater increase was observed in the 18-34 year old drivers (29.6% point increase), a smaller increase in the 35-49 year old drivers (17.2% points), and an even smaller increase in the 50 and older drivers (11.2% points).

Figure 10
**Aided Recall of National Slogan
*You Drink & Drive. You Lose.***
 National Sample by Age



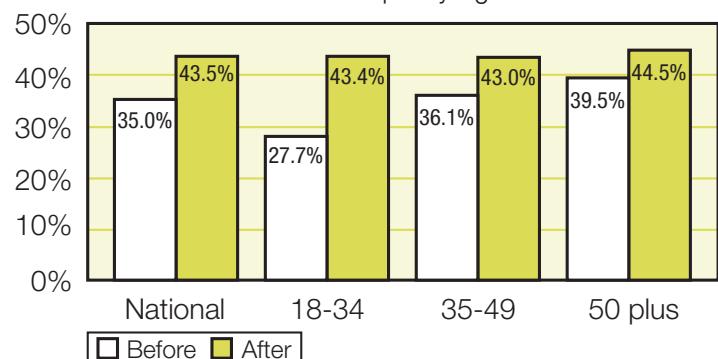
Q21. Do you recall hearing or seeing the following slogans in the past 30 days?

Base: National: Before=1,272, After=1,261; 18-34: Before=355, After=348; 35-49: Before=438, After=423; 50 plus: Before=457, After=470

As shown in Figure 10, 55.7% of the younger drivers recalled hearing or seeing the national slogan after the crackdown (pre to post difference was 20.5% points), while 49.2% of the drivers 35-49 years old recalled the slogan (an increase of 11.5% points), and 49.8% of those drivers older than 50 recalled the slogan (an increase of 14.8% points).

Prior to the crackdown, about one-quarter of drivers 18-34 years old reported seeing or hearing about police setting up checkpoints or other enforcement efforts to catch drivers who were driving while under the influence or driving drunk (Figure 11).

Figure 11
Seen or Heard about Police Checkpoints or Other Efforts in Past 30 Days to Catch Drunk Drivers
 National Sample by Age



Q19a. In the past 30 days, have you seen or heard anything about police setting up checkpoints or other enforcement efforts to catch drivers who were driving while under the influence of alcohol or driving drunk?

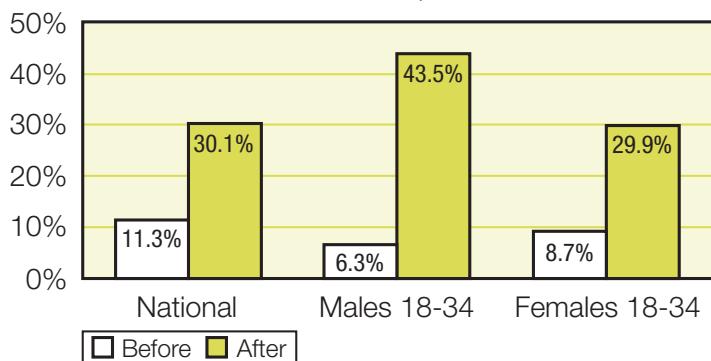
Base: National: Before=1,272, After=1,261; 18-34: Before=355, After=348; 35-49: Before=438, After=423; 50 plus: Before=457, After=470

This contrasts with more than a third of older drivers who reported seeing or hearing about the police enforcement efforts. By the end of the program there was no difference among the age groups. The shift was largest for 18-34 year olds (15.7%), next largest for those 35-49 year olds (6.9%), and least for those over 50 (5.0%).

18-34 Year Old Males Show Greater Change than Females

The National Sample was further categorized into 18-34 year old males and females (Figure 12). There were no significant differences between males and females

Figure 12
Recall Seeing National Ad on TV Recently
 National Sample



Q20c. I'd like to find out if you recall seeing a particular ad on TV recently. It starts with police pulling over drivers, and asking if they had been drinking alcohol. The drivers are then told to step out of the car, and tested to see if they are breaking the drinking and driving laws. The ad ends with the drivers handcuffed, placed in a police car, and shows their mug shots. Do you recall seeing this ad in the past two weeks?

Base: National: Before=1,272, After=1,261; Males 18-34: Before=160, After=184; Females 18-34: Before=195, After=164

before the crackdown but a significant difference was seen after the crackdown. For example, before the crackdown 6.3% of males and 8.7% of females recalled seeing the national ad, but after the crackdown 43.5% of males and 29.9% of females recalled seeing the ad. Clearly, the media campaign targeting of 18-34 year old males was successful.

Conclusions

The use of paid advertisements was clearly effective in raising driver awareness of the *You Drink and Drive. You Lose.* impaired driving crackdown. Awareness was significantly higher in States using paid advertisements than in those States that used minimal or no paid ads.

The use of a national advertisement (at a significant savings per exposure) was an effective means of raising awareness of the crackdown. Significant numbers of drivers reported seeing the *You Drink and Drive. You Lose.* ad, even in States that did not use it as their only slogan.

- The use of funds in some States to complement the national ad led to significantly greater awareness of the campaign in those States.
- The targeting of the ad at 18-34 year old males was effective with higher awareness shown by 18-34 year old drivers than for 35-49 year old drivers or for those over 50 years old, with the effect decreasing with age. Males reported having seen the ad at a significantly greater percentage than did females.
- The media campaign did appear to raise the perception of enforcement activity among drivers, especially those who were 18-34 years old. Before the crackdown 18-34 year old drivers reported having seen or heard of significantly less enforcement activity designed to catch impaired drivers, while after the crackdown their perception of enforcement activity rose to the level of the older drivers.
- On the other hand, the public did not appear to perceive that there was an increase in enforcement activity, that is, in having seen more police on the road.
- There was no change in the frequency of self-reported driving after drinking.

While the July 2003 You Drink and Drive. You Lose crackdown was the first time that Federal funds were used to purchase advertising in support of an impaired driving program, paid advertising has been used effectively in safety belt campaigns (e.g., Click It or Ticket) over the last several years (Solomon, et. al., 2002). There is evidence from the safety belt campaigns that the effect is additive with repeated exposures. Whether the same effect will be seen for impaired driving campaigns remains to be seen.

Our evaluation of the July 2003 impaired driving crackdown is continuing. Information about the enforcement activity carried out in the 13 SES states (e.g., number of checkpoints and saturation patrols conducted, number of impaired drivers arrested) will be included in the complete evaluation report. Alcohol-related crash data for 2003 will be available in 2004 and the effects of the programs on alcohol-related crashes will be assessed at that time.

References

Lacey, J., Stewart, J., Marchetti, L., Popkin, C., Murphy, P., Lucke, R. and Jones, R. *Enforcement and Public Information Strategies of DWI General Deterrence: Arrest Drunk Driving: The Clearwater and Largo, Florida Experiences*, Technical Report, Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT HS 807 006, 1986.

Lacey, J., Jones, R., and Smith, R. *Evaluation of Checkpoint Tennessee: Tennessee's Statewide Sobriety Checkpoint Program* Technical Report, Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT HS 808 841, 1999.

Solomon, G., Ulmer, R., and Preusser, D. *Evaluation of Click It or Ticket Model Programs*, Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT HS 809 498, November, 2002.

Wells, J., Preusser, D., and Williams, A. *Enforcing Alcohol-Impaired Driving and Seat Belt Use Laws*, Binghamton, N.Y. Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, Arlington, Virginia, 1991.



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

NHTSA
People Saving People
www.nhtsa.dot.gov

For additional copies of this Research Note, please call 1-202-366-9591 or fax your request to 202-366-7096. For questions regarding the data reported in this Research Note contact Marv Levy at 202-366-5587. This Research Note and other information on traffic safety may be accessed by internet users at: <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov>