

<b>Title of Recommendation</b>		<b>PCCEP Recommendation to Include Veil of Darkness Analysis in PPB Annual Stops Data Report</b>	
<b>Author(s): (Subcommittee or committee members)</b>		<b>Date presented:</b>	
<b>Summary of Recommendation:</b>			
<p>The Portland Committee on Community Engaged Policing (PCCEP) is committed to fostering trust and collaboration between the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) and the communities it serves. In light of ongoing discussions about equitable policing practices, we propose enhancing the PPB’s Annual Stops Data Report by implementing a Veil of Darkness analysis. This approach aims to provide deeper insights into the racial equity of traffic stops in our community.</p>			

<b>Body of Recommendation:</b>
<p>The existing Stops Data Report offers valuable information about the frequency and demographics of stops made by PPB officers. PCCEP understands that PPB began collecting stops data in 2001 following state and City-level recommendations to adopt specific policies prohibiting stops and searches “motivated by the officer’s perception of race, color, sex, or national origin” and to collect data on the topic.<sup>1</sup> We know that the PPB Strategic Services Division is committed to producing a high quality product, and we appreciate the opportunity to review their reports each year.</p> <p>The subject of benchmarking, and specifically, using the injury collision benchmark to assess stop rates across demographic groups, has generated much discussion over the years. While we understand the purpose of benchmarking is to control for other confounding variables that might impact why a driver is stopped, we also know that data analysis can be subjective like anything else. We believe that the PPB can take additional steps to help improve transparency and trust in the data they are producing about stop rates across racial groups.</p> <p>To improve the Bureau’s and the public’s understanding about whether PPB stops are equitably distributed among racial groups, PCCEP recommends incorporating an additional analytical framework. Veil of Darkness (VOD) analysis is a statistical method based on the idea that, during nighttime hours, the visibility of a person's race or ethnicity decreases. By</p>

<sup>1</sup> Oregon HB2433

comparing police stops during the day to those at night, researchers can evaluate whether racial disparities in stops are influenced by the visibility of race.

Veil of Darkness analysis has shown to be a robust method for evaluating potential biases in policing. One study conducted by Stanford University analyzing 95 million traffic stop records from 2011 to 2018 showed obvious trends of racial bias in traffic stops, something that can occur subconsciously. Although PCCEP recognizes there is some need to address confounding variables through a method like benchmarking, VOD analysis provides the PPB with an opportunity to enhance their understanding of racial disparities in stops. Analyzing PPB's data in such a way will pave way for changes to stops methods and training, if trends show changes are needed.

We recommend that the Portland Police Bureau take the following actions:

1. **Integrate Veil of Darkness Analysis:** Include a detailed Veil of Darkness analysis in the Annual Stops Data Report. This analysis should differentiate between stops made during daylight hours and those made after sunset, providing a clearer picture of racial disparities in traffic stops. PCCEP recommends VOD analysis be conducted for all future reports, as well as all past annual stops data reports in order to establish and evaluate trends.
2. **Utilize Existing Data:** Leverage the comprehensive data already collected by the PPB regarding the timing of stops and the race of individuals stopped. This will facilitate the implementation of the analysis without the need for additional data collection resources.
3. **Public Reporting:** Share the findings of the Veil of Darkness analysis publicly as part of the Annual Stops Data Report. This transparency will help build trust within the community and demonstrate the PPB's commitment to addressing potential biases in policing.
4. **Engage with Community Stakeholders:** Collaborate with community members, advocacy groups, and academic experts to interpret the analysis's results and develop actionable strategies for improving equitable policing practices.

#### Expected Outcomes

- **Enhanced Understanding of Racial Equity:** The Veil of Darkness analysis will provide critical insights into whether traffic stops are applied equitably across different racial groups, helping to identify and address any disparities.
- **Informed Policy Development:** By understanding the factors that contribute to unequal stop patterns if any should emerge, the PPB can better tailor its training and policy initiatives to promote fair and just policing practices.
- **Strengthened Community Relations:** The proactive approach of incorporating this analysis will demonstrate the PPB's dedication to transparency and accountability, fostering greater trust between law enforcement and the community.

**Commented [GD1]:** May be useful to add more background about VOD analysis - where else is it used? How developed, etc?

**Commented [GD2]:** Maybe build out this part - PPB does take efforts to understand racial disparities in stops (much discussion about benchmarking over the years), but the current methods seem to be confusing to the public, and in their report they acknowledge the many different benchmarks they could use/imperfect system. Opportunity to improve clarity/trust on their end.

**Conclusion**

Implementing a Veil of Darkness analysis in the PPB's Annual Stops Data Report represents a meaningful step toward achieving racial equity in policing. We urge you to consider this recommendation as part of your ongoing efforts of more equitable policing, but also to enhance the relationship between the Portland Police Bureau and the communities it serves.

We view this as a positive step PPB can take to increase transparency. We urge PPB to take advantage of this opportunity to build trust with the community.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. We look forward to your response and to collaborating on initiatives that promote equity and justice in our community.

<b>How does this recommendation redress barriers to racial equity?</b>	
<b>How does this recommendation improve outcomes for persons with mental illness?</b>	
<b>How were marginalized and underrepresented communities, including those who will be affected by this recommendation, engaged to shape, write and otherwise develop this recommendation?</b>	

**Resources**

<https://news.stanford.edu/stories/2020/05/veil-darkness-reduces-racial-bias-traffic-stops>