

Traffic Stop Quarterly Report #20: Arrests MCSO Response

The Office has considered internal and external recommendations to address findings of disparity from the 20th Traffic Stop Quarterly Report (Q4 2025), which was a deep dive on the arrests completed in 2024. Arrests vary in their nature, whether a driver was “arrested” does not indicate that a driver was taken into custody. Most arrests (80% of them) effectuated during traffic stops are considered “cite and release,” whereby drivers are issued a citation for a criminal violation and are never taken into custody, rather they are issued a criminal citation, in a fashion similar to receiving a civil traffic ticket, the only difference being the manner in which the court processes the violations. While reviewing data for this report, we identified 155 traffic stops where drivers were cited with criminal violations, but for which deputies did not indicate that an arrest was made in the Vehicle Stop Contact Form. Each of these stops was a “cite and release/no custodial” arrest. Those stops were recoded as arrests in this quarterly report and one of the recommendations coming out of the IRG was to re-run that Traffic Stop Annual Report (TSAR) 10 Analyses with that data updated. The TSAR 10 found statistically significant disparities at the Office level at the Arrest benchmark for all three comparison groups, Black, Hispanic, and Minorities as a whole. When we re-ran the data with the complete set of arrests, the TSAR results remained largely unchanged. The results of those analyses are presented below in an appendix to this document.

TSQR 20 identified many of the causes of those disparities through a series of statistical analyses as well as Body Worn Camera reviews. Based on findings from this report and the nature of the arrests, MCSO concludes that bias or racial profiling is not impacting disparate outcomes in traffic stop arrests. We conclude that the inequality observed in TSAR are explained by race-neutral characteristics of deputies’ duties. The available evidence demonstrates that disparity in arrest outcomes is associated with criminal speeding, suspended licenses, DUI/alcohol related arrests, and warrant arrests. The IRG discussed the results and identified ways that may improve the measurement of arrest disparities in the future and those are presented below. It is often challenging to identify new operational measures designed to reduce disparities that may be impactful on top of the already significant efforts that MCSO has been implementing with its continual policy evaluation, training, inspections, and TSMR interventions.

Recommendation 1: Publish report to website and brief District personnel through a series of Internal Town Halls.

Action Item 1: TSAU sergeants and research staff will conduct Town Halls across every district and multiple squads to: 1) brief patrol on the findings of the TSQR 19: Citations and Warnings and TSQR 20 Arrests in Q1 2026. 2) Remind deputies and sergeants that when criminal violations are sited, mark arrest on the VSCF regardless of whether the subject was placed in custody or not.

Recommendation 2: Re-Run the TSAR 10 Arrests Analyses with the 155 “cite and release” traffic stops that were not properly coded in the TSAR 10 data and publish the results.

Action Item 1: Re-Conduct the Stop Length and Arrest TSAR analyses which use the Arrest variable from the Vehicle Stop Contact Form as part of the analyses. (Completed see Appendix A of this document)

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Recommendation 3: Propose methodological changes for future TSARs based on the findings of this report in order to further refine the measurement of disparities. The recommendations are as follows: to include Custodial and Non-Custodial arrests a matching variable for the Stop Length benchmark, match stops for suspended licenses for arrests, match DUI stops for arrests, and remove warrant arrests from the arrest analysis.

Action Item 1: Submit revisions to the TSAR methodology for approval for TSAR 12 which will cover the data from 2026.

Recommendation 4: Continue to educate the field supervisors on the presence and utility of the Supervisors Traffic Stop Dashboard.

Action Item 1: Provide a “translation/guide” of the data dashboard to assist supervisors in navigating the dashboard.

Recommendation 5: Continue to provide guidance to deputies on traffic enforcement priorities.

Action Item 1: Produce semi-annual traffic trends guide for line-level deputies and community members to refer to on our website. This guide will include a list of the most common ARS violations that are cited or warned in traffic stops and their associated citation and warning rates. This information can be viewed by deputies, including officers in training, as resource guide/tool post-academy that can support new deputies and inform their decision making to increase consistency and reduce outliers.

Recommendation 6: Continue to partner with the Community Outreach Division, Community Advisory Board and other community groups through meetings and town halls to share the results of this research and other traffic stop research so they can be informed on the issues that have been identified as driving disparities.

Action Item 1: MCSO held a Community Meeting this quarter in Gilbert on February 19th, 2026 and shared the latest issues related to traffic stop disparities and the Melendres case in general, among other agenda items. This was the 5th such community meeting in the last year that Sheriff Sheridan has held around the county in areas that MCSO is the primary law enforcement entity. Others were conducted in Gila Bend, Aguila, Laveen, and Waddell. On March 31st, MCSO invited the Mexican Consulate to attend and participate in our community meeting in Tonopah and shared Melendres related updates as well as information on MCSO in general.

Recommendation 7: Continue ongoing monitoring of and intervening when necessary on individual traffic stop activity via the TSMR process which has been ongoing since April of 2021.

Action Item 1: Continue the ongoing monthly analysis of the previous 12 months of individual deputies traffic stop activity, review identified disparities and intervene when necessary.

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Appendix A: TSAR 10 Arrest Outcome Reanalysis

During the development of TSQR 20 on arrests, MCSO identified additional arrests that were not analyzed in TSAR 10. In TSAR 10 we utilized a data set that identified N = 1,212 arrests during the 2024 traffic stop year. For TSQR 20, MCSO identified an additional 155 traffic stops where drivers were cited with criminal violations, but for which deputies did not indicate that an arrest was made in the VSCF. Each of these stops included a “cite and release/no custodial” arrest. MCSO also identified three traffic stops that were identified as an arrest in the data, but for which no arrest was made. Thus, during 2024, there were a total of N = 1,364 arrests during traffic stops made by MCSO deputies.

Considering the changes in the 2024 data following TSQR 20, MCSO wished to reevaluate the TSAR results utilizing the TSAR 10 methodology while using a more accurate account of the arrests that were made in 2024. The arrest variable is utilized in many different models in the TSAR analyses. The variable is used as a matching/control variable for all analyses of stop length.

- 3 Baseline PSM Models
- 9 Alternative PSM Models
- 3 Linear Regression Models

The arrest variable is used for all analyses of arrests as an outcome variable.

- 3 Baseline PSM Models
- 3 PSM Models for Booked arrests compared to all other stops
- 3 PSM Models for Non-Warrant arrests compared to all other stops
- 3 PSM Models for Arrests, including special assignments as a matching variable
- 3 PSM Models for Booked arrests, compared to cite and release arrests

Below, we provide TSAR 10 results for comparison and note any changes in statistical significance for these models.

Stop Length

Table 1: PSM Stop Length Analysis, Baseline Analysis

TSAR 10 Data	Difference (in minutes)	t-statistic	Statistically significant?
Hispanic v. White Drivers	0.23	1.67	No
Black v. White Drivers	0.52	2.32	Yes
Minority v. White Drivers	0.10	0.92	No
TSQR 20 Data			
Hispanic v. White Drivers	0.27	2.00	Yes
Black v. White Drivers	0.46	2.25	Yes
Minority v. White Drivers	0.19	1.67	No

In comparing results from TSAR 10 we identified one additional statistically significant difference in stop length when utilizing the revised TSQR 20 data for analysis. Specifically, the difference in stop length between Hispanic and White drivers in TSAR 10 was reported as 0.23 minutes (13.8 seconds) and was not

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statistically significant. Using data from the TSQR 20 we found that the difference between Hispanic and White drivers was 0.27 minutes (16.2 seconds) and was statistically significant.

Table 2: PSM Stop Length Analysis, All Stops

TSAR 10 Data	Difference (in minutes)	t-statistic	Statistically significant?
Hispanic v. White Drivers	1.24	1.27	No
Black v. White Drivers	-0.91	-0.68	No
Minority v. White Drivers	1.04	1.29	No
TSQR 20 Data			
Hispanic v. White Drivers	1.75	1.90	No
Black v. White Drivers	-1.84	-1.44	No
Minority v. White Drivers	1.27	1.53	No

Utilizing all stops, we found no statistically significant differences in stop length using TSQR 10 data. Results were similar when utilizing TSQR 20 data and we found no statistically significant differences.

Table 3: PSM Stop Length Analysis, Including Special Assignments as a Matching Variable, Extended stops removed

TSAR 10 Data	Difference (in minutes)	t-statistic	Statistically significant?
Hispanic v. White Drivers	1.24	1.27	No
Black v. White Drivers	-0.91	-0.68	No
Minority v. White Drivers	1.04	1.29	No
TSQR 20 Data			
Hispanic v. White Drivers	0.16	1.22	No
Black v. White Drivers	0.42	2.19	Yes
Minority v. White Drivers	0.26	2.19	Yes

We identified two changes in the analysis of stop length when using TSQR 20 arrest data when compared to the results of TSAR 10. We identified no statistically significant differences in stop length for any groups in TSAR 10. In contrast, we identified statistically significant differences in stop length between Black and White drivers. In this case, stop lengths of Black drivers averaged 0.42 minutes (25.2 seconds) longer than stops of White drivers. Likewise, we identified statistically significant differences in stop length between Minority and White drivers when using TSQR 20 data. Stops of Minority drivers were 0.26 minutes (15.6 seconds) longer, on average than stops of White drivers.

Table 4: PSM Stop Length Analysis, Including ETSIs as matching variables

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TSAR 10 Data	Difference (in minutes)	t-statistic	Statistically significant?
Hispanic v. White Drivers	1.24	1.27	No
Black v. White Drivers	-0.91	-0.68	No
Minority v. White Drivers	1.04	1.29	No
TSQR 20 Data			
Hispanic v. White Drivers	1.75	1.90	No
Black v. White Drivers	-1.84	-1.44	No
Minority v. White Drivers	1.27	1.53	No

Utilizing all stops, with ETSIs employed as additional matching variables analyses of stop length in TSAR 10 and when using TSQR 20 arrest data were similar and identified no statistically significant differences in stop length.

Table 5: Regression Stop Length Analysis, Including ETSIs as matching variables

TSAR 10 Data	Difference (in minutes)	t-statistic	Statistically significant?
Hispanic v. White Drivers	-0.10	-0.20	No
Black v. White Drivers	-0.29	-0.43	No
Minority v. White Drivers	0.13	0.31	No
TSQR 20 Data			
Hispanic v. White Drivers	-0.11	-0.22	No
Black v. White Drivers	-0.20	-0.31	No
Minority v. White Drivers	0.13	0.33	No

When analyzing stop length using regression analysis results for the TSQR 10 and data from the TSQR 20, results were similar and there was no statistically significant difference in stop length for any group.

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Table 6: Arrests, Baseline Analysis

TSAR 10 Data	Difference (percentage points)	t-statistic	Statistically significant?
Hispanic v. White Drivers	3.86	6.51	Yes
Black v. White Drivers	3.08	2.94	Yes
Minority v. White Drivers	3.05	5.30	Yes
TSQR 20 Data			

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Hispanic v. White Drivers	2.53	3.68	Yes
Black v. White Drivers	3.19	3.08	Yes
Minority v. White Drivers	3.03	4.98	Yes

For the baseline analyses of arrests, we identified similar results when comparing TSAR 10 results with those using data from TSQR 20.

Table 7: Arrests, Booked Arrests, Compared to All Other Stops

TSAR 10 Data	Difference (percentage points)	t-statistic	Statistically significant?
Hispanic v. White Drivers	0.34	1.66	No
Black v. White Drivers	0.00	0.00	No
Minority v. White Drivers	0.00	0.00	No
TSQR 20 Data			
Hispanic v. White Drivers	-0.08	-0.32	No
Black v. White Drivers	0.31	0.95	No
Minority v. White Drivers	0.00	0.00	No

For analyses of booked arrests when compared to all other stops, we identified similar results when comparing TSAR 10 results with those using data from TSQR 20.

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Table 8: Arrests, Non-Warrant Arrests Compared to All Other Stops

TSAR 10 Data	Difference (percentage points)	t-statistic	Statistically significant?
Hispanic v. White Drivers	2.89	5.09	Yes
Black v. White Drivers	5.21	2.40	Yes
Minority v. White Drivers	4.76	5.44	Yes
TSQR 20 Data			
Hispanic v. White Drivers	2.44	3.45	Yes
Black v. White Drivers	2.77	2.76	Yes
Minority v. White Drivers	3.02	5.73	Yes

For analyses of non-warrant arrests when compared to all other stops, we identified similar results when comparing TSAR 10 results with those using data from TSQR 20.

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Table 9: Arrests, Including Special Assignments as Matching Variables

TSAR 10 Data	Difference (percentage points)	t-statistic	Statistically significant?
Hispanic v. White Drivers	2.75	4.61	Yes
Black v. White Drivers	0.31	0.31	No
Minority v. White Drivers	0.24	0.35	No
TSQR 20 Data			
Hispanic v. White Drivers	2.89	4.28	Yes
Black v. White Drivers	1.00	0.91	No
Minority v. White Drivers	0.49	0.76	No

For analyses of arrests when using special assignments as matching variables, we identified similar results when comparing TSAR 10 results with those using data from TSQR 20.

Table 10: Booked Arrests, compared to cite and release arrests

TSAR 10 Data	Difference (percentage points)	t-statistic	Statistically significant?
Hispanic v. White Drivers	-4.55	-1.11	No
Black v. White Drivers	-3.73	0.93	No
Minority v. White Drivers	-5.82	-1.61	No
TSQR 20 Data			
Hispanic v. White Drivers	-1.64	-0.48	No
Black v. White Drivers	-3.91	-0.94	No
Minority v. White Drivers	-4.80	-1.29	No

For analyses of booked arrests compared to cite and release arrests, we identified similar results when comparing TSAR 10 results with those using data from TSQR 20.