

Traffic Transgressions

This study responded to a need by City of Cape Town to gain a better understanding of traffic transgressions and transgressors, in order to determine whether current traffic policy interventions have had any effects. The project provided the City of Cape Town Traffic Services with information on the profile of a typical transgressor and what transgressions are being enforced.

Such profiling of transgressors might be useful for planning enforcement actions and for designing interventions aimed at changing behaviour-influencing habits and norms.

In this study longer-term trends in traffic offences and specifically, the payment of fines were also analysed. The analysis provide data that could assist Cape Town Traffic Services in allocating resources and in structuring enforcement measures to reduce offences.

The results show that speeding received the most citations (i.e. 51%), with transgressions linked to licencing in second place (at 24%). Males incurred more than 55% of all transgressions and approximately 58% of the speeding offences were incurred by males.

An interesting observation was that for the period under investigation, of the offences that were not withdrawn, only approximately 26% were paid. Speeding offences were more likely to be paid, possibly because of the transgressors' perceptions that speeding offences may be easier to prosecute given the technology used to record the offence (such as cameras producing a photo of the offender).

The Cape Town Traffic services commenced with interventions to induce payment of charges. Two campaigns were implemented in July 2014: 1) a campaign that includes sending cell phone (sms) messages to transgressors of an offence, and 2) renewal of car licences are prohibited if there are any outstanding warrants of arrest. Given that these campaigns were initiated at the beginning of the period under investigation, there seems to have been less of an impact on encouraging transgressors to pay their charges.