

SAFE CLEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2008

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In January 2005, the City of Houston launched its SafeClear traffic incident management program. The program aimed to combat many of the problems that arose from the 'free-for-all' that occurred as tow operators raced towards disabled vehicles on Houston freeways. By improving tow operator response (dividing Houston freeways into segments with assigned operators responsible for their own segments), policy makers believed that they could reduce collisions.

An analysis conducted in 2006 looked at the first year of the program and concluded that the program was successful – i.e. SafeClear was having the desired effect of reducing collisions, congestion, and crash clearance times. The SafeClear Performance Report for 2008 took another look at the SafeClear program as part of continued evaluation efforts.

Key Findings

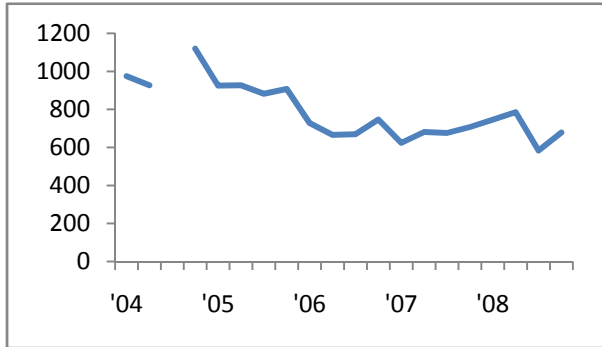
- Program performance metrics are consistent with those of previous years.
- With regards to performance metrics, the program is meeting the majority of established goals; however, there is room for improvement – in 2008, 89.8% of tows were responded to within 6 minutes, just short of the 90% goal.
- There is evidence that tow operators adjust their behavior to the price of gasoline, patrolling less as that sort of activity becomes more costly.
- The SafeClear program continues to have an impact on reducing collisions on Houston area freeways.
 - Valuing the cost of a collision at \$34,000 per collision, the reduction of approximately 120 collisions per month attributed to the SafeClear program results in savings to the driving public of \$4,080,000 per month (\$48,960,000 per year).
- Response time (i.e. how fast tow operators arrive at disabled vehicles) is correlated with the volume of collisions – a one minute decrease in average response time yields approximately 80 fewer collisions per month.

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OVERVIEW

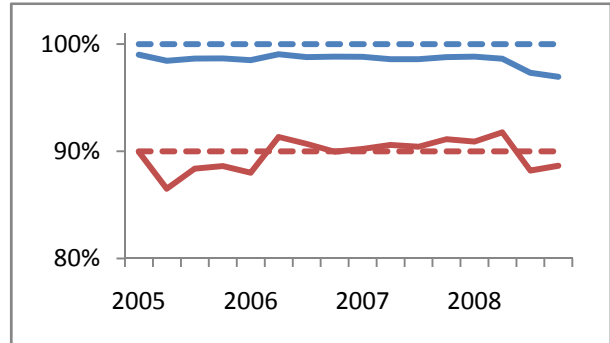
Collisions

Collision totals represent total crashes on Houston freeways.



Response Time

The amount of time between notification of the tow operator and arrival at the disabled vehicle.



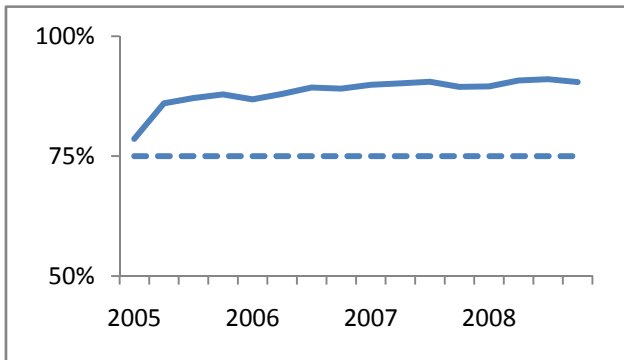
Goals:

100% within 20 min ✗ Actual – 97.9%

90% within 6 min ✗ Actual – 89.8%

Clearance Time

The amount of time between the arrival of the tow operator at the vehicle and the removal of the vehicle.

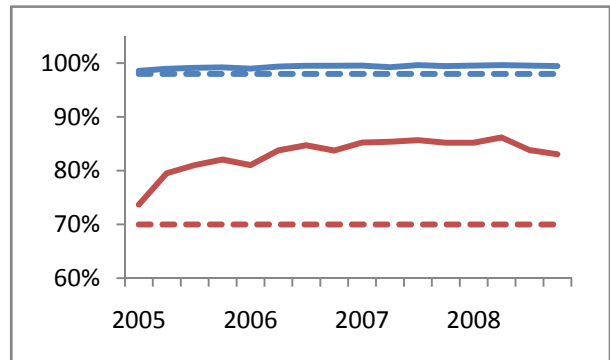


Goals:

75% within 20 min ✓ Actual – 90.5%

Duration

The amount of time elapsed between the notification of the tow operator and the removal of the disabled vehicle.



Goals:

98% within 90 min ✓ Actual – 99.5%

70% within 20 min ✗ Actual – 84.5%