



TOWN OF HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS POLICE DEPARTMENT

February 8, 2022

Press Release

A report recently came out which appears to suggest that under a specific condition, Hadley may have disparate statistics when it comes to traffic stops for non-white vs white motorists. We are still trying to fully understand the report, and it is important to note that even the researchers themselves say that the statistical significances in their report can stem from factors outside of the report.

First and foremost, we at the Hadley Police Department are as always committed to ensuring that we treat all individuals fairly, equally, and are transparent.

- In this vein, we publish reports on our website for annual bias free policing, use of force, and police pursuit data per our policies.
- We have had a fully operational body and cruiser camera system in place for more than a year and a half, and are of the very few agencies in Western Massachusetts that deploy both body and cruiser cameras combined.
- We have completed annual trainings on subjects like Implicit Bias, Fair and Impartial Policing, Legitimacy and Procedural Justice, Restorative Justice, and Cultural Competency.
- We have our own Restorative Justice program here working with members of our own Community, the DA's office and C4RJ (Communities for Restorative Justice).
- We are one of the first in the area, after partnering with Easthampton, to have an in-house Clinician to respond with officers to mental health and substance abuse calls.



TOWN OF HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS POLICE DEPARTMENT

Regardless of all the above, we look forward to learning more and speaking to those who executed this study and are eager to interpret the data to better understand what it means.

Here are some facts of the study as we understand them for the nearly one year long collection of data (10+ months):

- Of a total of 913 stops recorded, 168 were for non-white operators (a *combination* of Black/African American, Hispanic, Asian, Asian Pacific, American Indian, Middle Eastern and Pacific Islander). **This is below the State average.**
- There is a theory used within the report called “Veil of Darkness” for “Inter-Twilight Period” stops (specific timeframes only surrounding dawn and dusk). This theory suggests that officers cannot see the race of the operator at night but would be able to during the day. For this theory to have any validity, it must be assumed that if non-white operators are stopped more during daylight hours, then the officer can more easily profile them. The report states that factors like **reason for the stop, weather, vehicle speed, driver behavior, or whether a stop was made by the officer vs. being a call for service for erratic operation,** are not considered under veil of darkness. It appears that this is the only portion of the study in which a disparity is noted for Hadley.
 - The totals for Inter-twilight period: Non-white operators= 47, White operators= 262. Non-white operators are stopped nearly 6 times *less* than white operators and equates to approximately 4 non-white operators being stopped per *month*.
 - The results for veil of darkness for ALL Hadley stops appears to report that there is no relationship between the likelihood of a non-white motorist being stopped during the daylight as compared to darkness. In fact, Non-white motorists are stopped less during daylight.



TOWN OF HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS POLICE DEPARTMENT

We are hoping to understand veil of darkness and Inter-twilight period better, what the data means and will soon be working with senior department heads in Town to assist with this. We look forward to discovering more about how this study was conducted and will approach this with an open mind to understand it and learn from it.

While we await further clarification on this report, if anyone has any questions or concerns, or would like to speak further about this report, please contact me.



Respectfully,

Michael A. Mason

Chief of Police