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Selective Traffic Enforcement Program for Occupant Restraints

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16. Abstract Increased compliance with New York's occupant restraint law was the result of two different traffic enforcement and public information and education (PI&E) programs. The police in one community conducted four PI&E campaigns highlighting increased enforcement and four intermittent selective (primary) enforcement blitzes. In a second community, four PI&E campaigns highlighting the safety benefits of restraints were conducted but increased (secondary) enforcement was integrated into normal traffic duties. A third community served as a control with no PI&E or increased enforcement of the law scheduled.

An evaluation of the programs showed that the blitz strategy resulted in a 13 point increase (52% to 65%) in restraint use (all from the first blitz). The integrated strategy resulted in a 17 point increase (49% to 66%) in usage. There was no major change in usage (54% to 56%) in the control site. Four months after the formal programs ended, the blitz site usage rate had decreased (to 61%), while there was no significant decrease (to 65%) in the integrated site. Another interesting result was that even though the police in the control site issued safety belt tickets at twice the rate of the officers in the integrated strategy site, there was no change in the usage rate in the control site. The control site, however, did not have an accompanying PI&E effort.

Based on these results, a successful, cost-efficient enforcement program would start with a blitz and then integrate enforcement into regular traffic duties. In addition, there must be periodic PI&E to enhance and maintain the public's perception of enforcement and the need to use safety restraints, and the enforcement officers must have a positive attitude toward the law.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On December 1, 1984 New York became the first state in the nation to implement a Mandatory Occupant Restraint Law. Because of the controversy surrounding the passage of the law, New York State adopted an implementation strategy which emphasized the safety benefits of restraint use and encouraged the habit of buckling up, rather than focusing on the punitive aspects of the law.

Observational surveys conducted during the first year of the law indicated that usage increased from a statewide baseline rate of 16 percent to as high as 75 percent in selected areas of the State immediately after the law took effect. However, the high initial level of usage was not sustained. In April 1985, a statewide rate of 57 percent was measured and by September 1985 usage statewide had declined to 46 percent. Attitudinal surveys of licensed drivers found that the perception of how strictly the law was being enforced decreased at the same time that usage declined, despite the fact that the number of convictions for violations of the law fluctuated very little throughout the year.

While the lack of emphasis on enforcement in the first year may have prevented a backlash against the law, it also contributed to a relatively low level of enforcement and a low perception of the risk of being stopped for noncompliance. Concern over declining usage led to the development of a project entitled Selective Traffic Enforcement Program for Occupant Restraints (STEP-OR). The purpose of STEP-OR was to test the effects of two different public information and education (PI&E) and enforcement strategies on restraint use.

The project involved two test sites (the City of Albany and the Town of Greece) and one control site (the Town of Tonawanda). The Albany Police Department's Traffic Safety Division conducted four periods of PI&E and four intermittent periods of intense enforcement (blitzes). Special enforcement techniques were used and efforts concentrated on primary enforcement of the safety belt law. In the second test site, the Town of Greece Police Department also conducted four PI&E programs. The enforcement strategy, however, was to increase the number of tickets issued during regular enforcement activities and sustain this higher level of enforcement throughout the project. No PI&E or enforcement program was planned for the control site.

PI&E activities and the number of tickets issued in each site were monitored in the administrative evaluation. Through observational surveys, the impact evaluation identified the effects of the PI&E and enforcement programs on safety restraint use. Attitudinal surveys helped to link the changes in usage with the various components of the program.

City of Albany

During the four enforcement blitzes, road checks were used to conduct highly visible primary enforcement. The road checks received extensive news coverage which became the main component of the PI&E campaigns. The publicity that was generated conveyed the message of vigorous enforcement. During the enforcement blitzes, an average of 58 tickets per day were written compared to approximately one ticket per day during the baseline and non-blitz periods.

The telephone surveys indicated that the public was aware of the increased enforcement of the safety belt law. At the midpoint of the project, more Albany residents reported that the law was the reason they buckle up on a regular basis. At the same time, the number of respondents who thought that the law was being strictly enforced doubled. This perception was reflected in a sharp increase in usage early in the program. The usage rate in Albany increased from 52 percent to 64 percent after the first blitz.

As the novelty of the road checks wore off, the media were less interested in publicizing the Police Department's safety belt enforcement activities. By the end of the project, fewer respondents remembered seeing or hearing recent publicity related to safety belts. There were also decreases in both the number of residents who perceived that the law was being strictly enforced and the number who were aware of the Albany Police Department's program to increase enforcement.

The declining perception of risk resulting from the decrease in publicity may have been the reason that subsequent blitzes did not produce further increases in usage. Usage rates remained fairly stable, fluctuating only two to three percentage points throughout the rest of the project. Four months after the special PI&E and enforcement activities ended, there was a significant decrease in usage to 61 percent. This, however, was still nine points higher than the baseline rate.

Town of Greece

Enforcement of the safety belt law by the Town of Greece Police Department increased from a baseline level of an average of one ticket every ten days to an average of one ticket per day during the project. The four PI&E campaigns used an educational approach which stressed the safety benefits of restraint use. Members of the police force delivered this educational message primarily through public service announcements, the distribution of materials, and various forms of direct contact with the public.

The PI&E and enforcement program resulted in an increase in usage from 49 percent to 66 percent by the end of the project, with the largest increases occurring in the first half of the project. The results of the telephone survey conducted after the first two phases of the project indicated that the message of the Greece Police Department's PI&E campaign was heard. As usage increased, the number of respondents who said they buckle up for safety reasons increased, while the number who buckle up because of the law decreased.

At the midpoint of the project, when usage had made the largest gains, 35 percent of the residents interviewed were aware of some recent publicity related to safety belt use. At the same time, twice as many respondents as in the baseline survey perceived that the law was being strictly enforced. Although the publicity campaign focused on educating the public about safety belts, the fact that the message was associated with police officers may have contributed to the increase in the respondents who thought that the law was being strictly enforced.

In the second half of the project, usage rates continued to increase, but at a slower pace. At the same time, there was some decline in the proportion of respondents who were aware of safety belt publicity. There was also a decline in the perception of strict enforcement and the number of residents who knew that the local police had increased enforcement. Four months after the program ended usage remained at the same level.

Town of Tonawanda

Although no program of PI&E or enforcement was planned for the control site, a monitoring of the number of safety belt tickets issued indicated an increase in enforcement during the project period from an average of one ticket per day to two per day. Despite the fact that the enforcement level doubled, usage rates were relatively unchanged, remaining between 54

percent and 57 percent throughout the project. It was apparent from the telephone survey results that the public was not aware of the increase in enforcement of the safety belt law. In the four months after the project ended there was a further increase in enforcement, but the usage rate in Tonawanda was not affected.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The PI&E and enforcement strategies implemented in the City of Albany and the Town of Greece were both effective in increasing safety restraint use. Although not planned, there was also an increase in enforcement in the control site. However, usage in the Town of Tonawanda was relatively unchanged. The fact that publicity was the missing element in the control site would suggest that an increase in the perceived risk of enforcement must accompany the increase in the actual risk before usage will be affected.

Similar levels of usage resulted from the programs in Albany and Greece. There were differences between the two strategies, however, in the costs, the feasibility of implementation by other police departments, and the long-term impact on usage.

The most obvious difference in cost was the payment of 312 hours of overtime to Albany police officers to conduct the special safety belt road checks. The Greece Police Department integrated increased safety belt enforcement into its regular enforcement activities and no additional costs were incurred.

Other factors would also affect which strategy other police departments would find feasible to implement. Highly visible special enforcement efforts targeting safety belt violations are likely to be very controversial. There may be a reluctance to implement the blitz strategy for this reason. It may also be unrealistic to expect safety belt enforcement to take priority over other enforcement activities on a regular basis. Therefore, a strategy that integrates increased safety belt enforcement into established enforcement routines may prove to be more feasible.

One of the most important considerations is which strategy is more likely to sustain usage rates at a high level once program activities end. Four months after the final phase of the project there was a significant decrease in usage in Albany, while the level of usage in Greece was sustained. Additional follow-up surveys should be conducted to determine if these patterns continue.

This project identified several components of a successful program. A training program geared to creating positive attitudes is necessary so that the police will convey to the public the importance of safety belt use and compliance with the law. The use of safety belts by the police officers themselves would also contribute to the public's perception that the police are serious about the law.

A program that combines both a blitz and integrated enforcement strategy would be the best way to raise the level of usage quickly and then sustain or further increase usage over time. In addition, public information and education must accompany any enforcement strategy in order for it to be successful. The results of this project make it clear that the public's perception of the risk of receiving a ticket is more important than the actual number of tickets issued.

A final component of a successful program may be the willingness of a police department to institutionalize the activities that result in increases in both the actual level and the perceived level of enforcement. This would include the incorporation of safety belt training, public information and education, and enforcement into the routine activities of the police department. This type of commitment will be necessary to ensure that high levels of usage are sustained on a long-term basis.

1. INTRODUCTION

On December 1, 1984 New York became the first State in the nation to implement a Mandatory Occupant Restraint Law. The use of safety restraints is required for all front seat occupants and children under ten years of age, regardless of seating position. After a one-month warning period, full enforcement of the law began on January 1, 1985. The driver of the vehicle is responsible for compliance by any children under the age of sixteen in the front seat and under the age of ten in the back, as well as his or her own use. Front-seat passengers sixteen years of age and older are responsible for compliance with the law and can be issued a ticket for noncompliance.

The penalty for violating the law is a maximum fine of fifty dollars. No minimum fine is stipulated in the law, and no penalty points are charged to the driver's license. Primary enforcement of the law is allowed; that is, vehicles with occupants not using safety restraints can be stopped and tickets can be issued, even if no other violation of the law is evident.

Because of the controversy surrounding the passage of the law, New York State adopted an implementation strategy which emphasized the safety benefits of restraint use and encouraged the habit of buckling up. The punitive aspects of the law were not stressed and there were no statewide efforts to promote strict enforcement in 1985.

A comprehensive evaluation of the first-year effects of the law was conducted.[1] Usage rates, convictions for violations of the law, and perceptions of the risk of enforcement were monitored throughout 1985. The results of observational surveys indicated that usage increased after the implementation of the law from a statewide baseline rate of 16 percent to as high as 75 percent in selected areas of the State. However, the initial level of usage was not sustained. In April 1985, a statewide usage rate of 57 percent was measured and in September 1985 usage had declined even further to 46 percent.

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[1] Debra H. Rood, Patricia P. Kraichy et.al., Evaluation of New York State's Mandatory Occupant Restraint Law, 6 vols. (Institute for Traffic Safety Management and Research, 1985-1987).

Attitudinal surveys of licensed drivers found that the perception of how strictly the law was being enforced decreased at the same time that usage declined. The perception of enforcement changed even though a study of 1985 conviction data indicated that the number of convictions for violations of the law fluctuated very little throughout the year.

While the lack of emphasis on enforcement in the first year may have prevented a backlash against the law, it also contributed to a relatively low level of enforcement by the police and a low public perception of the risk of being stopped for noncompliance. These in turn are believed to be related to the decrease in usage rates.

Late in 1985, concern over declining usage led to the development of a project entitled Selective Traffic Enforcement Program for Occupant Restraints (STEP-OR). Funding was provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles to conduct the project. The Institute for Traffic Safety Management and Research performed the administrative and impact evaluations under subcontract to the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles. This is the final report for the project.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF PROJECT

The objective of STEP-OR was to increase safety restraint use by increasing the perceived and actual threat of enforcement. The project involved two test sites and one control site. Two different enforcement strategies were combined with public information and education (PI&E) and implemented in the two test sites. No change in either enforcement or PI&E was planned for the control site.

The first test site conducted four intensive enforcement "blitzes." Special enforcement techniques were used and efforts concentrated on primary enforcement of the safety belt law. Enforcement returned to normal levels between the blitzes. Specified periods of intensive PI&E activity either preceded or accompanied each enforcement blitz. The strategy in the second test site was to increase enforcement and sustain a higher level of enforcement throughout the project. Four periods of PI&E were conducted at the same times as those specified for the first test site. The control site, where no PI&E or enforcement program was implemented, served as a comparison for determining the effects of the programs in the two test sites.

The project in the three sites began May 2, 1986 with the start of the first PI&E campaigns in the two test sites. Enforcement was monitored from the beginning of the first enforcement blitz on May 16, 1986 until the end of the last blitz on October 24, 1986. The project was divided into four phases and a complete schedule of these phases appears in Appendix A.

The purpose of the administrative and impact evaluations was to determine if the combined PI&E and enforcement efforts resulted in increased safety belt usage. If usage increased, did an intermittent, intensive approach or a continuous higher level of enforcement integrated into regular police duties produce the most positive results? Finally, which strategy was more successful in achieving results that were sustained over time?

SELECTION OF PARTICIPATING SITES

Several factors were considered in selecting the sites for this project. It was necessary to find three jurisdictions comparable in population size and other important characteristics who were willing to implement the enforcement strategy assigned to them and to fulfill the requirements of the project. The two test sites had to agree to increase enforcement of the law and to implement a safety belt use policy for their police officers.

Because of the potential difficulty in coordinating activities, it was preferable to choose jurisdictions covered by only one police agency. In addition, the three areas had to be far enough apart geographically to have separate media coverage.

Based on these criteria, three jurisdictions in upstate New York were selected to participate in the project: the City of Albany, the Town of Greece (outside of the City of Rochester), and the Town of Tonawanda (outside the City of Buffalo).

City of Albany

Albany, the Capital city of New York State, is twenty-six square miles in size and has a population of 102,000. The population more than doubles to 250,000 on workdays, primarily as a result of the large number of State employees who commute into Albany to work.

The Police Department consists of 368 police officers, 213 of whom patrol the city's 326 miles of highway. Twenty-three of the Department's 213 road patrolmen are assigned to the Traffic Safety Division, which is specifically dedicated to vehicle and traffic law enforcement. This Division is equipped with nine patrol cars and ten radar units. Since Albany has a large influx of daytime commuters, there are approximately 13 officers on duty during the day shift, while ten officers are scheduled on the evening and night shifts.

The Traffic Safety Division issues 78 percent of all the Police Department's traffic tickets. The remaining traffic tickets are written by road patrolmen outside of the Traffic Safety Division who spend approximately ten percent of their time on traffic enforcement.

Town of Greece

The Town of Greece is a suburban community located north of Rochester, New York. It covers 42 square miles and has a population of approximately 98,000 people. Although Greece is primarily residential, there are large retail and commercial areas which attract many residents from the surrounding communities. A large proportion of the population is blue collar and a majority of the residents commute to the City of Rochester for employment purposes.

The Town of Greece Police Department consists of a force of 80 trained officers, 60 of whom are assigned routine road patrol duties on the Town's 380 miles of roadways. Their equipment includes 12 patrol vehicles and five radar units. On a daily basis there are eight cars on patrol during the day shift and ten cars during the evening and night shifts. Approximately 60 to 65 percent of each patrol officer's time is spent on traffic enforcement activities, including radar patrol and accident investigation.

Town of Tonawanda

Located north of Buffalo, New York, the Town of Tonawanda has a population of 91,000 and is approximately 20 square miles in size. Although the community is primarily residential, there are also a few large industrial areas.

The Town of Tonawanda Police Department has 100 police officers on its active force, 67 of whom are patrolmen responsible for patrolling the Town's 222 miles of roadways. Close to 75 percent of the officers' time on road patrol is spent conducting traffic enforcement activities. The Police Department has 14 patrol vehicles and six radar units.

Project Assignments

The Traffic Safety Division of the Albany Police Department agreed to conduct the periodic enforcement blitzes, while the Town of Greece Police Department agreed to increase and sustain a higher level of safety belt enforcement for the length of the project. The Town of Tonawanda served as the control site. The police departments in both test sites implemented safety belt use policies for their officers. The documentation on these policies is found in Appendix B.

Officer William Georges of the Albany Police Department and Officer Douglas R. Fisher of the Greece Police Department were the local Site Coordinators for the project. Funding was provided to the two test sites to plan and implement PI&E activities and to collect PI&E and enforcement data. The City of Albany Police Department also received funds to conduct special enforcement activities on an overtime basis. The Town of Greece did not receive funding to pay for overtime enforcement.

TRAINING

The Site Coordinators and Mr. Charles Rutherford of the Bureau for Municipal Police conducted training sessions for the police officers participating in the project. Twenty-two members of the Albany Police Department's Traffic Safety Division attended the training which was held approximately two weeks before the first phase of the project began. The Greece Police Department does not have a separate traffic safety unit. Since the project involved all members of the police force, it was necessary to videotape the training held in Greece so that those officers who were unable to attend the session could view it at a later time.

The training included instruction on the dynamics of a crash, the increased risk of accident involvement for police officers, the role of enforcement, and the specifics of the law. The goal of the training was to raise awareness of the benefits of safety belt use and to instill a positive attitude toward the law. The creation of positive attitudes among the police officers was seen as the first step toward encouraging enforcement.

REPORT SUMMARY

This is the final report for the project. It contains the information presented in the Activity Reports prepared after each of the four phases of the project, as well as data from a four-month post-project period. Chapter 2 discusses the methodologies used in conducting the administrative and impact evaluations. The evaluation results for the City of Albany, the Town of Greece and the Town of Tonawanda are presented in Chapters 3-6. The final chapter compares the impact of the programs implemented in the two test sites with each other and with the results from the control site. In addition, the components of a successful program are discussed.

2. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

ADMINISTRATIVE EVALUATION

The PI&E and enforcement activities in the two test sites and the control site were monitored in the administrative evaluation. The objectives were to determine 1) what PI&E activities were implemented, 2) what the scope and message of the publicity were, 3) if enforcement of the law increased, and 4) if the enforcement strategy assigned to each site was implemented. The administrative evaluation defined the programs that produced the results measured in the impact evaluation.

Public Information and Education

The two test sites were required to submit a PI&E plan prior to each publicity campaign. The Site Coordinator reported the outcome of each planned activity at the end of the project phase. For those activities that were completed, the following information was provided: a description of the activity, the date, the police officer involved, the duration of the activity, the target audience, and the estimated size of the audience. The activities that were not completed were listed on a separate report form with explanations. Copies of the PI&E data collection forms appear in Appendix C.

These PI&E forms documented the number and the scope of the activities implemented in each site. In addition, newspaper articles related to the programs in the test sites and other PI&E materials were collected. Public reaction to the programs was determined from newspaper articles, editorials, Letters to the Editor and other information supplied by the Site Coordinators. The media in the control site were also monitored for publicity related to safety belt use and the law.

Enforcement

Each site was also required to provide data on the safety belt tickets written during the project. The following information was reported on special data collection forms: the ticket number, the street location, the date of violation, the type of enforcement, the type of violation, the gender and age of the person issued the ticket, and the gender and age of the person violating the law. A copy of the ticket data collection form is found in Appendix D.

The number of tickets issued was monitored to determine if there were substantial periodic increases in enforcement in Albany and if a higher level of enforcement occurred and was sustained in Greece. The control site was also monitored for any changes in the level of enforcement during the project. The information compiled from the tickets was analyzed to identify the types of enforcement used, the violations being committed, and the characteristics of those violating the law.

Information on the disposition of the tickets was obtained from the Traffic Safety Law Enforcement and Disposition (TSLE&D) system,an automated ticket tracking system administered by the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles.

IMPACT EVALUATION

The primary measure of the impact of the program was the change in usage rates in the project sites. The project was divided into four phases based on the PI&E/enforcement blitz schedule followed in the first test site. Observational surveys of restraint use were conducted to determine how usage rates were affected by the program. In addition, telephone surveys of residents of the three sites were conducted to help interpret the changes in usage observed.

Attitudinal Surveys

Three telephone surveys of residents of the three jurisdictions were conducted. The baseline survey was conducted before the first project phase began (April 1986), the second survey was completed between the second and third phases (July 1986), and the third survey followed the final phase of the project (October 1986). The surveys identified reported restraint use behaviors, awareness of the safety belt law and its provisions, attitudes toward the law and its enforcement, and perceptions of the current level of enforcement. In the second and third surveys, additional questions were directed to residents of the two test sites. These questions were designed to assess awareness of the PI&E and enforcement programs among the residents of Albany and Greece.

Sampling Design. For each survey, 130 residents 16 years of age and older were contacted from each of the project sites. Random-digit dialing was used to select the households contacted. This technique makes it possible for all households with telephones, including those with unlisted and newly listed numbers, to have an equal, unbiased probability of

inclusion in the sample. Six-digit prefixes were selected from the telephone directories covering the three areas. A seventh "random" digit was added to each prefix to generate the telephone numbers used.

Once a household was contacted, the person interviewed was randomly selected from among all the residents of the household who were 16 years of age or older. Up to five attempts were made to contact the selected person before proceeding to the next randomly generated telephone number.

Data Collection. Telephone calls were made Monday-Friday, between 5:00 and 9:00 in the evening. All survey personnel received training in the objectives of the project, interviewing techniques, and data collection procedures.

Analysis. Data were analyzed using the SPSS analytical software. Tests of significance were conducted using the Z statistic. Differences significant at the .05 level are noted. Because fairly small samples of residents were contacted in each survey, only substantial differences proved to be statistically significant.

Observational Surveys

In all three sites, observational surveys were conducted before and after each of the four project phases. A follow-up survey was conducted four months after the last phase of the project to determine whether the changes in usage rates were sustained over time.

Selection of Observation Locations. In order to ensure that an adequate number of drivers and passengers were observed in each survey, only roadways with a sufficient volume of traffic were considered for inclusion in the sample of locations selected in the City of Albany and the Towns of Greece and Tonawanda. Maps of each jurisdiction were used to identify all intersections of roadways classified as at least minor arterials. Eighteen intersections were randomly selected from each of the three jurisdictions. These locations were then visited to determine if they met the following criteria:

1) the driver and front seat passenger could be observed at the location;

2) there was a sufficient volume of traffic on the roadway;

3) there was a safe place to stand to observe traffic; and

4) traffic was controlled by a traffic light or stop sign to allow adequate time for observation.

Scheduling. Each survey lasted three days and was conducted Tuesday-Thursday of the designated weeks (see Appendix A for schedule). Each day was divided into six one-hour time periods: 8:00-9:00 am, 9:30-10:30 am, 11:00 am-12:00 noon, 1:00-2:00 pm, 2:30-3:30 pm, and 4:00-5:00 pm. Dates and times were randomly assigned to the eighteen selected locations. Each observation period was one hour long and a half-hour was allotted for travel between locations. The same schedule was followed and the same locations were used in each survey.[1]

Data Collection. An observer was hired to collect data in each of the three jurisdictions. All three observers were experienced in conducting observations of safety belt use and there were no changes in personnel during the project. Training was provided and the observers were instructed to collect data on the restraint use and gender of drivers and front seat passengers. If there were two passengers, only the one nearest the door on the passenger side was included in the survey. A copy of the data collection instrument appears in Appendix E. Usage rates were calculated from the data collected in each survey.

Analysis. The SPSS analytical software was used in the data analyses. Tests of significance using the Z statistic were conducted. Differences significant at the .05 level are noted.

[1] The only exception occurred in the City of Albany. In the first survey, one location proved to be unsafe for conducting observations. Another location was substituted in subsequent surveys.

3. CITY OF ALBANY EVALUATION RESULTS

ADMINISTRATIVE EVALUATION

Public Information and Education

The program implemented in the City of Albany combined public information and education with intensive, periodic primary enforcement efforts. Table 3.1 summarizes the PI&E activities and copies of selected materials appear in Appendix F.

The project began with a press conference at the Albany Police Department. The message relayed to the press was that the Traffic Safety Division would begin enforcing the safety belt law more vigorously than ever before as part of its continuing effort to provide safe roadways for Albany residents. This crackdown on violators of the safety belt law would be a change from the secondary enforcement strategy under which safety belt tickets are only issued to motorists who are stopped for other violations or have been involved in accidents. In the press conference, the Site Coordinator stressed that the change in the enforcement strategy was the result of the continuing decline in usage, the recent rise in the number of personal injury accidents in the City of Albany, and the perception on the part of the general public that the law was not being strictly enforced.

The press conference received wide news coverage and generated a great deal of media attention, including invitations to participate in several local radio talk shows. In addition, the Police Department received over 200 telephone calls and 75 other inquiries from the public regarding the enforcement campaign and the specific requirements of the law.

The public awareness campaign in Albany also included a series of public service announcements for television that featured talking crash dummies in simulated collisions. Radio public service announcements were also aired on local stations and were incorporated in morning and evening traffic condition reports. In addition, various community groups were encouraged to contact the Police Department to schedule lectures on seat belt safety.

Media coverage, especially by local television news stations, focused on publicizing the Albany Police Department's use of road checks for safety belt enforcement. Newspaper articles also detailed the number of safety belt tickets written and the current level of compliance during each phase of the project.

TABLE 3.1. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES, CITY OF ALBANY

Activity	First PI&E Phase	Second PI&E Phase	Third PI&E Phase	Fourth PI&E Phase
Press Conferences	1	0	0	0
TV News Segments	3	4	4	4
Radio Talk Show Appearances	3	2	1	0
Radio News Segments	2	2	2	2
Public Service Announcements:				
Television	5 stations	5 stations	5 stations	5 stations
Radio	5 stations	5 stations	5 stations	5 stations
Traffic Van	0	During Traffic Reports	During Traffic Reports	During Traffic Reports
Newspaper:				
Headline Articles	1	1	1	0
Other Articles	3	3	3	3
Editorials	1	0	0	0
Community Groups:				
High School Students	1	0	0	0
Senior Citizens	0	0	1	1
Material Distributed at Fast Food Restaurants	Activity was planned, but not completed, because of difficulties in obtaining permission to distribute materials.			

The high visibility of the controversial enforcement activities resulted in some negative publicity during the initial phases of the program. Letters to the Editor appeared in local newspapers criticizing the "Big Brother campaign to hunt down motorists" who were not in compliance with the safety belt law. Individuals stated their concern that the Police Department might "otherwise be solving murder, assault, and child abuse cases" and some taxpayers suggested staffing cuts. In addition, a bumper sticker which stated "Avoid Albany, Seat Belt City" was distributed by a member of the public.

Enforcement

As discussed previously, the enforcement strategy assigned to the City of Albany called for four intermittent periods of intense enforcement. During these enforcement blitzes, the law was enforced on a primary basis using road checks patterned after equipment inspection stops. Throughout the project, the Traffic Safety Division conducted a total of 21 safety belt road checks, each lasting four hours. In addition, primary and secondary enforcement were increased on regular traffic patrol.

During each road check, three or four officers were stationed at a location, such as a signalized intersection, where traffic came to a stop. Vehicles with occupants not in compliance with the safety belt law were asked to pull over and tickets were issued. Additional tickets were issued if other violations were found. Road checks were scheduled at different times of the day, but always during daylight hours so that belt use could be observed. All road checks were conducted by officers working overtime. In the four enforcement blitzes, 288 hours of overtime were used for road checks. An additional 24 overtime hours were logged on traffic patrol targeting primary safety belt enforcement.

Level of Enforcement. During 1985, the Albany Police Department issued 418 tickets for safety belt violations. This was equivalent to approximately one ticket per day. During the STEP-OR project, 1440 safety belt tickets were issued for an average of nearly nine tickets per day. Of these 1440 tickets, 89 percent were issued during the four blitz periods, for an average of 58 per day. Between blitzes, the rate of issuing safety belt tickets was the same as the 1985 baseline rate. Tables 3.2-3.6 present information from the 1440 tickets issued during the four project phases.

Safety belt tickets were also monitored for four months after the end of the project. Between the end of October 1986 and the end of February 1987, 79 tickets were issued by the Albany Police Department. This level of ticketing for a year would result in an average of approximately one ticket every two days. This rate is lower than the 1985 baseline rate.

Type of Enforcement. Table 3.2 shows the number of safety belt tickets resulting from each type of enforcement during the project. This table includes tickets written during both the blitz and regular enforcement periods. Seventy-nine percent of the tickets were issued at the special safety belt road checks conducted during the blitz periods. In addition, 134 of the tickets written on patrol and 12 of the tickets written as a result of the use of radar or an accident investigation were issued during the blitzes. Ninety-eight percent of all these tickets resulted from primary enforcement.

In between the blitz periods, approximately three-quarters of the tickets were the result of secondary enforcement. Eighty-five tickets were written on routine patrol, half as a result of primary enforcement and half on a secondary basis. An additional 74 safety belt tickets were issued to persons who were stopped for speeding or were involved in an accident.

TABLE 3.2. SAFETY BELT TICKETS ISSUED BY TYPE OF ENFORCEMENT, CITY OF ALBANY

	Number	Percent
Road Checks	1135	78.8
Patrol	219	15.2
Radar	76	5.3
Accident Investigation	10	0.7
	1440	100.0

Types of Violations. The number of tickets issued for each type of violation appears in Table 3.3. The largest proportion (88%) were issued to unbelted drivers, nine percent were for adult front seat passengers, and three percent of the tickets were written for unrestrained children.

TABLE 3.3. SAFETY BELT TICKETS ISSUED BY TYPE OF VIOLATION, CITY OF ALBANY

	Number	Percent
Unbelted Drivers	1265	87.9
Unbelted Front Seat Passengers Age 16 and Over	133	9.2
Unrestrained Children	42	2.9
	1440	100.0

Demographic Information. Twice as many male drivers as female drivers were ticketed for not wearing a safety belt (Table 3.4). However, similar numbers of men and women received tickets as passengers. There were also similar numbers of men and women ticketed for having unrestrained children in their vehicles.

TABLE 3.4. PERSONS ISSUED SAFETY BELT TICKETS BY GENDER, CITY OF ALBANY

	Number	Percent
Male Drivers	857	59.6
Female Drivers	408	28.3
Male Passengers 16 and over	68	4.7
Female Passengers 16 and over	65	4.5
Males Driving Unrestrained Children	22	1.5
Females Driving Unrestrained Children	20	1.4
	1440	100.0

Table 3.5 shows the age distribution of the persons who received safety belt tickets during the project. Persons in the younger age groups received the largest proportions of tickets.

TABLE 3.5. PERSONS ISSUED SAFETY BELT TICKETS BY AGE, CITY OF ALBANY

	Number	Percent
16-24 years	381	26.4
25-34 years	443	30.8
35-44 years	281	19.5
45-54 years	150	10.4
55 and over	185	12.9
	1440	100.0

Ticket Dispositions. Eighty-five percent of the tickets written during the project had been adjudicated within four months after the end of the final phase (Table 3.6). Ninety-five percent of the tickets that had reached final disposition resulted in a fine, and almost all of the fines were ten dollars. Only three percent of the tickets resulted in an acquittal or a dismissal.

TABLE 3.6. DISPOSITION OF SAFETY BELT TICKETS, CITY OF ALBANY

	Number	Percent
$10 fines	1132	93.0
$15-$35 fines	21	1.7
Discharges	23	1.9
Acquittals/Dismissals	42	3.4
	1218	100.0

Site Coordinator's Comments

Site Coordinator, Officer William Georges, was asked to respond to a series of questions related to the project conducted in the City of Albany. His comments are summarized below:

The existence of a special Traffic Safety Division within the Albany Police Department facilitated the implementation of the STEP-OR project in the City of Albany. The Traffic Safety Division's primary responsibilities

include enforcement of traffic laws and accident investigation. While the overtime pay provided an additional incentive, motivating the officers to enforce the safety belt law was not a problem since members of the Traffic Safety Division were already safety conscious and oriented to issuing traffic tickets.

The training provided for officers participating in the project was highly rated and was important to the outcome of the project. Safety belt use among officers was estimated to be around 95 percent during the project.

The various media sources were extremely helpful in publicizing the enforcement blitzes in the early phases of the project. Headline newspaper articles and television news coverage were most effective in kicking off the program. However, by the last phase, it became more difficult to capture media attention for the program.

In general, the public's reaction to the Police Department's intensive enforcement campaign was positive throughout the project. Most inquiries from the public concerned the specific provisions of the law. A few Albany residents, however, raised the issue that the police were enforcing a law that infringed on personal freedom. There was also some negative publicity surrounding the "Seat Belt City" bumper sticker.

The local traffic court judges were contacted before the project began. A commitment was made to fine first-time violators $10, with subsequent violations resulting in fines of $50. This cooperation led to the very low rate of dismissals and discharges noted in Albany.

The project has helped the Traffic Safety Division of the Albany Police Department to incorporate a controversial enforcement duty into its regular enforcement activities. The City of Albany plans to continue many of the activities from the project. The public service announcements are still used on local television stations. All presentations to community groups include a discussion of safety belts. The belt use policy for police officers has remained in effect. In addition, a safety belt section has been added to the pursuit driving training curriculum for police officers. Although special road checks targeting safety belt use have not continued because of the costs involved, primary enforcement of the safety belt law will be integrated into the periodic equipment road checks. Strong secondary enforcement of the law will be used to relay the message that the police are continuing to enforce the law and are concerned with the public welfare and safety on the roadways.

IMPACT EVALUATION

Attitudinal Surveys

A sample of 130 residents of the City of Albany were contacted in each of the three telephone surveys. The April 1986 survey was conducted before the first PI&E and enforcement phase and served as a baseline for the surveys conducted at the midpoint (July 1986) and the end (October 1986) of the project. Because of the small sample size, only substantial differences were statistically significant. These differences are noted in the discussion of the results.

General Questions Related to Safety Belt Use and the Mandatory Use Law. City of Albany residents were asked how often they wear safety belts and why (Table 3.7). In April 1986, 81 percent indicated that they buckle up all or most of the time. Reported usage increased during the project to 86 percent in July and by October there was a significant increase (to 93%) in those reporting regular safety belt use (Z=3.0). After the project began, the mandatory use law was mentioned more frequently as the reason for regular belt use, while safety was mentioned less often.

TABLE 3.7. REPORTED REASONS FOR USE OF SAFETY RESTRAINTS, CITY OF ALBANY

	Baseline: Apr.'86 Percent	During Project: July'86 Percent	Oct.'86 Percent
In general, do you wear a seat belt...			
Always	57.4	67.0	73.9
Most of the time	23.3	19.2	19.2
Sometimes	10.9	6.9	4.6
Never	8.4	6.9	2.3
Why do you wear seat belts regularly? (always, most of the time)			
Mandatory seat belt law	37.5	40.2	48.3
Safety	54.8	50.0	44.2
Habit	7.7	6.2	5.8
Other	0.0	3.6	1.7

Nearly all of the Albany residents contacted in each survey were aware of the law (Table 3.8). There was less certainty about which vehicle occupants were covered. In all three surveys, the majority knew that all front seat occupants were required to use safety restraints. Although many also knew that children were covered by the law, relatively few mentioned that the law applied to children up to the age of ten. Approximately one-fifth of those interviewed in each survey incorrectly stated that restraint use was required for all occupants in the vehicle.

Respondents were also asked to estimate the proportion of Albany residents that wear safety belts regularly. In April 1986, an average usage rate of 58 percent was estimated, in July usage was estimated at 56 percent, and in October usage was estimated at 59 percent. In each survey, the usage rate most frequently mentioned was 50 percent.

Albany residents were also questioned concerning their attitudes toward the law (Table 3.9). Between April and July, there was a small decline in support for the law (68% to 62%). In July, when support for the law declined, there was a significant increase in the proportion of people who thought the law was being strictly enforced (26% to 49%, $Z = 3.8$). In October, the proportion of those in favor of the law increased to 71 percent. This increase in support for the law was accompanied by a drop in the perception of strict enforcement (49% to 42%). Little change in the proportion of those in favor of increased enforcement was noted. In all three surveys, between 47 and 49 percent of the residents indicated they would support increased enforcement.

Awareness of Program Activities. In the July and the October surveys, Albany residents were asked questions to determine their awareness of the PI&E and enforcement activities implemented as part of the STEP-OR project (Table 3.10). More respondents in July (49%) than in October (42%) remembered hearing or seeing some publicity related to safety belt use. In both surveys, television and newspapers were the sources of publicity most frequently mentioned.

Finally, those interviewed were asked if they were aware of any recent increase in safety belt enforcement in the City of Albany. In July, almost half of the residents said they knew that enforcement had increased, but only one-third were aware of increased enforcement by the end of the project.

TABLE 3.8. AWARENESS OF THE LAW AND ITS PROVISIONS AND PERCEPTION OF COMMUNITY COMPLIANCE, CITY OF ALBANY

	Baseline: Apr.'86 Percent	During Project: July'86 Percent	Oct.'86 Percent
Are you aware that New York State has implemented a mandatory seat belt law?			
Yes	100.0	99.2	99.2
No	0.0	0.8	0.8
Which persons riding in the car are covered by the law?			
Front seat occupants and all children under age 10	6.2	16.2	10.8
Front seat occupants and all children (age other than under 10 mentioned)	27.7	30.0	15.4
Front seat occupants only	39.2	30.0	49.3
All occupants	23.1	19.2	19.2
Drivers only	1.5	1.5	2.3
Don't know	2.3	3.1	3.0
Out of every 100 people in your area, how many would you say wear their seat belts regularly?			
0-20	3.0	3.8	3.9
21-40	13.1	18.5	9.9
41-60	32.4	33.9	33.0
61-80	26.9	20.7	30.8
81-100	8.4	5.3	6.2
Don't know	16.2	17.8	16.2
Average Usage Rate	57.8	55.7	58.5

TABLE 3.9. ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LAW AND ITS ENFORCEMENT, CITY OF ALBANY

	Baseline: Apr.'86 Percent	During Project: July'86 Percent	Oct.'86 Percent
How do you feel about the seat belt law? Would you say you are...			
In favor	67.7	62.3	70.6
Undecided	9.2	7.7	7.9
Opposed	23.1	30.0	21.5
How strictly do you think the law is currently being enforced?			
Strict	26.2	48.9	41.9
Not sure	19.2	16.5	14.7
Not strict	54.6	34.6	43.4
Would you be in favor or opposed to your local police agency increasing enforcement of the seat belt law?			
In favor	49.2	47.2	46.8
Not sure/Don't care	17.0	14.4	17.0
Opposed	33.8	38.4	36.2

TABLE 3.10. AWARENESS OF STEP-OR ACTIVITIES, CITY OF ALBANY

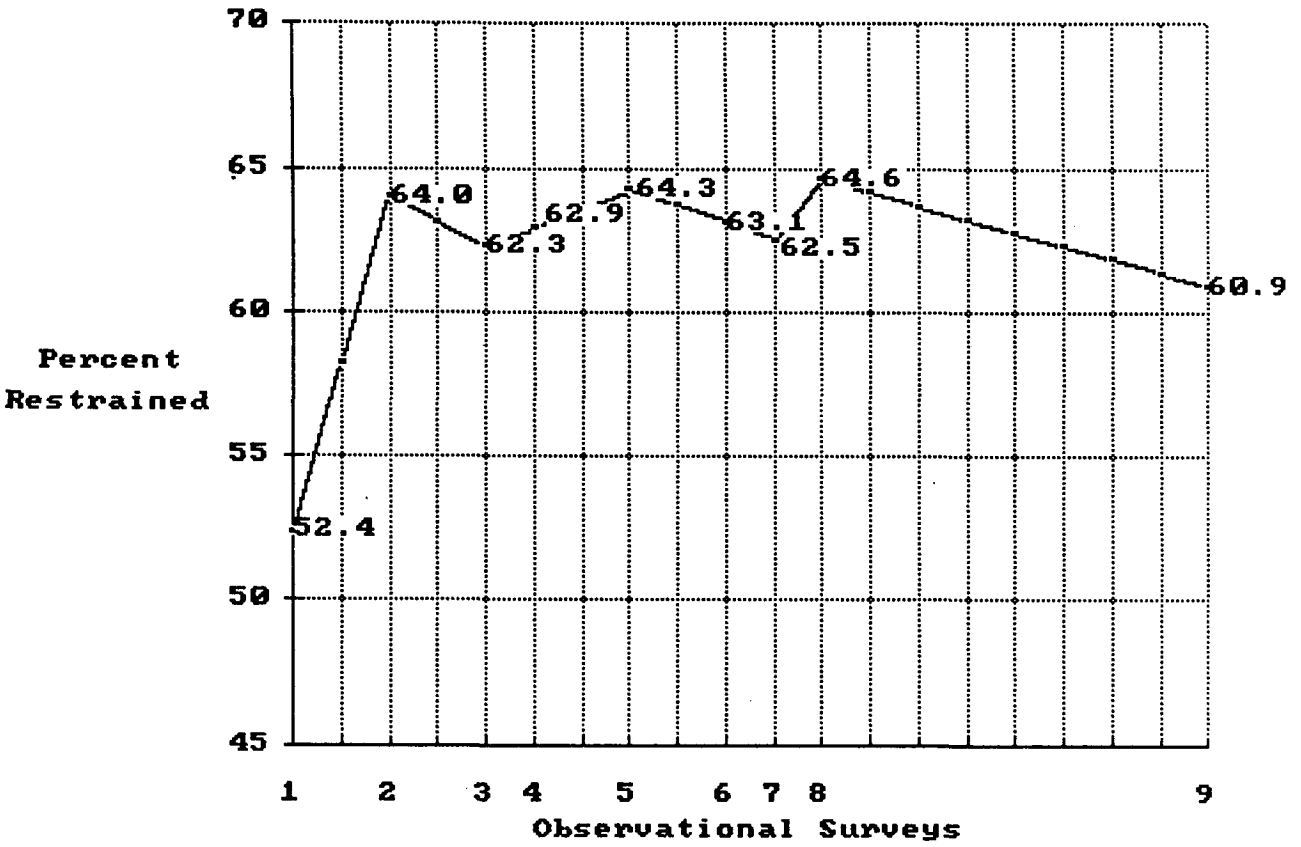
	During Project: July'86 Percent	Oct.'86 Percent
Are you aware of any recent publicity in your local area encouraging seat belt use or compliance with the law?		
Yes	48.5	41.9
No	51.5	58.1
If yes, what types of publicity have you seen or heard? (More than one response was allowed)		
Television	47.6	58.5
Newspaper	39.7	28.3
Radio	11.1	18.9
Sign/Billboard	0.0	9.4
Brochure/flier	4.8	11.3
Speaker	1.6	3.8
Police Road Check	4.8	5.7
Other	4.8	0.0
Are you aware of any recent increase in seat belt enforcement by your local police agency?		
Yes	48.5	33.0
No	51.5	67.0

Observational Surveys

Observational surveys were conducted before and after each project phase to determine how usage rates were affected by the program. In addition, a final survey was conducted four months after the end of the project to determine if the changes in usage rates resulting from the program were sustained over time. Complete data from each survey conducted can be found in Appendix G.

Front Seat Occupants. Figure 3.1 shows the usage rates measured before and after each phase (Surveys 1-8) and in the follow-up survey (Survey 9). Before the project began, 52 percent of the front seat occupants observed in the City of Albany were restrained. Usage rose to 64 percent following the first public information campaign and enforcement blitz. After the initial large increase, no significant change in usage was noted until the fourth project phase when usage increased again to approximately the level after the first blitz (65%). Four months after the last phase there was a significant decrease in usage to 61 percent (Z=4.0). This level, however, was still nine percentage points higher than the baseline rate.

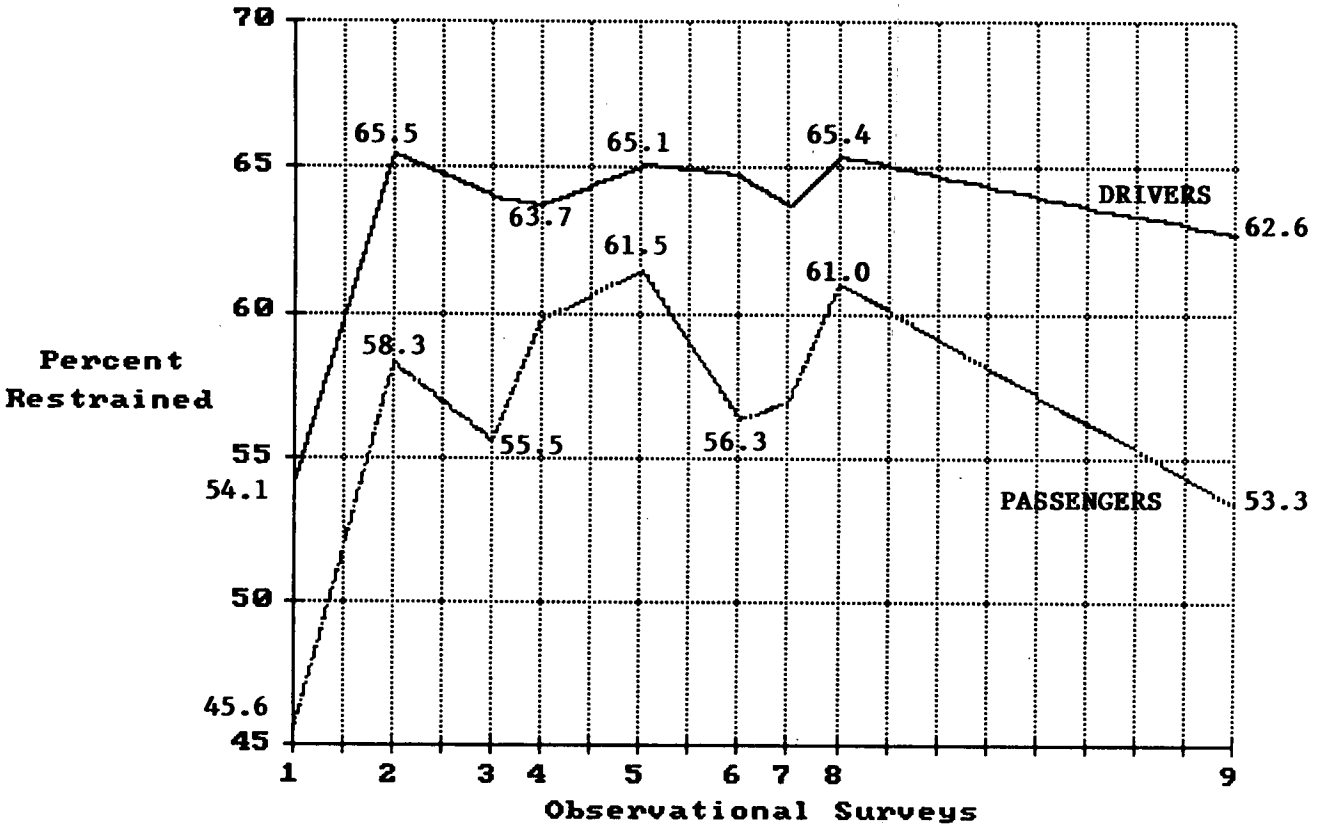
FIGURE 3.1. USAGE RATES FOR FRONT SEAT OCCUPANTS, CITY OF ALBANY



Drivers and Passengers. Restraint use among both drivers and passengers increased during the project (Figure 3.2). The usage rate for drivers rose from 54 percent to 66 percent in the first phase and fluctuated only two percentage points in the next three phases of the project. Usage among passengers also increased 12 percentage points in the first phase (from 46% to 58%), and increased to as high as 62 percent in later phases. In all phases of the project, usage was higher among drivers than passengers.

Four months after the final project phase, usage among drivers was 63 percent, three percentage points lower than the highest usage measured during the project. There was a greater decline in usage among passengers, from 62 percent to 53 percent.

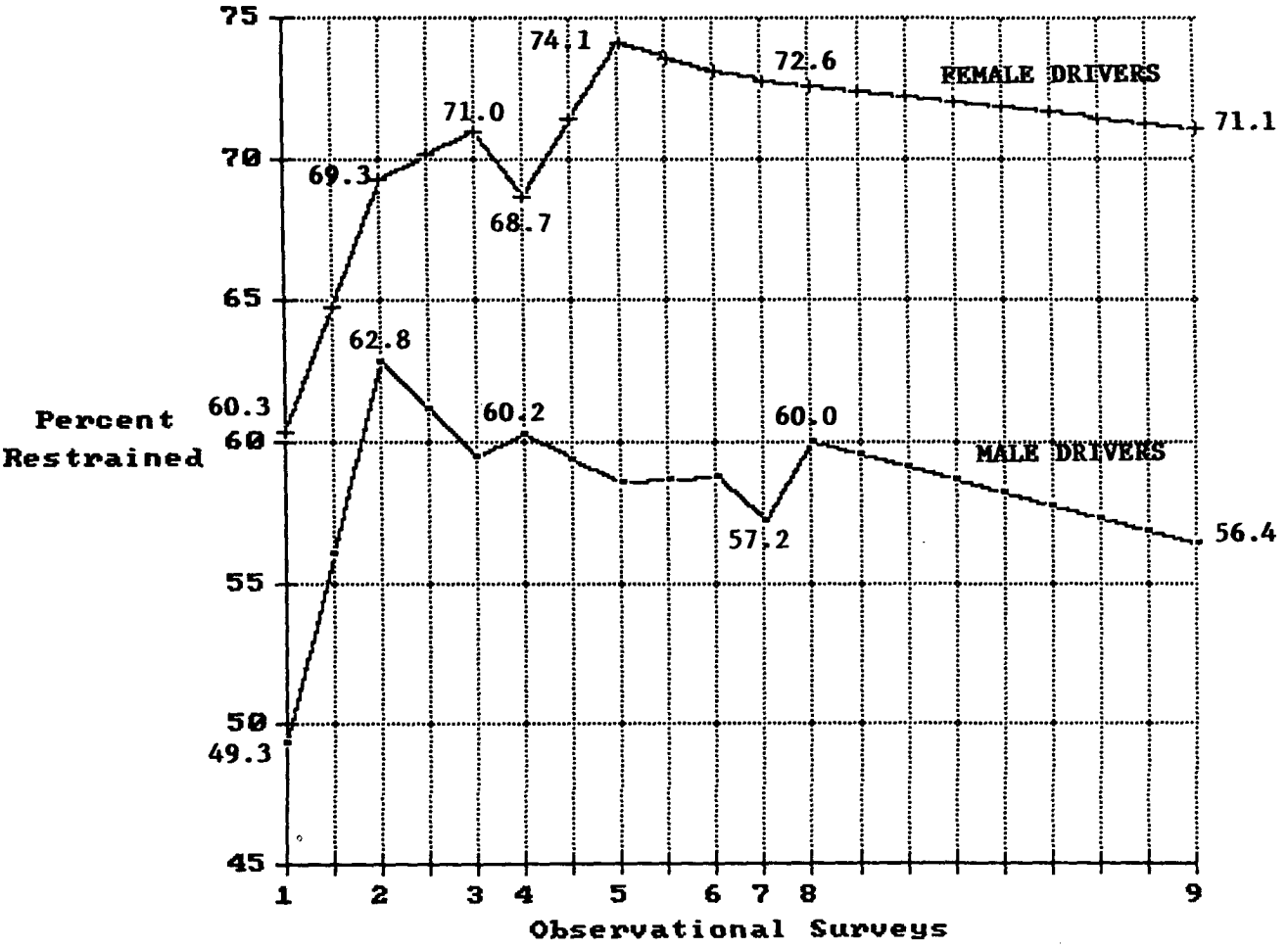
FIGURE 3.2. USAGE RATES FOR DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS, CITY OF ALBANY



Male and Female Drivers. Comparisons were also made of restraint use by male and female drivers. Safety belt usage among female drivers was substantially higher than that of male drivers at all points in time throughout the project (Figure 3.3). The baseline rates for male and female drivers were 49 percent and 60 percent, respectively. After the first PI&E and enforcement blitz, usage among male drivers increased 14 percentage points to 63 percent. In later phases of the project, usage for male drivers ranged between 57 percent and 60 percent. Usage among female drivers also increased substantially (to 69%) after the first phase, and continued to increase to a high of 74 percent midway through the project.

In the survey conducted four months after the final PI&E and enforcement blitz, usage among female drivers was still over 70 percent while usage among male drivers was 56 percent.

FIGURE 3.3. USAGE RATES FOR MALE AND FEMALE DRIVERS, CITY OF ALBANY



DISCUSSION

The City of Albany Police Department implemented four PI&E campaigns and four periods of intensive enforcement. During these enforcement blitzes, an average of 58 tickets per day were written compared to approximately one ticket per day during non-blitz periods. The road checks conducted during the blitzes received extensive media coverage and the publicity that was generated relayed the message of vigorous enforcement.

The telephone surveys provided several indications that the public was aware of the increased enforcement of the safety belt law. After the program was under way, more Albany residents reported that they buckle up on a regular basis and more said that the safety belt law was the reason.

In addition, after the first two phases of the project, the number of respondents who thought the law was being strictly enforced nearly doubled (26% to 49%). In the same survey, approximately half of the residents interviewed were aware that the Albany Police Department had increased safety belt enforcement. The same proportion of respondents were also aware of recent publicity on safety belts.

The publicizing of the enforcement efforts in Albany resulted in a high level of awareness of the program. It also contributed to an increased perception of the risk of being stopped for violating the law. The result of this increase in the actual and perceived risk of enforcement was a 12 percentage point increase in restraint use immediately following the first blitz (52% to 64%).

As the novelty of the road checks wore off, the media were less interested in publicizing the Police Department's special enforcement activities. This decrease in publicity was also reflected in the telephone survey results. In October, at the end of the final two phases of the project, fewer respondents remembered seeing or hearing recent publicity related to safety belts. At the same time there were decreases in both the number of residents who perceived that the law was being strictly enforced and the number who were aware that the local police were increasing enforcement.

A declining perception of risk resulting from the decrease in publicity may have been the reason that subsequent blitzes did not produce further increases in usage. Following the initial large increase, usage rates remained fairly stable, fluctuating only two to three percentage points throughout the rest of the project.

Support for the law fluctuated somewhat with the changes in the perception of strict enforcement. Although more than 60 percent of the residents were in favor of the law in all three surveys, there was a small decrease in support at the midpoint of the project when awareness of the local enforcement activities was highest. The proportion of residents in favor of the law increased again at the end of the project at the same time that fewer respondents were aware of the Albany Police Department's enforcement program. There was little change in attitudes toward increasing enforcement. In all three surveys, approximately half of the respondents were in favor of increasing enforcement.

In summary, four intensive enforcement blitzes were conducted. A large increase in restraint use followed the first blitz. Subsequent blitzes did not produce further increases, but sustained usage at approximately the level initially reached. The visibility of the enforcement efforts decreased as media attention declined. The result was a decrease in awareness of the program and a decrease in the perception of the risk of enforcement, perhaps explaining why usage rates did not continue to rise with later enforcement blitzes. Four months after the final blitz there was a significant decrease in usage. However, the usage rate of 61 percent measured in the follow-up survey was only slightly lower than the rates measured during the project (62%-65%), and nine percentage points higher than the baseline rate.

4. TOWN OF GREECE EVALUATION RESULTS

ADMINISTRATIVE EVALUATION

Public Information and Education

Table 4.1 lists the public information and education activities conducted by the Greece Police Department in the four project phases. Selected PI&E materials from the program appear in Appendix H. The publicity campaigns focused on an educational approach and emphasized the safety benefits of restraint use. The project began with a press conference in which a television public service announcement developed for the Greece Police Department was presented. The 30-second commercial, produced and donated by a local company, stressed the reasons that people should use safety belts. A public service announcement for radio was also produced from the soundtrack of the commercial.

During the project, various educational materials promoting the use of safety belts were distributed to Town of Greece residents. Approximately 100,000 one-page fliers which stated, "We value you as a customer. Please buckle up.", were handed out at the drive-up windows of local fast food restaurants. The Greece Police Department also distributed 2500 bumper stickers that showed a safety belt and the message, "You can LIVE with it." The stickers were available at the three police stations, the town hall and local libraries. The local newspaper reported on these public information activities.

During the first PI&E campaign, a safety belt exhibit was set up at an area shopping mall. Officers were available to answer questions on safety belt use and the law. In addition, police officers also urged students in driver education and elementary grade classes to "buckle up" during safety talks at local schools.

Police personnel also participated in radio and television talk show programs. On these shows, the public was encouraged to use safety belts and the benefits of the law were discussed.

TABLE 4.1. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION ACTIVITIES, TOWN OF GREECE

Activity	First PI&E Phase	Second PI&E Phase	Third PI&E Phase	Fourth PI&E Phase
Press Conferences	1	0	0	0
TV Talk Show Appearances	0	0	1	0
Radio Talk Show Appearances	0	0	1	1
Public Service Announcements:				
Television	4 stations	4 stations	4 stations	4 stations
Radio	3 stations	3 stations	3 stations	3 stations
Newspaper:				
Headline Articles	1	0	0	0
Other Articles	0	0	1	1
Community Groups:				
Senior Citizens	0	1	0	1
Elementary School Students	1	0	0	1
Driver Education Classes	0	1	0	0
Material Distributed at Fast Food Restaurants	5 locations	5 locations	5 locations	5 locations
Safety Display at Shopping Mall	Display at Mall	0	0	0
Bumper Stickers Distributed	0	0	Bumper Stickers Distributed	

Enforcement

The enforcement strategy for the Town of Greece Police Department was to increase the number of safety belt tickets written during routine police activities such as road patrol or radar detail. An increased level of enforcement was to be sustained for the length of the project.

Level of Enforcement. During 1985, the Greece Police Department issued 33 safety belt tickets. This was an average of one ticket every ten days. During the project, 163 tickets were issued, for an average of one ticket per day. Tables 4.2-4.6 present information from the 163 safety belt tickets written during the project.

Ticket activity was also monitored for four months after the project ended. During this period, 59 tickets were issued by the Greece Police Department. This is an average of one ticket every two days, one-half the level of ticketing during the project.

Type of Enforcement. The number of safety belt tickets written during each type of enforcement activity is shown in Table 4.2. The majority of the tickets were issued by police officers on routine patrol. The remaining tickets were written in conjunction with a radar stop or an accident investigation.

TABLE 4.2. SAFETY BELT TICKETS ISSUED BY TYPE OF ENFORCEMENT, TOWN OF GREECE

	Number	Percent
Patrol	149	91.4
Radar	12	7.4
Accident Investigation	2	1.2
	163	100.0

Types of Violations. Table 4.3 shows the types of violations for which tickets were issued during the project. Eighty percent of the tickets were written for unbelted drivers, 11 percent were for adult front seat passengers, and nine percent were for unrestrained children. The majority of the safety belt tickets were issued as second tickets to persons who had been stopped for another traffic violation. However, most of the tickets written for unrestrained children were the result of primary enforcement.

TABLE 4.3. SAFETY BELT TICKETS ISSUED BY TYPE OF VIOLATION, TOWN OF GREECE

	Number	Percent
Unbelted Drivers	131	80.4
Unbelted Front Seat Passengers Age 16 and Over	18	11.0
Unrestrained Children	14	8.6
	163	100.0

Demographic Information. Sixty percent of the drivers who were ticketed for not using restraints were men (Table 4.4.) There were a few more women than men in the very small group of adult passengers ticketed for noncompliance and the small group of drivers ticketed for having unrestrained children in their vehicles.

TABLE 4.4 PERSONS ISSUED SAFETY BELT TICKETS BY GENDER, TOWN OF GREECE

	Number	Percent
Male Drivers	97	59.5
Female Drivers	34	20.9
Male Passengers	7	4.3
Female Passengers	11	6.7
Male Drivers with Unrestrained Children	6	3.7
Female Drivers with Unrestrained Children	8	4.9
	163	100.0

Over half of the safety belt tickets were issued to persons under 25 years of age. Very few persons over the age of 45 received tickets during the project (Table 4.5).

TABLE 4.5. PERSONS ISSUED SAFETY BELT TICKETS BY AGE, TOWN OF GREECE

	Number	Percent
16-24 years	88	54.0
25-34 years	45	27.6
35-44 years	25	15.3
45-54 years	2	1.2
55 and over	3	1.9
	163	100.0

Ticket Dispositions. Eighty-five percent of the tickets were adjudicated by the end of February 1987. Table 4.6 details the dispositions of these 138 tickets. Fifty-nine percent of these tickets resulted in fines, generally of $20 or less. Another 27 percent of the tickets were discharged and the remaining 15 percent of the tickets resulted in either a dismissal or an acquittal.

TABLE 4.6. DISPOSITION OF SAFETY BELT TICKETS, TOWN OF GREECE

	Number	Percent
$10 Fines	23	16.7
$15 Fines	15	10.9
$20 Fines	39	28.2
$25-$35 Fines	4	2.9
Discharges	37	26.8
Acquittals/Dismissals	20	14.5
	138	100.0

Site Coordinator's Comments

Site Coordinator, Officer Douglas Fisher, was asked to respond to a series of questions related to the project conducted in the Town of Greece. His comments are summarized below:

The locally-produced public service announcement was an important part of the four publicity campaigns in the Town of Greece. Its premiere at the initial press conference helped to kick off the project. The commercial which promoted safety belt use was well received by the public and proved to be one of the most effective public information tools used. The fliers handed out at the fast food drive-up windows were also useful in reaching a large number of residents. The bumper stickers were probably the least effective educational device, perhaps because the public sees so many of them that most people do not take the time to read the message. It was difficult to maintain media interest throughout the project. However, more persistent efforts with the newspapers may have generated more publicity.

In general, the residents of the Town of Greece have supported the mandatory use of safety belts. The public's positive attitude toward safety belts seemed to continue throughout the project.

Before the project began, the local traffic court judge was contacted and the project goals were explained. This helped to ensure that the enforcement efforts would not be negated by the court. The dismissal and discharge rates for the safety belt tickets issued during the project were similar to the rates for other traffic offenses.

The training program offered to police officers was excellent. In the Town of Greece, officers unable to attend the actual training workshop watched videotaped sessions. Although watching the training on tape was probably not as effective as attending the training in person, both methods of training were important to the individual officer's attitude and performance on the project. Since members of the Greece Police Department are responsible for other types of police work in addition to traffic enforcement, the officers need to be self-motivated to enforce the safety belt law. The training program and the Department's overall participation in the project increased awareness of the importance of the law and encouraged a higher level of enforcement.

As part of the public education campaign, police officers provided instruction on the law to motorists stopped for noncompliance. The majority of tickets written for unbelted adults were the result of secondary enforcement, while most violations involving children resulted from primary enforcement. Both primary and secondary enforcement efforts were effective in increasing usage.

The public service announcement produced for this project is still being aired and other PI&E activities have continued. In addition, the belt use policy for police officers has remained in effect. The Greece Police Department also plans to hold a refresher training program for its officers.

IMPACT EVALUATION

Attitudinal Surveys

Telephone surveys of Town of Greece residents were conducted at the same three points in time as the surveys of Albany residents. One hundred thirty persons 16 years of age and over were contacted in each survey and asked the same questions related to safety belt use and the mandatory use law. The additional questions related to awareness of the STEP-OR program were included in the surveys conducted at the midpoint (July 1986) and the end (October 1986) of the project. Tests of significance were conducted. Because of the small sample size, only substantial differences were statistically significant. These statistically significant differences are noted in the discussion of the survey results.

General Questions Related to Safety Belt Use and the Mandatory Use Law.

In the April 1986 baseline survey, 79 percent of the Town of Greece residents reported that they use safety belts all or most of the time (Table 4.7). There was an increase in reported usage in July (to 85%), after the first two project phases, and another small increase in October (to 87%) at the end of the project. In October there was a significant decrease in the proportion of respondents who said that they buckle up regularly because of the law (51% to 31%, $Z = 2.9$), and a significant increase in those who said safety was the reason that they use safety restraints (39% to 58%, $Z = 2.8$).

TABLE 4.7. REPORTED REASONS FOR USE OF SAFETY BELTS, TOWN OF GREECE

	Baseline: Apr.'86 Percent	During Project: July'86 Percent	Oct.'86 Percent
In general, do you wear a seat belt...			
Always	61.5	68.5	70.8
Most of the time	17.7	16.2	16.1
Sometimes	18.5	11.5	6.9
Never	2.3	3.8	6.2
Why do you wear seat belts regularly? (always or most of the time)			
Mandatory seat belt law	50.5	49.1	31.0
Safety	38.8	46.4	57.5
Habit	6.8	4.5	9.7
Other	3.9	0.0	1.8

In each survey, almost every Town of Greece resident interviewed was aware of the mandatory restraint use law (Table 4.8). After the project began, there was a significant increase in those who thought that the law applied only to front seat occupants (13% to 34%, Z = 4.0), and by the end of the project 42 percent thought the law was limited to the front seat. Although there was some increase in awareness of the 10-year-old age requirement for children, there was a significant decrease overall in the number of residents who mentioned that children were covered by the law (52% to 29%, Z = 3.8).

The residents interviewed estimated an average usage rate for the Town of Greece of 61 percent before the project began, 62 percent midway through the project, and 59 percent at the end of the project. Usage rates of 50 percent and 75 percent were most frequently mentioned.

TABLE 4.8. AWARENESS OF THE LAW AND ITS PROVISIONS AND PERCEPTION OF COMMUNITY COMPLIANCE, TOWN OF GREECE

	Baseline: Apr.'86 Percent	During Project: July'86 Percent	Oct.'86 Percent
Are you aware that New York State has implemented a mandatory seat belt law?			
Yes	99.2	98.5	98.5
No	0.8	1.5	1.5
Which persons riding in the car are covered by the law?			
Front seat occupants and all children under age 10	10.0	12.3	18.5
Front seat occupants and all children (age other than under 10 mentioned)	42.3	23.1	10.8
Front seat occupants only	13.1	33.9	41.6
All occupants	29.2	23.1	19.2
Drivers only	0.8	1.5	4.6
Don't know	1.5	4.6	3.8
Other	3.1	1.5	1.5
Out of every 100 people in your area, how many would you say wear their seat belts regularly?			
0-20	1.6	1.6	3.9
21-40	7.7	7.6	6.9
41-60	35.3	31.5	36.8
61-80	20.0	33.2	30.0
81-100	10.8	5.4	4.7
Don't know	24.6	20.7	17.7
Average Usage Rate	61.3	61.6	58.9

Attitudes toward the law changed very little over time. Between 76 percent and 78 percent of the respondents were in favor of the law in each survey (Table 4.9). After the program began, there was a small decline in those opposed to the law which was reflected in an increase in those who were undecided.

Between the baseline survey and the midpoint of the project there was a significant increase in the perception of how strictly the law was being enforced. In July, 34 percent thought that the law was being strictly enforced, compared to 17 percent before the project began (Z = 3.2). At the end of the project, the number of Greece residents (26%) who thought that enforcement of the law was strict had declined.

Support for increased enforcement of the law decreased between April (57%) and July (53%) and continued to decline over time (to 48% in October). However, the result of this decrease was an increase in those expressing no opinion, rather than an increase in those opposed.

TABLE 4.9. ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LAW AND ITS ENFORCEMENT, TOWN OF GREECE

	Baseline: Apr.'86 Percent	During Project: July'86 Percent	Oct.'86 Percent
How do you feel about the seat belt law? Would you say you are...			
In favor	76.9	76.1	77.7
Undecided	3.8	6.9	8.5
Opposed	19.3	17.0	13.8
How strictly do you think the law is currently being enforced?			
Strict	16.9	34.1	25.6
Not sure	26.2	17.8	19.4
Not strict	56.9	48.1	55.0
Would you be in favor or opposed to your local police agency increasing enforcement of the seat belt law?			
In favor	56.9	52.7	48.4
Not sure/Don't care	6.2	11.6	14.1
Opposed	36.9	35.7	37.5

Awareness of Program Activities. The results from the July and October surveys indicated that more respondents were aware of safety belt publicity at the midpoint of the project than at the end (35% compared to 29%, Table 4.10). Television was most often mentioned as the source of publicity in both surveys. In July, over a third said they had heard publicity on the radio, compared to 10 percent in October. While none of those interviewed in July mentioned speakers, 12 percent in October gave this response.

In July, one out of 10 persons was aware of increased enforcement by the local police. At the end of the project, seven percent indicated that they knew the local police were enforcing the law more strictly.

TABLE 4.10. AWARENESS OF STEP-OR ACTIVITIES, TOWN OF GREECE

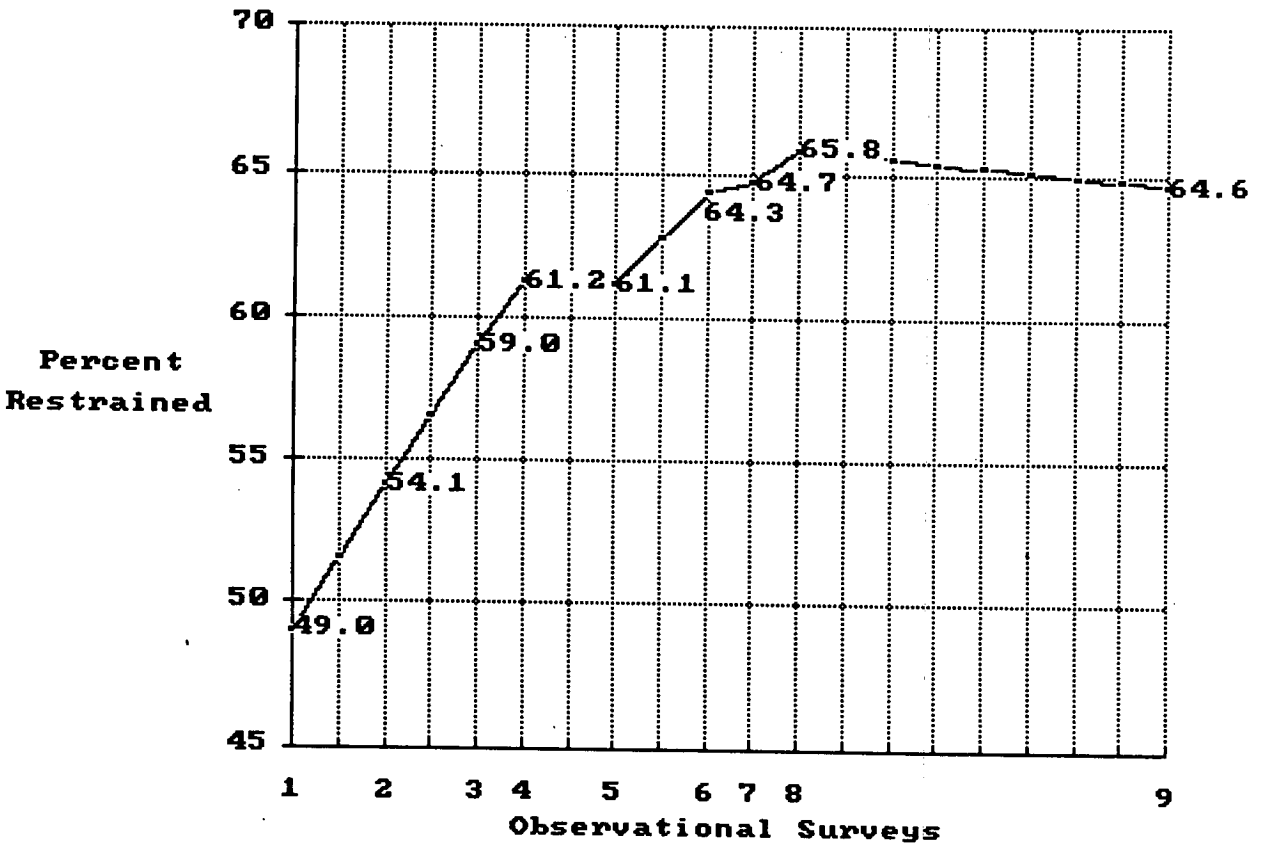
	During Project: July'86 Percent	Oct.'86 Percent
Are you aware of any recent publicity in your local area encouraging seat belt use or compliance with the law?		
Yes	35.4	29.2
No	64.6	70.8
If yes, what types of publicity have you seen or heard? (More than one response was allowed)		
Television	56.5	70.7
Newspaper	17.4	19.5
Radio	34.8	9.8
Speaker	0.0	12.2
Brochure/flier	8.7	2.4
Other	8.7	9.8
Are you aware of any recent increase in seat belt enforcement by your local police agency?		
Yes	10.0	6.9
No	90.0	93.1

Observational Surveys

Observational surveys were conducted in the Town of Greece before and after each of the project phases to determine how usage rates were affected by the program. In addition, a final survey was conducted four months after the end of the project to determine if the increases in usage resulting from the program were sustained over time. The complete data from each survey appear in Appendix G.

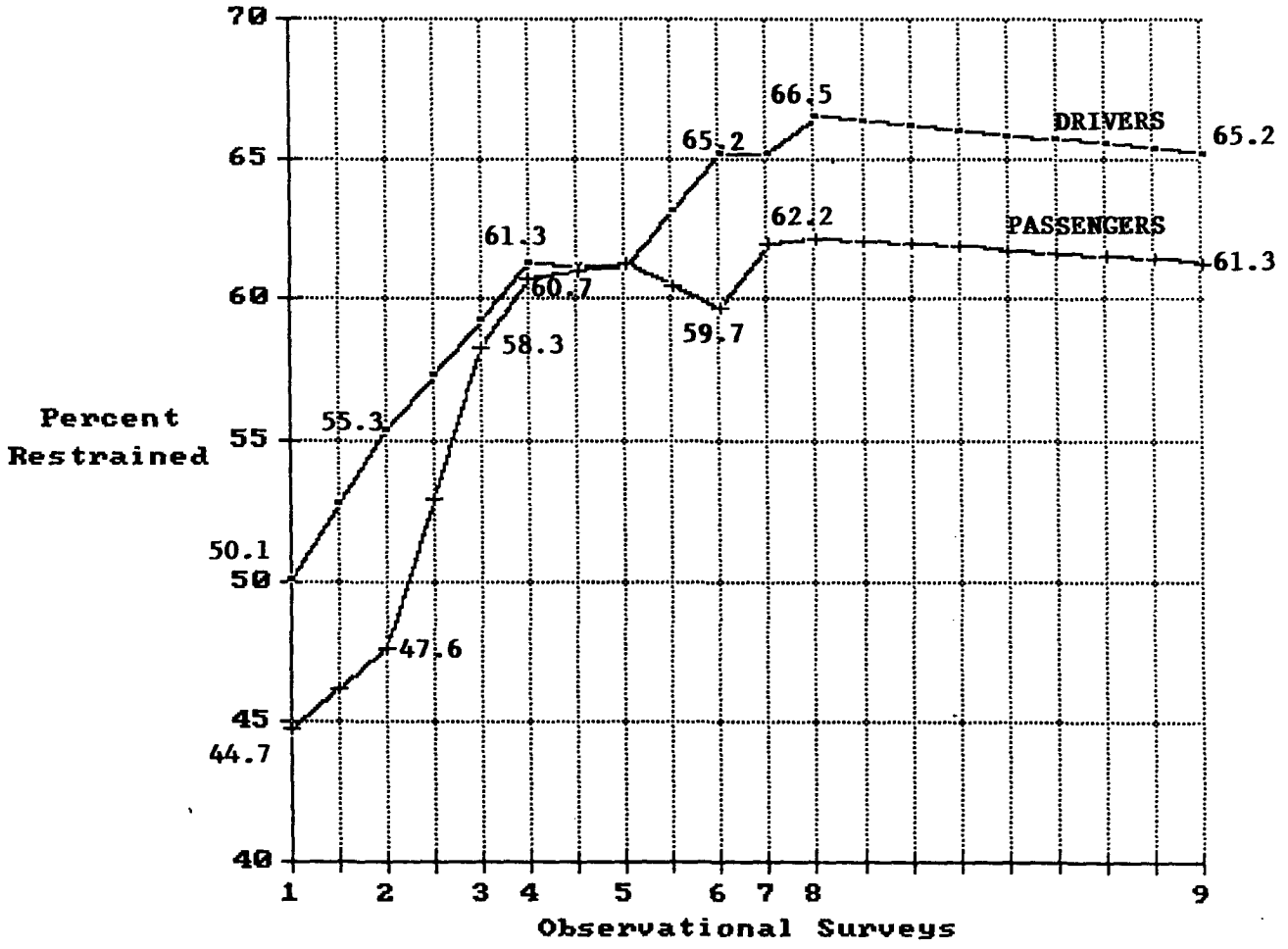
Front Seat Occupants. Figure 4.1 details the usage rates observed during the project (Surveys 1-8) and four months after the end of the project (Survey 9). Before the program began, 49 percent of the front seat occupants observed in the Town of Greece wore safety restraints. Safety belt use rose steadily, reaching a high of 66 percent in the last phase of the project. No significant decline in usage was found in the follow-up survey conducted four months later. At that time, 65 percent of the front seat occupants were using safety belts (Z = 1.0).

FIGURE 4.1. USAGE RATES FOR FRONT SEAT OCCUPANTS, TOWN OF GREECE



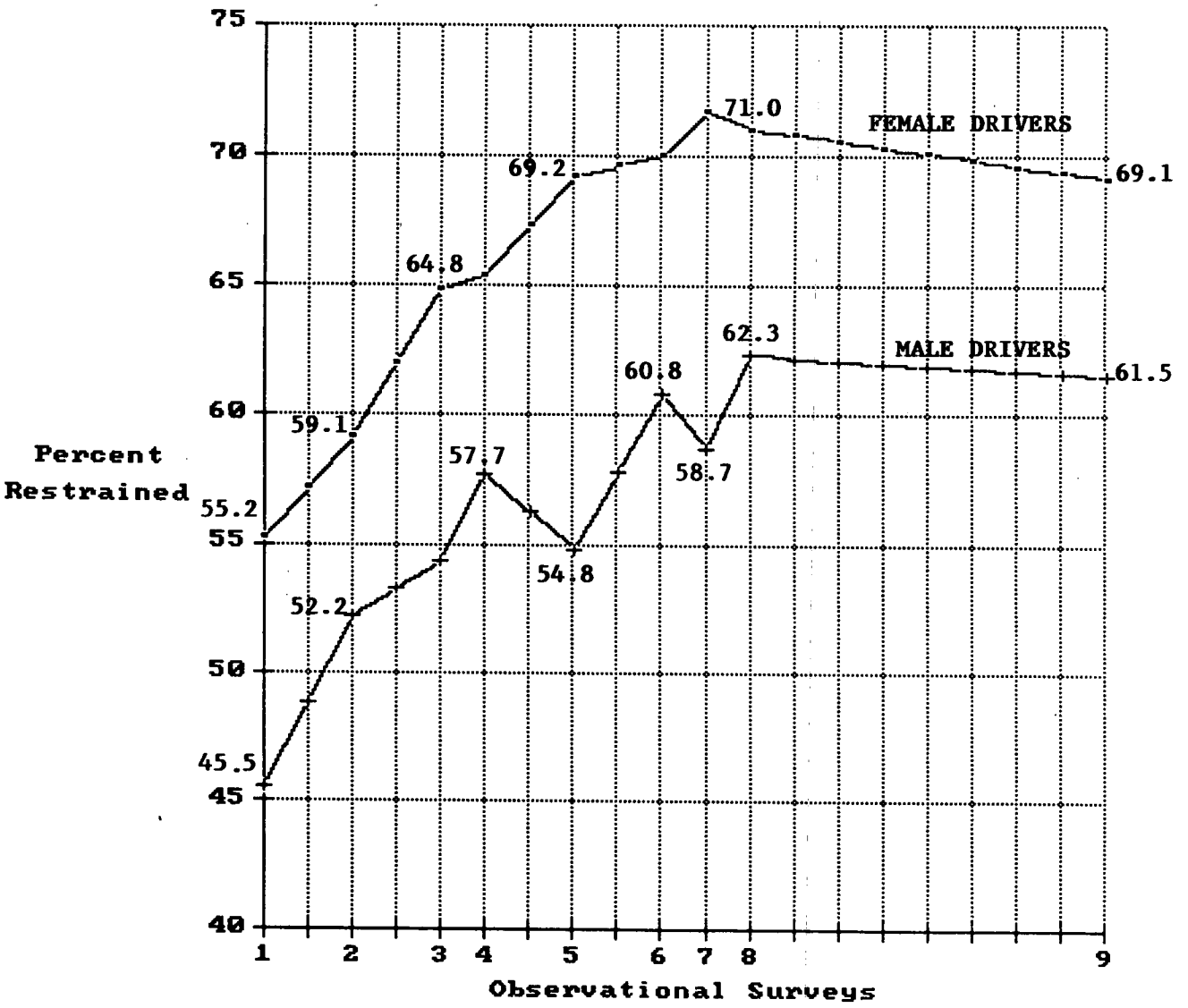
Drivers and Passengers. The usage rates of drivers and front seat passengers were compared (Figure 4.2). In the baseline survey, 45 percent of the passengers were restrained compared to 50 percent of the drivers. While the usage rates for both groups increased early in the project, the increase among passengers was greater. Consequently, after the end of the second project phase, no significant difference in usage between the groups was noted. In the second half of the project, usage among drivers continued to increase while usage among passengers remained the same. This resulted in a difference of four percentage points between the usage rates of drivers and passengers that was sustained in the follow-up survey. In the four months between the last enforcement blitz and the final survey, usage for both drivers and passengers declined only one percentage point.

FIGURE 4.2. USAGE RATES FOR DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS, TOWN OF GREECE



Male and Female Drivers. Safety belt usage rates for male and female drivers were also compared (Figure 4.3). Throughout the project, usage among female drivers was substantially higher than usage among male drivers. Usage rates for women increased with each phase of the project. From a baseline rate of 55 percent, usage rose 16 percentage points to 71 percent after the final phase. Usage among men also increased after each publicity campaign from 46 percent to 62 percent by the end of the project. This was also a total increase of 16 percentage points. Four months later, the usage rate for male drivers had declined less than one percent and was only two percent lower for female drivers.

FIGURE 4.3. USAGE RATES FOR MALE AND FEMALE DRIVERS, TOWN OF GREECE



DISCUSSION

The Town of Greece Police Department implemented an enforcement strategy which called for increased enforcement of the safety belt law within regular enforcement activities. This increased level of enforcement was sustained throughout the project. The four PI&E campaigns used an educational approach which stressed the safety benefits of restraint use. Members of the police force delivered this educational message primarily through public service announcements, the distribution of materials, and various forms of direct contact with the public.

The impact of the PI&E and enforcement program on restraint use behavior was assessed by tracking usage rates throughout the project. The baseline usage rate in the Town of Greece was 49 percent. Once the program began, usage gradually increased 17 percentage points, to 66 percent. The largest increases occurred in the first half of the project when usage rose to 61 percent. Smaller increases in usage continued in the second half of the project, resulting in a usage rate of 66 percent. Four months after the program ended there was no significant change in the usage rate (65%).

During 1985, the baseline period, the Town of Greece Police Department issued an average of one safety belt ticket every ten days. During the project, an average of one ticket per day was written. Although this represented a large increase, it is unlikely that the level of enforcement was solely or even primarily responsible for the substantial increase in restraint use.

The attitudinal surveys helped to identify shifts in attitudes and perceptions that may have been reflected in the increases in restraint use behavior. The results of the surveys conducted after the program began indicated that the message of the Greece Police Department's PI&E campaign was heard. In addition to increases in observed usage, there were also increases in the usage levels reported in the telephone surveys (79% to 87%). As usage increased, the number of respondents who said they buckle up for safety reasons increased, while the number who buckle up because of the law decreased.

At the midpoint of the project, when usage had made the largest gains, 35 percent of the residents interviewed were aware of some recent publicity related to safety belt use. At the same time, twice as many respondents as in the baseline survey perceived that the law was being strictly enforced. Although the publicity campaign focused on educating the public about safety belts, the fact that the message was delivered by police officers may have contributed to the increase in the number of respondents who

thought that the law was being strictly enforced. Since enforcement was not stressed in the publicity, it is not surprising that relatively few residents were aware of the Greece Police Department's program to increase enforcement.

In the second half of the project, usage rates continued to increase, but at a slower pace. At the same time, there was some decline in the proportion of respondents who remembered recently seeing or hearing safety belt publicity. There was also a decline in the perception of strict enforcement and the number of residents who knew that the local police had increased enforcement.

Changes in attitudes toward the law and toward increased enforcement did not appear to be linked to the continuous increases in the usage rates. The level of support for the law was consistent, with over three-quarters of the respondents in favor in all three surveys. With each survey, fewer residents were in favor of increased enforcement of the safety belt law.

In summary, the PI&E and enforcement strategy implemented in Greece was successful in raising front seat occupant restraint use 17 percentage points, from 49 percent to 66 percent. Since this was achieved with a relatively low level of enforcement, it is likely that the publicity campaigns were very important, and possibly more important, to the success of the program than the actual enforcement level. The telephone surveys provided evidence linking the changes in restraint use behavior to an increased awareness of the safety benefits of belt use and an increased perception of strict enforcement of the law, both of which resulted from the publicity campaigns.

The final test of the PI&E and enforcement strategy was its long-term effect on restraint use. Four months after the program ended there was no significant change in the usage rate. It is likely that the Greece Police Department's continuation of several elements of their program was chiefly responsible for maintaining usage at a high level.

5. TOWN OF TONAWANDA EVALUATION RESULTS

ADMINISTRATIVE EVALUATION

Enforcement Activity

Enforcement activities were monitored in the Town of Tonawanda for comparison with the test sites of Albany and Greece. No public information campaigns or additional enforcement were planned for the control site.

Level of Enforcement. In 1985, the Town of Tonawanda Police Department issued a total of 222 tickets. This was approximately one ticket every other day. During the five months of the STEP-OR project, 371 safety belt tickets, or more than two tickets a day, were written. The following tables present information from the 371 tickets issued during the project.

In the four months following the end of the project, the level of ticketing increased. A total of 469 safety belt tickets were issued for an average of nearly four tickets per day.

Types of Violations. Information on the safety belt tickets written by the Town of Tonawanda Police Department was obtained from the Traffic Safety Law Enforcement and Disposition (TSLE&D) system. As Table 5.1 indicates, the large majority of tickets (88%) were issued to unbelted drivers. The remaining tickets were divided between drivers with unrestrained children (7%) and adult passengers (6%).

TABLE 5.1. SAFETY BELT TICKETS ISSUED BY TYPE OF VIOLATION, TOWN OF TONAWANDA

	Number	Percent
Unbelted Drivers	325	87.6
Unbelted Front Seat Passengers Age 16 and Over	21	5.7
Unrestrained Children	25	6.7
	371	100.0

Demographic Information. Almost two-thirds of the drivers receiving tickets for not buckling up were men (Table 5.2). However, there were twice as many women as men within the very small group of adult passengers ticketed for noncompliance. There were also more women than men issued tickets for unrestrained children in their vehicles.

TABLE 5.2. PERSONS ISSUED SAFETY BELT TICKETS BY GENDER, TOWN OF TONAWANDA

	Number	Percent
Male Drivers	225	60.6
Female Drivers	100	27.0
Male Passengers	7	1.9
Female Passengers	14	3.8
Male Drivers with Unrestrained Children	10	2.7
Female Drivers with Unrestrained Children	15	4.0
	371	100.0

Table 5.3 shows the age distribution of the persons receiving safety belt tickets. Drivers in the two youngest age groups received seven out of ten of the tickets.

TABLE 5.3. PERSONS ISSUED SAFETY BELT TICKETS BY AGE, TOWN OF TONAWANDA

	Number	Percent
16-24 years	138	37.3
25-34 years	121	32.6
35-44 years	52	14.0
45-54 years	22	5.9
55 and over	38	10.2
	371	100.0

Ticket Disposition. Nearly all of the tickets (95%) issued in Tonawanda during the project period reached final disposition by the end of February 1987. Table 5.4 presents the dispositions reached for those 351 tickets. Eighty percent of those that were adjudicated resulted in fines, generally of $10. Fourteen percent of the tickets resulted in either dismissals or acquittals.

TABLE 5.4. DISPOSITION OF SAFETY BELT TICKETS, TOWN OF TONAWANDA

	Number	Percent
$10 fines	269	76.6
$15-35 fines	13	3.7
Discharges	21	6.0
Acquittals/Dismissals	48	13.7
	351	100.0

IMPACT EVALUATION

Attitudinal Surveys

Residents of the Town of Tonawanda, the control site, were also contacted in three telephone surveys. These surveys were conducted concurrently with those in the City of Albany and the Town of Greece, the two test sites. One hundred thirty persons 16 years of age and over were interviewed in each survey. Tests of significance were conducted, but due to the small sample size, only large differences were found to be statistically significant. These are reported in the discussion of the results.

General Questions Related to Safety Belt Use and the Mandatory Use Law. Between April and July, there was a small increase in the number of Tonawanda residents who said that they use safety belts all or most of the time (81% to 86%). As Table 5.5 indicates, the high level of reported usage was sustained in the October survey (85%). In addition, when higher usage rates were first reported, there were small shifts in the reasons given for regular restraint use. In July, more residents said that they buckle up for safety reasons, while fewer said that they buckle up because of the law.

TABLE 5.5. REPORTED REASONS FOR USE OF SAFETY BELTS, TOWN OF TONAWANDA

	Baseline: Apr.'86 Percent	During Project: July'86 Percent	Oct.'86 Percent
In general, do you wear a seat belt...			
Always	55.3	69.3	68.2
Most of the time	25.4	16.9	17.1
Sometimes	13.1	10.0	6.2
Never	6.2	3.8	8.5
Why do you wear seat belts regularly? (always or most of the time)			
Mandatory seat belt law	41.0	36.5	36.4
Safety	51.3	56.3	57.2
Habit	4.8	5.4	5.5
Other	2.9	1.8	0.9

Almost all of the residents interviewed were aware of the safety belt law (Table 5.6). There was, however, a lack of knowledge about who was covered by the law. Less than 40 percent of the respondents in each survey knew that the law required restraint use for both front seat occupants and children. The number who thought that the law affected only front seat occupants increased over time. There was, however, a decrease in the number who thought that restraint use was required for all occupants.

Table 5.6 also includes the respondents' estimates of the usage rate in the Town of Tonawanda. The average usage rate increased over time from 56 percent to 61 percent. In all three surveys 50 percent was the response given most frequently, followed by 75 percent.

TABLE 5.6. AWARENESS OF THE LAW AND ITS PROVISIONS AND PERCEPTION OF COMMUNITY COMPLIANCE, TOWN OF TONAWANDA

	Baseline: Apr.'86 Percent	During Project: July'86 Percent	Oct.'86 Percent
Are you aware that New York State has implemented a mandatory seat belt law?			
Yes	99.2	99.2	97.7
No	0.8	0.8	2.3
Which persons riding in the car are covered by the law?			
Front seat occupants and all children under age 10	10.8	21.5	10.9
Front seat occupants and all children (age other than under 10 mentioned)	25.3	17.7	24.8
Front seat occupants only	24.6	26.9	38.7
All occupants	32.3	26.9	17.1
Drivers only	0.0	0.0	2.3
Don't know	0.8	6.2	3.9
Other	6.2	0.8	2.3
Out of every 100 people in your area, how many would you say wear their seat belts regularly?			
0-20	10.8	6.2	5.5
21-40	11.5	14.7	6.3
41-60	30.0	22.3	15.6
61-80	24.6	24.6	20.1
81-100	12.3	18.4	14.7
Don't know	10.8	13.8	27.8
Average Usage Rate	56.2	57.4	61.2

As Table 5.7 indicates, there was a significant increase among those in favor of the law between April and July (63% to 78%, Z = 2.6). The increased level of support was sustained in the final survey in October. There were only slight variations in the proportion of the respondents who thought that the law was being strictly enforced. In all three surveys, between 30 percent and 32 percent perceived strict enforcement. Support for increased enforcement of the law varied more over time. The proportion of residents in favor of increased enforcement rose from 49 percent in April to 56 percent in July, and then returned to 49 percent in October.

Since there were no special PI&E and enforcement activities implemented in the control site, Tonawanda residents were not asked the questions related to awareness of the program.

TABLE 5.7. ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LAW AND ITS ENFORCEMENT, TOWN OF TONAWANDA

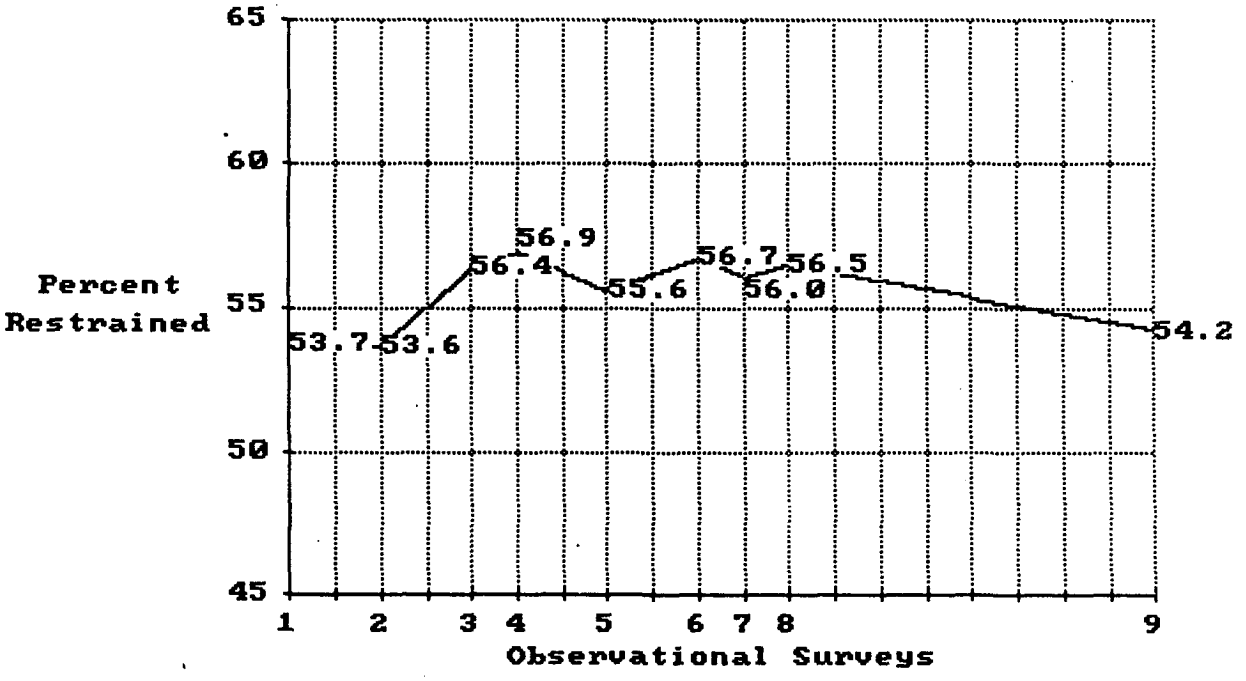
	Baseline: Apr.'86 Percent	During Project: July'86 Percent	Oct.'86 Percent
How do you feel about the seat belt law? Would you say you are...			
In favor	63.0	77.7	78.1
Undecided	12.3	10.0	8.6
Opposed	24.7	12.3	13.3
How strictly do you think the law is currently being enforced?			
Strict	31.5	29.7	31.7
Not sure	24.6	31.3	21.4
Not strict	43.9	39.0	46.9
Would you be in favor or opposed to your local police agency increasing enforcement of the seat belt law?			
In favor	49.2	55.5	49.2
Not sure	15.3	14.0	17.2
Opposed	35.5	30.5	33.6

Observational Surveys

Observational surveys were also conducted in the Town of Tonawanda, at the same nine points in time as those scheduled in the Town of Greece and the City of Albany. The results from the control site were compared to those of the two test sites to determine the impact of the programs in Albany and Greece. The complete data from each of the surveys appear in Appendix G.

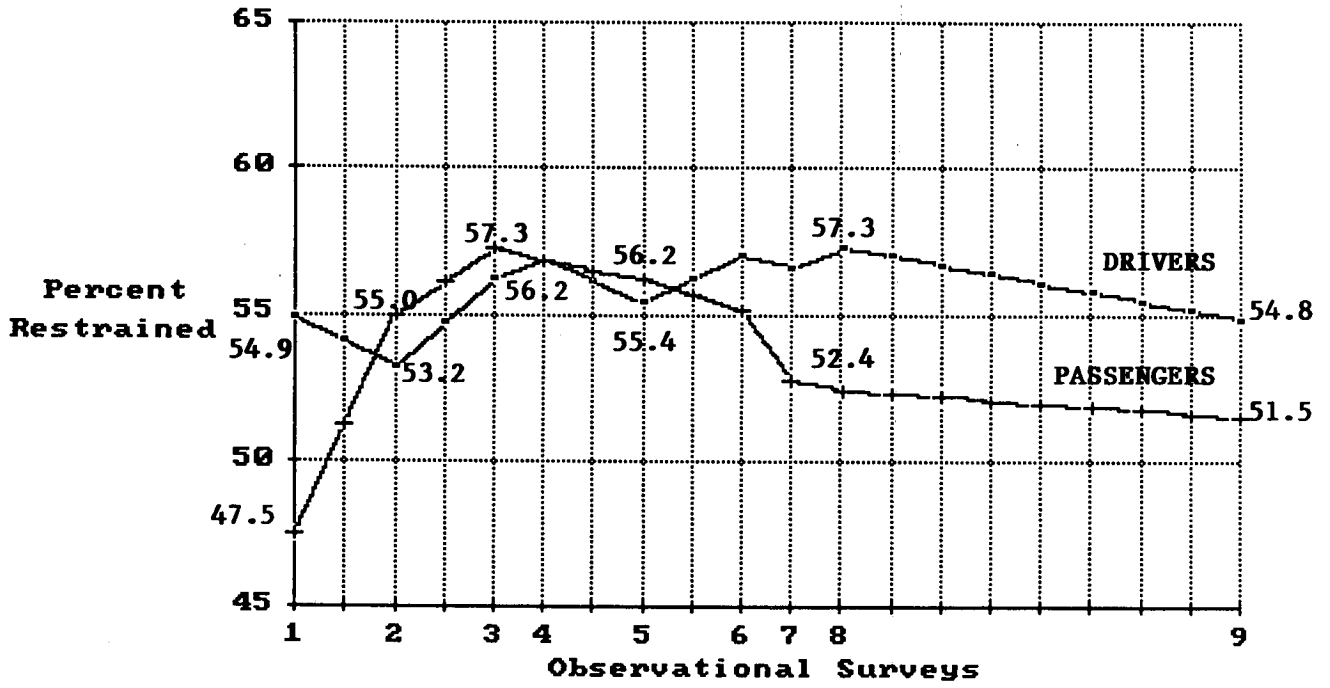
Front Seat Occupants. Safety belt usage rates in the Town of Tonawanda were very consistent throughout the project, with usage among front seat occupants measuring between 54 percent and 57 percent in each survey (Figure 5.1). In the follow-up survey four months later, usage remained within this range (54%).

FIGURE 5.1. USAGE RATES FOR FRONT SEAT OCCUPANTS, TOWN OF TONAWANDA



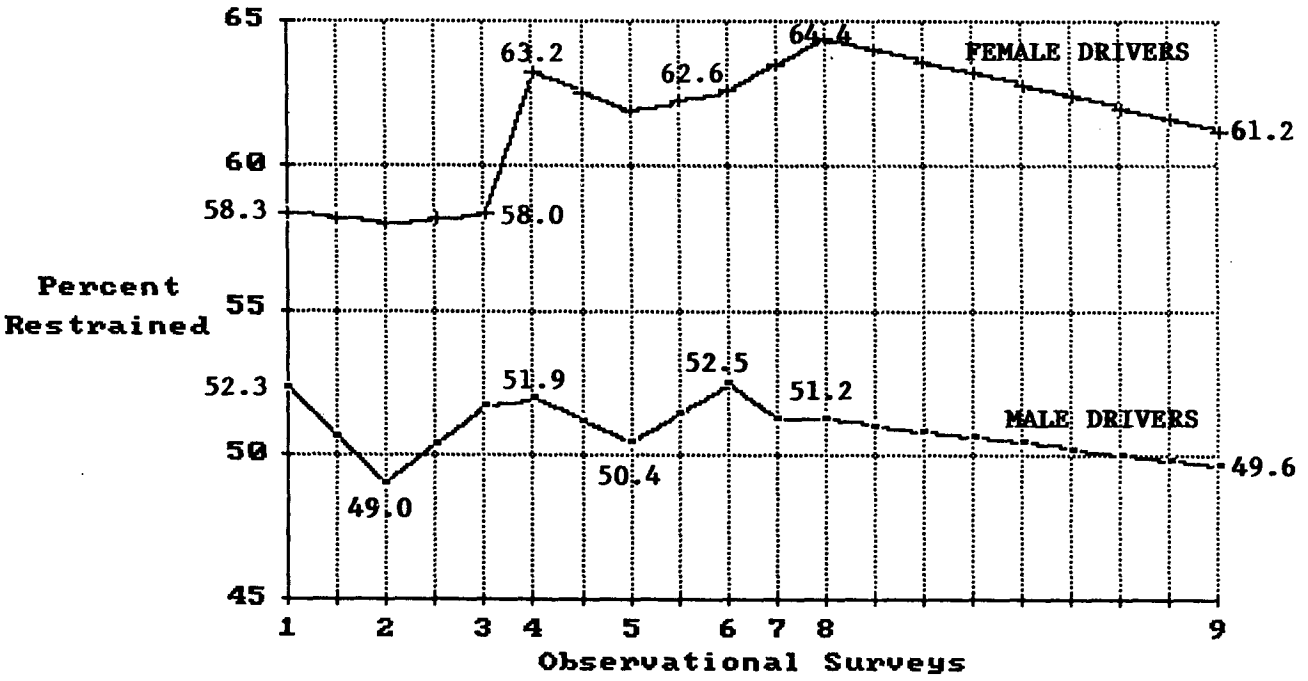
Drivers and Passengers. The usage rates of drivers and passengers were also compared. In each observational survey, between 53 percent and 57 percent of the drivers were restrained (Figure 5.2). More variation, however, was observed among front seat passengers. Usage for this group of occupants ranged from 48 percent to a high of 57 percent during the project period.

FIGURE 5.2. USAGE RATES FOR DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS, TOWN OF TONAWANDA



Male and Female Drivers. Usage rates for male and female drivers were also compared. As in Albany and Greece, the compliance rate for female drivers in the Town of Tonawanda was consistently higher than the rate for male drivers (Figure 5.3). During the project, usage among men ranged from 49 percent to 53 percent while usage among women was measured between 58 percent and 64 percent. Four months after the project ended, the usage rates for both groups were within three percentage points of the baseline rates.

FIGURE 5.3. USAGE RATES FOR MALE AND FEMALE DRIVERS, TOWN OF TONAWANDA



DISCUSSION

The Town of Tonawanda served as the control site for comparison with the City of Albany and the Town of Greece where special PI&E and enforcement programs were implemented. Usage rates were measured in observational surveys conducted at the same points in time as those in the two test sites. In addition, three telephone surveys of Tonawanda residents were conducted, and publicity and enforcement activity were monitored.

Although no program of PI&E or enforcement was planned for Tonawanda, the number of safety belt tickets issued during the project period increased from an average of one ticket per day to two per day. Despite the fact that the enforcement level doubled, usage rates were relatively unchanged, remaining within three percentage points of the baseline rate (between 54% and 57%) throughout the project. It was also not apparent from the telephone survey results that the public perceived that enforcement of the safety belt law had increased. The perception that the law was being strictly enforced changed only slightly over time.

The only statistically significant change found in the telephone surveys of Tonawanda residents was an increase in support for the law. Between the baseline survey and the midpoint of the project, the proportion of residents in favor of the law increased from 63 percent to 78 percent. Support remained at this level in the final survey.

In the four months following the end of the project, the level of enforcement was even higher. However, in the final observational survey, usage was once more measured at 54 percent, the baseline rate.

In summary, the number of safety belt tickets written by the Town of Tonawanda Police Department increased substantially. However, no special publicity related to safety belts occurred during the same period. The fact that usage rates remained relatively unchanged indicates that an increase in awareness and the perceived risk of enforcement must accompany an increase in actual enforcement before usage levels will be affected.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

It is clear from the comparison of the two test sites with the control site that the programs implemented in the City of Albany and the Town of Greece were both effective in increasing safety restraint use. During the STEP-OR project, the usage rate in Albany increased 13 points, from 52 percent to 65 percent, and usage in Greece increased 17 points, from 49 percent to 66 percent. During the same time period, the usage rate in the Town of Tonawanda fluctuated between 54 percent and 57 percent.

The two test sites implemented different enforcement strategies and used different approaches in their publicity campaigns, but achieved similar results. Since comparable levels of usage were reached, the issue becomes one of evaluating the two strategies in terms of the relative costs involved in implementation, the feasibility of replication by police departments in other jurisdictions, and the long-term impact on usage. In addressing this issue, the first step is to identify the specific elements of each program and their relative contribution to the program's success.

The publicity campaigns in Albany stressed that the police were enforcing the law more vigorously than ever before. This was backed up by intermittent periods of intense enforcement using road checks targeting violators of the safety belt law. The enforcement program was dramatic and controversial and received widespread media attention, especially in the early phases of the project.

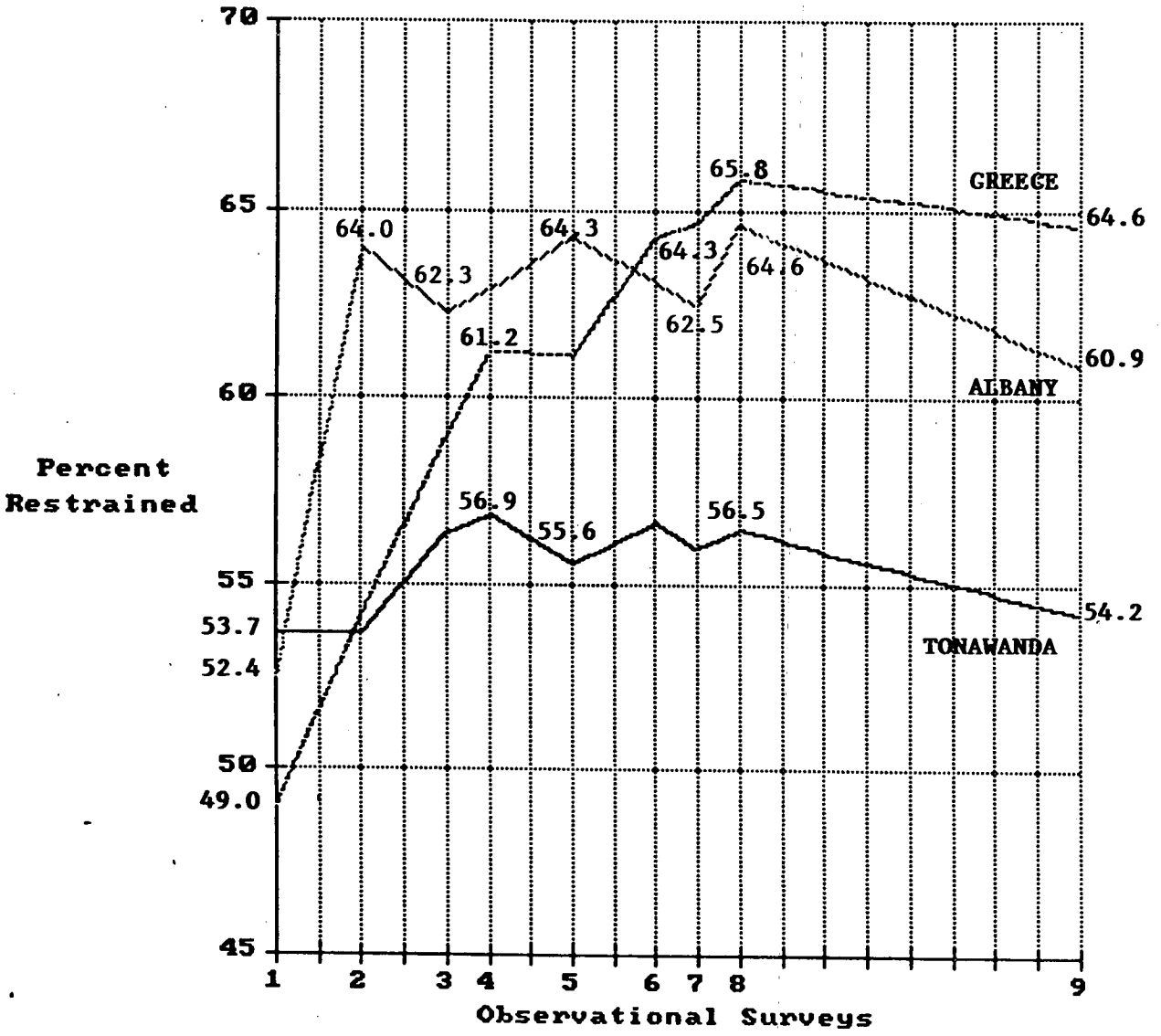
A different PI&E and enforcement strategy was implemented in Greece. The integrated enforcement strategy undertaken by the Greece Police Department was much more subtle and did not generate publicity like the blitz approach in Albany. The publicity campaign in Greece focused on the safety benefits of restraint use. Since the program was not as dramatic, it was difficult to gain media attention. The Greece Police Department relied more on face-to-face education with various groups and the distribution of a variety of PI&E materials. The fact that police officers were conducting the PI&E activities may have subtly relayed the message that the police were willing to enforce the law, consequently contributing to the success of this strategy.

The two enforcement strategies resulted in very different numbers of tickets. The City of Albany Police Department issued 58 tickets per day during its enforcement blitzes and one ticket per day during the baseline and non-blitz periods. Enforcement in the Town of Greece increased from an average of one ticket every ten days to one ticket per day and was sustained at that level throughout the project. Although not planned

within this project, the Town of Tonawanda Police Department also increased enforcement of the safety belt law from an average of one ticket per day to two per day. This was done within regular enforcement activities, similar to the strategy in Greece.

The blitz approach in Albany and increased enforcement during routine police activities in Greece produced usage rates of 65 percent and 66 percent, respectively, at the end of the four phases. Tonawanda, which also increased the number of safety belt tickets issued during regular enforcement duties, saw no comparable increase in usage (Figure 6.1).

FIGURE 6.1. USAGE RATES FOR FRONT SEAT OCCUPANTS



A comparison of the number of tickets written in the three sites indicates that the actual number of tickets issued was not the key factor in raising usage rates. Publicity was the missing element in the Town of Tonawanda, suggesting that the public must perceive that there is a serious risk of receiving a ticket. Results from the telephone surveys provide further evidence of the contribution the publicity campaigns made to the increases in safety belt use.

In the City of Albany, where the road checks conducted in the first enforcement blitz generated extensive media coverage, there was an immediate, sharp increase in usage. Subsequent blitzes received less media attention and, although the usage rate was maintained at the higher level, no further significant increases were noted. From the telephone surveys, it is clear that the perception of the risk of enforcement increased substantially in the first half of the project, but declined somewhat in the last two phases. At the same time, there were also decreases in the number of Albany residents who were aware of recent publicity related to safety belt use and the number who knew that the local police were increasing enforcement of the safety belt law.

Four publicity campaigns were also conducted in the Town of Greece, where an increased, but relatively low level of enforcement, produced usage rates comparable to those in the City of Albany. A more gradual rise in usage resulted from this enforcement strategy and the publicity campaigns which focused on police officers educating the public on the benefits of safety belt use. Although the increases were smaller over time, usage rose with each publicity campaign, reaching the highest level after the fourth phase of the project.

It was apparent from the telephone surveys that the Town of Greece residents were aware of the publicity message. There was a significant increase in the number of respondents who said that they buckle up for safety reasons and a significant decrease in those who said that the law was the main reason for using restraints. In addition, the number of residents who perceived that the law was being strictly enforced doubled in the first half of the project. The visibility of the police in the publicity campaigns may have contributed to this.

It is clear that a combined PI&E and enforcement strategy is needed to increase restraint use. Since the programs in both Albany and Greece were successful, the resources required and other factors associated with each of the programs should be assessed.

Neither test site incurred substantial costs in conducting their PI&E campaigns. Both Albany and Greece received free publicity from the media, including news coverage, guest appearances on talk shows, and air time for public service announcements. In Greece, the production costs of the public service announcement and much of the printing costs for the various PI&E materials were donated. Both police departments routinely conduct safety lectures for various groups and, during the project the safety belt message was incorporated into these and similar activities.

The greatest difference in the costs associated with the two programs was the payment of overtime to Albany police officers to conduct the special safety belt road checks. A total of 312 hours of overtime were logged during the project. The Town of Greece Police Department integrated increased enforcement of the safety belt law into regular enforcement activities and no additional costs were incurred.

The blitz strategy cost substantially more to implement than the integrated approach. However, since the increase in usage in Albany was more immediate than the increase in Greece, there may have been a greater savings in traffic accident injuries.

In addition to cost there are other factors that would affect which of the two strategies other police departments would find feasible to implement. Highly visible special enforcement efforts targeting safety belt violations are likely to be very controversial in most jurisdictions. There may be a reluctance to implement the blitz strategy for this reason. It may also be unrealistic to expect safety belt enforcement to take priority over other enforcement activities on a regular basis. Therefore, a strategy that integrates increased safety belt enforcement into established enforcement routines may prove to be more feasible.

Perhaps the most important consideration is determining which strategy is more likely to sustain usage rates at a high level once program activities end. Four months after the final phase of the project there was a significant decrease in usage in Albany, while the level of usage in Greece was sustained. Additional follow-up surveys should be conducted to determine if these patterns continue.

This project tested the effects of two very different PI&E and enforcement strategies on safety restraint use. The results from the programs conducted in the City of Albany and the Town of Greece helped to identify the general components of a successful program.

Before undertaking any strategy, police officers must be motivated to increase enforcement of the safety belt law. Even within departments with designated traffic safety units, there may be resistance to issuing safety belt tickets. A training program designed to create positive attitudes among police officers is necessary. The goal of the training should be to increase awareness of the police officers' risk of accident involvement and the safety benefits of restraint use. A positive attitude toward restraint use would help convey to the public the importance of compliance with the law. The use of safety belts by the police officers themselves would also contribute to the public's perception that the police are serious about the law. Therefore, a departmental policy requiring belt use by police officers would be another component of a successful program.

A combination of the blitz and integrated enforcement approaches appears to be the ideal strategy. In the Albany test site, the maximum benefits of the blitz approach were attained in the first project phase, with subsequent blitzes maintaining usage at the initial level. After one intensive period of highly visible enforcement, increased safety belt enforcement could be integrated into routine enforcement activities to sustain or further increase restraint use. Additional blitzes may only be necessary when usage rates begin to decline.

Public information and education must accompany any enforcement strategy in order for it to be successful. The results of this project make it clear that the public's perception of the risk of receiving a ticket is more important than the actual number of tickets issued.

A final component of a successful program may be the willingness of a police department to institutionalize the activities that result in increases in both the actual level and the perceived level of enforcement. This would include the incorporation of safety belt training for enforcement officers, public information and education, and enforcement of the occupant restraint law into the routine activities of the police department. This type of commitment will help to ensure that high levels of usage are sustained on a long-term basis.

APPENDIX A

SELECTIVE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM
FOR OCCUPANT RESTRAINTS

Project Schedule

ACTIVITY	DATES	RESOURCE
Phase I		
Baseline Telephone Survey	4/14 - 4/17	ITSMR
Pre-Observation Survey	4/29 - 5/1	ITSMR
PI&E - 15 days	5/2 - 5/16	Sites 1 & 2
Enforcement Blitz - 7 days	5/16 - 5/22	Site 1
Increased Enforcement	5/16 - 10/24	Site 2
Post-Observation Survey	5/27 - 5/29	ITSMR
Activity Report	6/20	Sites, ITSMR, DMV
Phase II		
Pre-Observation Survey	6/24 - 6/26	ITSMR
PI&E - 7 days	6/27 - 7/3	Sites 1 & 2
Enforcement Blitz - 5 days	7/8 - 7/12	Site 1
Increased Enforcement	Ongoing	Site 2
Telephone Survey	7/14 - 7/17	ITSMR
Post-Observation Survey	7/15 - 7/17	ITSMR
Activity Report	8/15	Sites, ITSMR, DMV
Phase III		
Pre-Observation Survey	8/19 - 8/21	ITSMR
PI&E - 7 days	8/23 - 8/29	Sites 1 & 2
Enforcement Blitz - 5 days	9/15 - 9/19	Site 1
Increased Enforcement	Ongoing	Site 2
Post-Observation Survey	9/23 - 9/25	ITSMR
Activity Report	10/17	Sites, ITSMR, DMV
Phase IV		
Pre-Observation Survey	10/14 - 10/16	ITSMR
PI&E - 5 days	10/20 - 10/24	Sites 1 & 2
Enforcement Blitz - 5 days	10/20 - 10/24	Site 1
Increased Enforcement	Ongoing to 10/24	Site 2
Telephone Survey	10/20 - 10/23	ITSMR
Post-Observation Survey	10/28 - 10/30	ITSMR
Activity Report	11/14	Sites, ITSMR, DMV
Follow-up Observation Survey	3/3/87-3/5/87	ITSMR
Final Report	3/31/87	Sites, ITSMR, DMV

APPENDIX B

FROM

INSP ROBERT M. COLEMAN

MEMO.....

-ENFORCEMENT-

ALBANY
POLICE DEPARTMENT
TRAFFIC SAFETY

526 CENTRAL AVE
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12206

-ENGINEERING-

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF TRAFFIC SAFETY DIVISION

FROM: INSPECTOR ROBERT M. COLEMAN

DATE: APRIL 1, 1986

Effective this date the Traffic Safety Division is participating in the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program for Occupant Restraints sponsored by the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles.

Although the department's Emergency Vehicle Operations Course only "strongly recommends" officer seat belt usage, as a part of the above program all members participating are requested to utilize a seat belt, at all times, while operating or riding in a departmental vehicle.

This shall be in effect until this program has been completed.

TOWN of GREECE

POLICE DEPARTMENT

400 ISLAND COTTAGE ROAD
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14612

(716) 225-2525

Gerald D. Phelan
Chief of Police

GENERAL ORDER	EFFECTIVE DATE APRIL 18, 1986	ISSUE DATE APRIL 18, 1986	NUMBER #6-86

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AND DIRECTED THAT WHEN DRIVING OR RIDING IN A GREECE POLICE DEPARTMENT VEHICLE, OFFICERS WILL WEAR THE SEAT BELTS PROVIDED IN THE VEHICLE, UNLESS, IN THE OFFICER'S JUDGEMENT, CIRCUMSTANCES PRECLUDE THEIR USE.

SECTION 1229-C OF THE VEHICLE AND TRAFFIC LAW EXEMPTS MEMBERS OF THE GREECE POLICE DEPARTMENT FROM THE REQUIREMENT TO WEAR SEAT BELTS WHEN OPERATING POLICE DEPARTMENT VEHICLES. THE LAW RECOGNIZES THAT DUE TO THE NATURE OF A POLICE OFFICER'S DUTIES, OTHER FACTORS CONCERNING THE OFFICER'S SAFETY MUST ALSO BE CONSIDERED. THE WEARING OF A SEAT BELT MAY, UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, POSE A HAZARD TO OFFICERS BY HAMPERING THEIR ABILITY TO QUICKLY AND APPROPRIATELY RESPOND IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION.

BY ORDER OF:-

Gerald D. Phelan

GERALD D. PHELAN
CHIEF OF POLICE

GDP/NS

APPENDIX C

FORM 1A PLANNED PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

Town: _____ Period from _____ to _____

Planned Activity	Target Audience	Tentative Date

FORM 1B REPORT ON COMPLETED
PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

Town: _____ Period from _____ to _____

Activity	Date	Officer/ Public Official Involved	Duration of Activity	Target Audience	Total No. of Participants

Comments about media support:

FORM 1C REPORT ON UNCOMPLETED
PUBLIC INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

Town: _____ Period from _____ to _____

Planned Activity	Tentative Date	Target Audience	Brief Description of Reason Unable to Complete Activity

FORM 2 ENFORCEMENT STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES

Town or City: _____ Period from _____ to _____

Officer: _____

Ticket No.	Street Location	Date Written Mo./Day	Time Written (AM/PM)	Type of Enforcement	Violation Code*	Ticketed Person [driver or front seat passenger over 15] Sex M/F	Ticketed Person [driver or front seat passenger over 15] DOB Year	Unbelted Person Sex M/F	Unbelted Person Age

Codes for 1229c Violations:

1229c 1(a) No child restraint - back seat 0-4 years old

1229c 1(b) No seat belt - back seat 4-9 years old

1229c 2(a) No seat belt - front seat 4-15 years old

1229c 2(b) No child restraint - front seat 0-4 years old

1229c 3(a) No seat belt - driver

1229c 3(b) No seat belt - front seat 16 + years old

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX E

INSTITUTE FOR TRAFFIC SAFETY MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH
SELECTIVE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT STUDY
DATA COLLECTION SHEET
(518) 449-3233

Observer:_____ Date:_____

Site No.:_____ Time:_____ a.m / p.m (circle)

CODING
0 = unbelted
1 = belted (any type)

Location:_____ at _____
street observed cross street

COLUMN 1

Car #	DRIVER M	DRIVER F	FRONT SEAT PASSENGER M	FRONT SEAT PASSENGER F
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
TOTALS COLUMN 1	0:	0:	0:	0:
	1:	1:	1:	1:

COLUMN 2

Car #	DRIVER M	DRIVER F	FRONT SEAT PASSENGER M	FRONT SEAT PASSENGER F
19				
20				
21				
22				
23				
24				
25				
26				
27				
28				
29				
30				
31				
32				
33				
34				
35				
36				
TOTALS COLUMN 2	0:	0:	0:	0:
	1:	1:	1:	1:

APPENDIX F

DEPARTMENT OF POLICE
CITY OF ALBANY, N. Y.
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF
PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING
MORTON AVENUE & BROAD STREET
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12202
(518) 462-8000

JOHN F. REID
CHIEF OF POLICE

JOHN A. DALE
DEPUTY CHIEF

PRESS RELEASE FOR ALBANY POLICE DEPARTMENT SELECTIVE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM FOR OCCUPANT RESTRAINTS.

The Albany Police Department is initiating a seat belt enforcement/education program as part of our continuing effort to provide traffic safety for the users of our highways.

The Traffic Safety Division utilizes a three pronged approach to acheive a total traffic safety program. This three pronged approach consists of proactive enforcement of the Vehicle and Traffic Law, public education and correcting roadway defects.

It was brought to our attention that in our area, selt belt/child safety seat usage has declined while personal injury motor vehicle accidents have increased.

The major reason for the decrease in seat belt/child safety seat compliance was a lack of primary enforcement. Tickets were issued to motorists only if stopped for another violation.

In cooperation with our department, a program was developed with the following agencies:

National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration

New York State Department of Motor Vehicle

New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services

The Institute for Traffic Safety

Albany County Traffic Safety Bureau

This program combines public education with primary enforcement. The goal of this program is to increase public awareness and compliance with seat belt/child safety seat usage in order to accomplish the traffic safety mission of reducing motor vehicle accidents and continuing to provide safe highways for the residents of our area.

Seat belt/child safety seat usage rates (Albany Area)

1.	Pre-law	18%
2.	January 1985	75%
3.	April 1985	59%
4.	September 1985	54%

Robert M. Coleman
Inspector
(518) 462-8071

ALBANY POLICE DEPARTMENT
TRAFFIC SAFETY
526 CENTRAL AVENUE
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12206
(518) 438-6881

RADIO PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT FOR ALBANY POLICE DEPARTMENT SELECTIVE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM FOR OCCUPANT RESTRAINTS.

Approximately 43,000 people are killed in motor vehicle accidents each year in the United States. Driving is a risk taking activity. Wear your seat belt and use child safety seats. It's the law and your best protection. PLEASE, don't be a "Crash Dummy".

This message brought to you by the Albany Police Traffic Safety Division and this station.

25 cents
Albany, N.Y. 12212

TIMES UNION

FINAL

F-3

Albany police to tighten up seat-belt law enforcement

By Joe Mahoney
Staff writer

Albany police are about to launch a concerted clampdown on motorists who fail to obey the state's mandatory seat-belt law and will — for the first time — keep an eagle eye out for those who fail to buckle up.

On May 16, Albany police will begin a citywide "primary" enforcement campaign, meaning they will pull over any motorist who is violating the seat-belt law and issue tickets that could result in fines of up to $50, officer William Georges of the Albany Police Traffic Safety Unit said Friday.

This approach is in sharp contrast to the "secondary" enforcement approach, in which police have only issued tickets to motorists who have been involved in accidents or were stopped for traffic violations — a lenient approach that has existed in Albany and almost all communities across the state since the law took effect in December 1984.

The new enforcement effort by Albany police, Georges said, may be the most vigorous campaign in the state.

Behind the crackdown are indications that compliance with the law has plummeted dramatically and steadily at the same time as authorities have noticed a rise in the number of personal-injury accidents, Georges said.

Before the law, an estimated 18 percent of New Yorkers were buckling up. In January of 1985, authorities pegged the compliance rate at 73 percent. In April 1985, however, it was down to 59 percent. By last September, it had slipped to 54 percent. Now, compliance has dipped to 43 percent, Georges said.

The use of child-restraint seats — another aspect of the law — also is slackening across the state, Georges said. "We are looking for at least an increased compliance rate," he said.

Evidence that enforcement of the law results in increased compliance came from Elmira Friday, where a polling firm reported that seat-belt use spiraled after Elmira police, in a 4-day ticketing blitz, warned 2,000 motorists to buckle up.

The survey reported that 83 percent of the drivers in passenger cars were buckled up, and 80 percent of their front-seat passengers wore seat belts.

Albany police, in order to beef up the enforcement effort, have received a $76,000 grant from the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration, with the money earmarked for a public awareness campaign and overtime pay for traffic patrol units.

City police have decided not to resort to roadblocks or roadchecks to enforce the law. Instead, Georges said, they will look for violators at traffic signals and while on road patrol.

The awareness campaign will include a series of public-service spots on television and will feature talking crash dummies used in simulated collisions to find what the impact would be on actual people.

Albany Police Traffic Safety Inspector Robert Coleman said use of seat belts has prevented numerous serious injuries and even deaths in Albany.

In one recent accident, he noted, a man wearing a seat belt was driving to the Crossgates Mall when he lost control of his car and it flipped over. The driver walked away, with only slight bruises, hopping into a cab that took him to the shopping center, he said.

Times Union 5/3/86

EDITORIALS

Time to buckle up

We think everyone should wear a seat belt — though we didn't think the government should have passed a law requiring the enforcement of what should be a self-chosen good habit.

But buckling up is now the law and as such it warrants the obedience that we accord any other law. However, as recent surveys have shown, only about 43 percent of the state's drivers and front-seat passengers are wearing a seat belt, compared to a compliance rate of nearly 75 percent just after the law took effect. What's more, surveys have also shown that some parents are failing to secure their youngsters in child-restraint seats — a dereliction that is likely far more serious than refusing to put a seat belt on oneself.

The fine for ignoring the seat-belt law is now $50. Albanians should be warned that soon the Albany Police Department will be issuing tickets for those who are in violation of either law. That's probably good.

Just as good though is that Albany officials have decided not to resort to roadblocks or roadchecks to enforce the seat-belt law. Instead, they will look for violators at traffic signals and stop signs and otherwise keep an eye out while on road patrol.

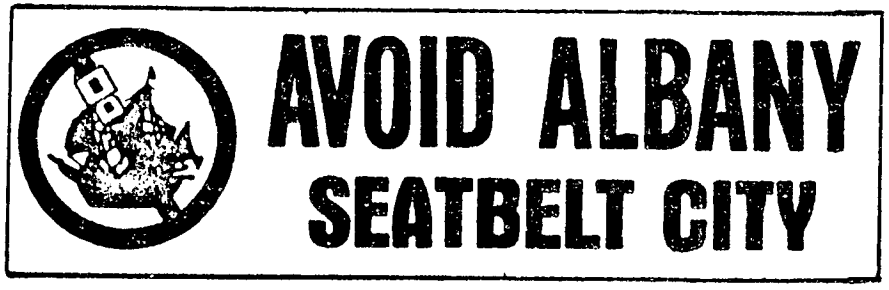
Passing a law requiring seat-belt use is intrusive enough. Stopping hundreds or thousands of drivers to make sure they are obeying that law violates at least the spirit of the "reasonable cause" guarantee against such government interference into the ordinary flow of daily life.

Nonetheless, buckling up is a good idea, whatever the flaws of the law that mandates it and the enforcement mechanisms that law engenders.

Times Union 5/10/86

When in Albany, buckle up or put up ($50)

By Joe Mahoney
Staff writer



As they crack down on motorists violating the state's mandatory seat-belt law, Albany Police are finding that many unharnessed drivers are befuddled by the belts and are not wearing them because they don't know how to adjust them.

"A couple of the officers (who have been writing seat-belt tickets) have even adjusted the belts for people," Albany Police Traffic Safety Inspect Robert Coleman said Monday, the fourth day of a clampdown on unbuckled motorists and their front-seat passengers. "They just couldn't fit themselves in right."

Police also have been urging motorists who have had problems with their seat belts to take their cars to automobile dealerships for adjustments, Coleman said.

Rather than being hostile to officers pulling them over for seat-belt checks, most motorists have been cordial to the police, even when they end up getting a ticket that could result in a fine of up to $50, Coleman said.

Coleman cackled when told that a phantom philosopher has penned a pointed putdown of the city police crackdown on seat-belt scofflaws, a sentiment printed on bumper stickers dubbing Albany "Seatbelt City."

The full message on the stickers, a stack of which were received by *Times Union* columnist Barney Fowler in his Monday mail, reads: "Avoid Albany — Seatbelt City."

The sticker also features a buckled seat belt slashed across an encircled silhouette sketch of a ship that appears to be the *Halfmoon*, the Dutch vessel navigated by explorer Henry Hudson when he wound up in what is now known as Albany in 1609.

Coleman said he has not tabulated how many tickets have been handed to violators since the crackdown began Friday.

"A good majority of people are wearing them, we're finding," he said.

Authorities recently estimated that less than 50 percent of Albany area drivers are complying with the mandatory seat-belt law, which critics claim is an infringement on their personal liberty. The compliance rate has slipped considerably since the law went into effect in December 1984, police have said.

Times Union 5/20/86

F-5

Albany catches 480 without seat belts

● *Assembly passes bill to mandate seat belts on school buses, Page 5A.*

By Bruce A. Scruton
The Knickerbocker News

In just five weeks, Albany police have cited more drivers for violating the state's seat-belt law than the department did in all of 1985.

Armed with a federal grant funneled through the state, Albany began "active enforcement" of the law in May. Through June 27, police had issued about 480 seat-belt summonses and an additional 125 for other violations of the state vehicle and traffic law, according to Bill Georges, the coordinator of the department's seat-belt enforcement program.

Georges called last year's enforcement effort "secondary" with police writing tickets as part of an arrest or during investigation of an accident.

This year's grant allows more Traffic Safety Division police to be on the street by paying for the overtime.

Police are stationing themselves at stop signs and traffic lights and looking into cars, checking for compliance with the law.

Georges said those being cited generally were fined $10 for the first offense and $50 for subsequent ones.

Georges said Albany had a 73 percent compliance rate during the early part of 1985, the year the law went into effect, but had dropped to less than 50 percent by early this year.

The Institute for Traffic Safety Management and Research, part of the State University of New York, made a telephone survey of Albany residents earlier this year and found almost half the 130 people polled favored stricter enforcement of the seat-belt law, Georges said. He said 33.8 percent were opposed and 17 percent had no opinion.

The poll, with a plus or minus 5 percent margin of error, was taken in April and found 40.8 percent did not believe the law was being strictly enforced in Albany.

Knickerbocker News 7/2/86

CITY STREETS

Police say more people buckling up

By Joe Mahoney
Staff writer

More and more Albany motorists appear to be buckling up as a result of the Albany Police Traffic Safety Unit crackdown on people who ignore the state's mandatory seat-belt law, a police official said Tuesday.

City police have issued about 480 citations to seat-belt violators since the clampdown began two months ago, and police will step up the enforcement effort over the Fourth of July holiday weekend, said Officer William Georges, the Traffic Safety Unit's training coordinator.

The effort also has resulted in 125 additional tickets being issued for equipment violations and other Vehicle and Traffic Law violations to people stopped for not wearing a seat belt, he said.

"People are beginning to understand and are cooperating with the program," Georges said, based on visual observations of officers.

Georges said the seat-belt crackdown was launched when police noticed two disturbing trends this year: an increase in personal-injury accidents in Albany and a steady slide in compliance with the seat-belt law.

More fuel for the enforcement campaign, he said, came from a survey of Albany residents by the state Institute for Traffic Safety Management and Research.

Of 130 residents surveyed, 46.9 percent said they were "very much in favor" of the seat-belt law, while 10.8 percent were "very much against" it, he said.

When asked how strictly they thought the law was being enforced, 40.8 percent of those polled said "not very strictly" while 13.8 percent believed the law was "not enforced at all."

When asked if police should increase enforcement of the law, 49.2 percent agreed with that idea, while 33.8 percent were opposed, Georges said.

Immediately after the seat-belt law was enacted in December 1984, about 75 percent of Albany residents were complying with the law, but that figure had dropped to 43 percent by last April, Georges noted.

Times Union 7/2/86

Getting Tough On Seat Belts Pays Off: Cops

ALBANY — Since Albany police started giving tickets to motorists who don't wear seat belts, people who drive here are buckling up more frequently than drivers elsewhere.

During the last five months, city police have written an average of nine tickets a day to people who don't wear their car seat belts.

* * *

This vigilance may be responsible for Albany drivers wearing seat belts more often that do other drivers elsewhere, said William Georges, an officer with the city's Traffic Safety Division. "The program has been successful," he said.

In announcing the total of 1,180 tickets issued since May 16, Georges said about 64 percent of drivers in Albany are wearing their seat belts, compared to the statewide average of 50 percent.

Drivers are fined $10 for the first violation and $50 for the second, he said.

* * *

In addition, he said, police have issued another 382 tickets to the beltless drivers for other traffic infractions.

Schenectady Gazette 10/24/86

Albany police: Tickets boost seat belt use

By Maureen McTague Dana
The Knickerbocker News

Less than four months after the Albany Police Department launched a coordinated effort to enforce the state's seat-belt law, compliance has increased from 46 to 64 percent, according to William Georges, training officer for the department's traffic safety division.

"We are very pleased and we think it's working," said Georges, noting police officers issued 743 tickets for seat-belt and child safety-seat violations between May 2 and Aug. 22.

Georges said the department chose to release information on the program's success just before Labor Day because of the holiday. "We're just making sure that people are aware that traffic enforcement is extremely important during the holiday weekend," he said.

Georges said the seat-belt violators were stopped at intersections by police officers who were asked to check for compliance in addition to their regular duties.

Although the violators were stopped because the police noted they were not buckled up, many of them also were issued tickets for other offenses. The police issued 280 additional tickets for such infractions as driving uninspected vehicles, or driving without insurance or valid licenses, he noted.

During the three-month period, there were no traffic fatalities in the city of Albany, compared to one during the same period last year, Georges said.

He noted that before the program began, police did not issue tickets for violations of the seat-belt law unless they had stopped motorists for another suspected violation. The seat-belt enforcement campaign has changed that approach.

"The whole program has changed our enforcement attitudes from a secondary to a primary enforcement," Georges said. "It used to be that if a person didn't have a seat belt on, but had done nothing else wrong, he wasn't stopped."

Georges said the department's efforts to publicize the program when it was launched in May are partly responsible for the increased compliance.

"The general public is aware of the fact that the city police department is concerned about traffic safety," he said, noting the program began with two weeks of educational seminars and a public awareness campaign.

Although violators can be fined up to $50 for first offenses, Albany City Traffic Court Judge Stephen Safranko charges $10 for first offenses and $50 for subsequent violations, Georges said.

The program is expected to continue for at least several more months. "We will analyze the program at the end of the year and see what the results are," Safranko said.

Knickerbocker News
8/27/86

E-C

LETTERS

Crime check

To the Editor:

On July 10, I was a passenger in a car in the vicinity of Tampa Avenue, Albany, proceeding toward Route 85, the Slingerlands bypass. As we neared a corner, we noticed a police roadblock, consisting of at least three vehicles, stopping each automobile as it entered the intersection. We surmised that there had been a serious accident, crime or chemical spill. Lo and behold, "Albany's Finest" were checking each car to see if the passengers were wearing seatbelts, and were pulling over and ticketing those individuals who were not in compliance with the seatbelt law.

Since it appears that the Albany Police Department has nothing better to do with its time than to conduct roadblocks to apprehend seat belt law violators (and let's not forget their customary ticketing and towing duties, which are always zealously performed), I'd suggest that a substantial cutback in police manpower is in order. On the other hand, if crime is still a problem in Albany, I'd suggest that police brass reexamine their priorities to concentrate on those serious criminal activities, and cease from conducting these obnoxious and unnecessary roadblocks.

HARVEY SILVERSTEIN

Albany

Times Union 7/22/86

Seat belts

To the Editor:

I understand the Albany police force is going to actively pursue the safety belt scofflaws. As an Albany resident and taxpayer, I consider this to be a brilliant move. Not only will it help to rid us of these safety belt vermin, but at the same time it will free up some of the force who might otherwise be working on cases involving murder, assault, armed robbery or child abuse.

Great idea, I feel safer already. Hey jaywalkers, you're next.

WALLY BRENNAN

Albany

Times Union

Crime free

To the Editor:

Isn't it marvelous that the city of Albany is so crime-free that our overstaffed police department can begin, with taxpayers' money, a campaign to hunt down motorists for the grievous offense of not wearing their seat belts. And wasn't it thoughtful of Mayor Whalen, in Albany's Tricentennial year, to bring the art of police harassment to a new low.

Genreal Motors, Ford and Chrysler have spent millions of dollars to purchase seat-belt laws throughout the country, but they can't purchase obedience. The people of New York state rejected the idea of a seat-belt law when it was proposed, and are rejecting it now, correctly viewing it as a violation of both privacy and property rights. It must gall the bureaucrats who run this state to see democracy in action once again.

I urge the victims of the police department's impending crackdown to bury the city of Albany's Traffic Court beneath an avalanche of Not Guilty pleas. That's the only kind of response Big Brother understands.

ANDREW ARMSTRONG

Albany

Times Union

APPENDIX G

TABLE G.1. SAFETY BELT USAGE FOR ALL FRONT SEAT OCCUPANTS, ALL DRIVERS, AND MALE AND FEMALE DRIVERS, CITY OF ALBANY

Observational Surveys	All Front Seat Occupants		All Drivers		Male Drivers		Female Drivers	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Phase 1								
Before:	3564	52.4	2844	54.1	1596	49.3	1248	60.3
After:	4717	64.0	3750	65.5	2170	62.8	1580	69.3
Phase 2								
Before:	4958	62.3	3958	64.0	2364	59.4	1594	71.0
After:	5062	62.9	4031	63.7	2378	60.2	1653	68.7
Phase 3								
Before:	5420	64.3	4212	65.1	2443	58.5	1769	74.1
After:	6052	63.1	4937	64.7	2898	58.7	2039	73.1
Phase 4								
Before:	6048	62.5	4984	63.7	2900	57.2	2084	72.8
After:	5968	64.6	4896	65.4	2765	60.0	2131	72.6
Follow-Up	5174	60.9	4229	62.6	2486	56.7	1743	71.1

APPENDIX G

TABLE G.2. SAFETY BELT USAGE FOR ALL FRONT SEAT PASSENGERS, MALE FRONT SEAT PASSENGERS AND FEMALE FRONT SEAT PASSENGERS, CITY OF ALBANY

Observational Surveys	All Front Seat Passengers		Male Front Seat Passengers		Female Front Seat Passengers	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Phase 1						
Before:	720	45.6	254	40.9	466	48.1
After:	967	58.3	317	53.9	650	60.5
Phase 2						
Before:	1000	55.5	349	48.7	651	59.1
After:	1031	59.8	375	53.1	656	63.7
Phase 3						
Before:	1208	61.5	417	52.5	791	66.3
After:	1115	56.3	407	49.1	708	60.5
Phase 4						
Before:	1064	57.0	368	50.3	696	60.5
After:	1072	61.0	330	57.3	742	62.7
Follow-Up	945	53.3	315	41.9	630	59.1

APPENDIX G

TABLE G.3. SAFETY BELT USAGE FOR ALL FRONT SEAT OCCUPANTS, ALL DRIVERS, AND MALE AND FEMALE DRIVERS, TOWN OF GREECE

Observational Surveys	All Front Seat Occupants		All Drivers		Male Drivers		Female Drivers	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Phase 1								
Before:	2992	49.0	2406	50.1	1270	45.5	1136	55.2
After:	4775	54.1	4008	55.3	2217	52.2	1791	59.1
Phase 2								
Before:	3588	59.0	2833	59.2	1520	54.3	1313	64.8
After:	3891	61.2	3070	61.3	1634	57.7	1436	65.4
Phase 3								
Before:	5490	61.1	4235	61.1	2418	54.8	1817	69.2
After:	3230	64.3	2709	65.2	1415	60.8	1294	70.0
Phase 4								
Before:	3417	64.7	2870	65.2	1437	58.7	1433	71.7
After:	3511	65.8	2921	66.5	1495	62.3	1426	71.0
Follow-Up	3291	64.6	2774	65.2	1420	61.5	1354	69.1

APPENDIX G

TABLE G.4. SAFETY BELT USAGE FOR ALL FRONT SEAT PASSENGERS, MALE FRONT SEAT PASSENGERS AND FEMALE FRONT SEAT PASSENGERS, TOWN OF GREECE

Observational Surveys	All Front Seat Passengers		Male Front Seat Passengers		Female Front Seat Passengers	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Phase 1						
Before:	586	44.7	160	28.8	426	50.7
After:	767	47.6	194	39.7	573	50.3
Phase 2						
Before:	755	58.3	315	47.9	440	63.2
After:	821	60.7	257	55.3	564	63.1
Phase 3						
Before:	1255	61.3	442	56.3	813	64.0
After:	521	59.7	131	51.9	390	62.3
Phase 4						
Before:	547	62.0	136	55.1	411	64.2
After:	590	62.2	146	54.8	444	64.6
Follow-Up	517	61.3	111	50.5	406	64.3

APPENDIX G

TABLE G.5. SAFETY BELT USAGE FOR ALL FRONT SEAT OCCUPANTS, ALL DRIVERS, AND MALE AND FEMALE DRIVERS, TOWN OF TONAWANDA

Observational Surveys	All Front Seat Occupants		All Drivers		Male Drivers		Female Drivers	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Phase 1								
Before:	3877	53.7	3222	54.9	1806	52.3	1416	58.3
After:	3457	53.6	2802	53.2	1489	49.0	1313	58.0
Phase 2								
Before:	4825	56.4	3953	56.2	2222	51.7	1731	58.3
After:	4631	56.9	3723	56.9	2075	51.9	1648	63.2
Phase 3								
Before:	4463	55.6	3565	55.4	2013	50.4	1552	61.9
After:	4508	56.7	3730	57.0	2055	52.5	1675	62.6
Phase 4								
Before:	4770	56.0	3996	56.6	2228	51.2	1768	63.5
After:	4395	56.5	3673	57.3	1967	51.2	1706	64.4
Follow-Up	4568	54.2	3820	54.8	2130	49.6	1690	61.2

APPENDIX G

TABLE G.6 SAFETY BELT USAGE FOR ALL FRONT SEAT PASSENGERS, MALE FRONT SEAT PASSENGERS AND FEMALE FRONT SEAT PASSENGERS, TOWN OF TONAWANDA

Observational Surveys	All Front Seat Passengers		Male Front Seat Passengers		Female Front Seat Passengers	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Phase 1						
Before:	655	47.5	187	47.1	468	47.7
After:	655	55.0	174	48.3	481	57.4
Phase 2						
Before:	872	57.3	372	50.4	500	60.1
After:	908	56.8	273	47.3	635	60.9
Phase 3						
Before:	898	56.2	291	48.1	607	60.1
After:	778	55.1	203	53.7	575	55.7
Phase 4						
Before:	774	52.7	184	45.1	590	55.1
After:	725	52.4	209	41.1	516	56.6
Follow-Up	748	51.5	221	49.8	527	59.1

TIMES-UNION

THE METRO

Rochester, N.Y., Wednesday Evening, April 23, 1986

On location in Greece for TV 'buckle up' spot

By NANCYJEAN PAWLIK
Times-Union

Hollywood it's not, but Greece will be just as good a location to film a commercial that the producer is optimistic will be seen in several states, if not nationwide.

Victoria Harris, president of Harris Group Communications Inc., 21 Prince St., hopes that her commercial, which is scheduled to be filmed at 6:30 p.m. tonight, will be more persuasive than the National Safety Council's commercials are in getting people to wear seatbelts.

"I can do better than that," Harris said.

That is why Harris accepted Greece Supervisor Donald J. Riley's offer to produce the commerical with money from a $60,000 state grant to the Greece Police Department to promote seatbelt use.

Harris, who declined to be paid, plans to approach national and state advertising councils with the commercial in hopes they'll use it.

Harris' commercial, which is scheduled to be filmed behind Greece Town Hall, 2505 W. Ridge Road, will show a wrecked car.

Please turn to back of section

Times-Union 4/23/86

'Buckle up' commercial filming in Greece

From page 1B

The audience will simultaneously hear a man telling a woman that she should wear her seatbelt. The woman will refuse to wear the seatbelt. Then, the sound of skidding tires and a crash will be heard, Harris said.

Another voice will then inform the man that the woman he was with was killed.

Harris said that her commercial is designed to let people "hear" themselves refusing to use seatbelts.

No actors will be seen in the commercial, Harris said. People for the voice-over roles have yet to be selected, Harris said.

Harris said that the 30-second television commercial, on 35 millimeter film, would normally cost upwards of $20,000 to produce. She is also producing three soundtracks to accompany the television commercial, which can also be used separately on the radio.

Besides the woman being reminded to "buckle-up," there will also be soundtracks of a man being reminded to use his seatbelt and a reminder for teenagers.

"I like doing things like this," Harris said.

The commercials will air locally May 2.

They also may serve to remind Harris to buckle up.

"I am really trying to break a bad habit," Harris said of her non-use of seatbelts.

Harris is not alone in needing to break that habit, said Greece Police Chief Gerald D. Phelan.

"Seatbelts just are not being used as much as they ought to be," Phelan said.

That is why Phelan applied for the $60,000 state Motor Vehicles Department grant. The money was offered to two communities in the state. The Greece Police Department and the Albany Police Department were the recipients, Phelan said.

Since Harris refused payment and is producing the commercials herself, Greece's $60,000 grant money will be used to pay officers overtime for training sessions to learn special enforcement strategies and for extra patrols, Phelan said.

The seatbelt campaign is being developed and supervised by Greece police Officers Doug Fisher andPeter Chechak and Sgt. Norman Whyte.

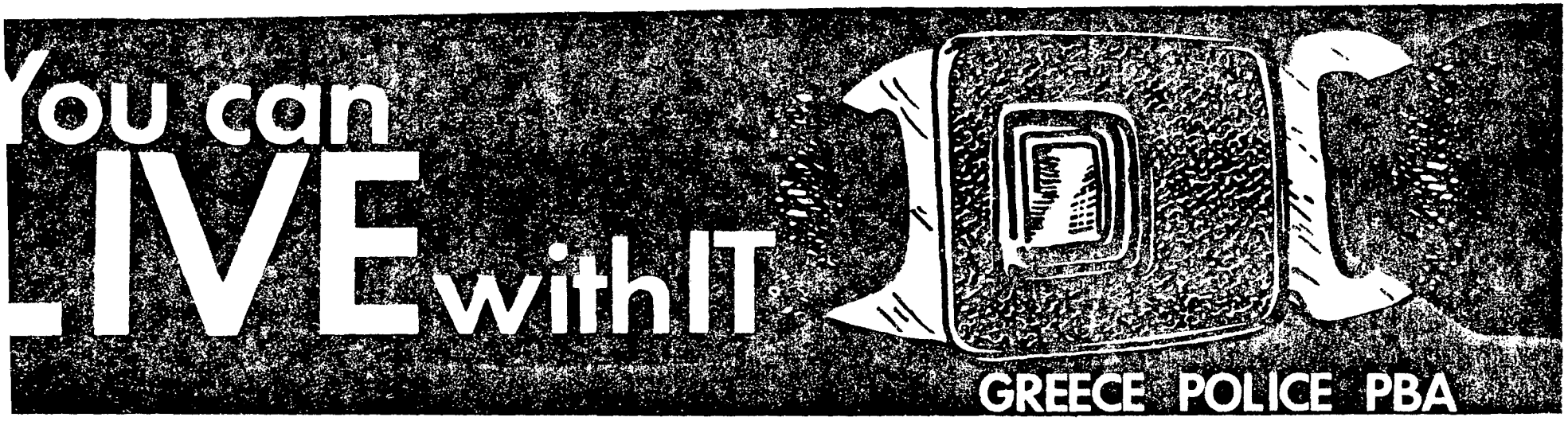
Travel expenses to Albany and salaries paid to the officers while they work on the program will not cost the town anything because that money will be refunded by the state. Phelan said.

We value you as a customer

Please Buckle-Up

Sponsored By
THE GREECE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Flier Distributed at Fast Food Restaurants



Bumper Sticker

Keep Buckling Your Seat Belt

Greece Post 9/3/86

"BUCKLE UP!" — That's the message of the Greece Police Department's ongoing campaign. As part of its grant for seat-belt awareness, the department is distributing bumper stickers that show a seat belt and say "You can LIVE with it." And if you pull up to the drive-through window at a Greece fast-food restaurant, you'll get a small flier that reminds you and your family to wear your seat belts. The stickers are available at the three Greece police precincts, as well as town hall and the local libraries.

Safety Belt Exhibit at Local Shopping Mall