

## **ICR Supporting Statement: Section B**

### *State of the Practice of Ignition Interlock Programs*

#### **Background**

An ignition interlock is an alcohol-detection device that a driver must exhale into before being able to start the vehicle. The interlock's detection threshold for alcohol can be set at any level, but is typically set at .025 grams per deciliter (g/dL) of breath alcohol concentration (BrAC). The devices are designed to prevent individuals who are alcohol-impaired from starting their vehicle. The prevention of impaired driving is an important measure to safety, as alcohol-impaired driving is a significant highway safety problem. For example, in 2016, 10,497 people were killed in traffic crashes that involved alcohol-impaired drivers.<sup>1</sup>

Interlocks have been used in impaired driving programs for nearly 30 years. Research on their effectiveness demonstrates that interlocks reduce recidivism during the time a device is on the offenders' vehicle (see Goodwin et al (2015)). All states allow the use of interlocks as a criminal or administrative sanction for driving while impaired (DWI)<sup>2</sup> and administer interlock services through their interlock programs. These programs are tasked with contracting with interlock vendors, and enrolling and monitoring DWI offenders.<sup>3</sup> Each program is unique, but they do have similar challenges and can learn from each other's experiences in areas such as monitoring DWI offenders' drinking and driving behavior, and coordinating between the justice system (DWI courts, probation offices), departments of motor vehicles and interlock vendors.

This research will examine states' interlock programs, with the goal of learning various strategies for administering programs and identifying promising practices. The research will seek information from publicly available information (such as DWI laws) and from interlock program administrators. The information from program administrators will be collected via: 1) a 15-minute on-line questionnaire on basic information on their individual program, and 2) a more in-depth 1-hour phone conversation.<sup>4</sup> This research will update an inventory (see <http://www.iip.tirf.ca/inventory/index.php>), which is out-of-date, and will obtain additional in-depth information from the group interviews. The results will be useful to all state highway safety office and interlock program administrators in their efforts to address the various challenges of program management, and support NHTSA's mission to reduce impaired driving and prevent fatalities from alcohol-involved traffic crashes.

- DWI and interlock law – to be obtained from available secondary sources;

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<sup>1</sup> National Center for Statistics and Analysis. (2017, October). DOT HS 812 102. *Alcohol-impaired driving: 2016 data* (Traffic Safety Facts. Report No. DOT HS 812 450). Washington, DC: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Retrieved from: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/812450>

<sup>2</sup> The Association of Ignition Interlock Program Administrators is a platform for interlock programs.

<sup>3</sup> When a device detects a positive BrAC, it will record it as a "fail" and prevent the vehicle from starting. Program administrators may issue additional sanctions when an offender's record reveals a fail(s).

<sup>4</sup> The phone interviews will include one-to-five participants per call; we will seek a call with each state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

- Program processes, resources, and practices – to be collected from the online questionnaire and group interviews
- Program features from the perspective of model guidelines or “key features” – to be obtained by researchers and from the questionnaire and interview; and
- Program data on the number of DWI arrests, convictions, recidivism rates – to be collected from the online questionnaire and group interviews

## **B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS**

NHTSA is seeking approval to gather information on programs that deliver ignition interlock services. The information will be used to update an online inventory of interlock programs. The inventory is a resource for agencies involved in addressing the DWI problem. Interlock programs operate in nearly every State, the District of Washington and Puerto Rico to manage the interlocks used by offenders of Driving While Impaired (DWI) laws.

### **B.1. Describe the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection to be used.**

The respondent universe is a census of interlock programs in the United States, of which there are fifty-two (one per State, DC and Puerto Rico). The selection is straight-forward because the programs are known. This ICR does not involve sampling or sampling weights.

### **B.2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information.**

First, researchers will notify the relevant groups of the request for information collection, including NHTSA’s Regional Offices. The Regional Offices will inform the State offices, including interlock program administrators of the project, its purpose, and the request for information. This approach to data collection has occurred successfully in the past, and there is no reason why it would not be successful again.

Second, the researcher will email invitations to the interlock program administrators to take the online questionnaire and join the group phone call. The invitations will describe the project, include a hyperlink to the online survey, and provide contact information for questions.

### **B.3. Describe methods to maximize response rates.**

The desired participants will likely be interested in participating in the project, as it addresses their area of expertise, and is supportive of their work. The contact information will emphasize the importance of their participation in providing information of value to their colleagues.

NHTSA will send invitation letters that highlight the importance of program participation to developing the state of the practice inventory in a manner that will support program administrators and staff. The invitation will highlight the goals of the project, namely, to support

programs, strengthen partnerships, share information on promising practices, identify research needs and opportunities, and describe trends in interlock use.

**B.4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken.**

The online questionnaire will be pilot-tested and monitored to ensure a quality data collection effort. Once data collection begins, we do not anticipate substantive changes to the question set proposed. The technical report will include descriptive statistics such as frequencies and cross-tabular analyses of the responses to the online questionnaire and a qualitative synthesis of the input from the telephone discussions.

**B.5. Provide the names and telephone numbers of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design.**

The following individuals have reviewed technical aspects of this research plan:

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