

Develop a Sustainable Model for Implementing Driver Improvement Points (Dips) in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

This research mainly focuses to come up with a suitable Sri Lankan model which will support the sustainable implementation of “Driver Improvement points system” (DIPs) - as per the regulations published under the Motor Traffic Act from the extra ordinary gazette numbered 1726/12 and dated 05.10.2011. It has declared 22 offences that could be counted for DIPs. The design of DIPs was done with the main objective of identifying high risk motorists and habitual offenders and to suspend them from driving for a specified period of time. While correcting the attitude and improving the discipline of drivers in order to ensure that they will be more responsible and courteous on the roads and reducing the high number of road accidents which has brought great loss to the country over the years are the two main objectives of a DIPs system.

DIPs are a mechanism already adopted in limited number of countries, mainly by the developed countries like USA, Canada and Australia, and as well as by some developing countries like Malaysia, Singapore and South Africa.

The implementation of DIPs within Sri Lanka is still doubtful though the legal enforcement is already available, due to some practical issues. A fully integrated and well equipped monitoring system will be required in order to ensure the effectiveness and the transparency of the system. The infrastructure facility requirement of the system is very high and eventually it requires a fairly large initial capital investment which is very hard to bear by a country like Sri Lanka. On the other hand the high possibility of corruptions in the current Sri Lankan system is one of the major issues to be addressed in the implementation process as it will drastically affect the credibility of the system.

In developing a sustainable model a comprehensive literature review was carried out on the DIPs systems implemented worldwide including the factors affecting the driver behavior. Further an opinion survey was carried out to get the public opinion and ideas of the proposed system. The sample group comprising of Private Vehicle Users, Professional Drivers and

Passengers/Road users were addressed through two different ways in form of Google forms and the printed version of the same. The online questionnaire using Google forms mainly targeted the private vehicle users. The printed version of the same questionnaire was used to get the opinion of the people who do driving as a profession and the other road users.

The results clearly show ensuring the effectiveness and transparency is a must for a credible system. Provision of valid evidence of the offence before marking any points is expected by almost all the parties involved. The new model proposed, points out the draw backs of the previous system and focuses on low cost methods such as body worn cameras, in capturing reasonable evidence of the offence.

Key Words: Offence, Driver Improvement points system (DIPs), Accidents

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