

Traffic Accident Investigators' Handbook. R. W. Rivers. Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, Springfield, IL, 1980. 320 pp. \$39.75

This book is written primarily for the training of traffic accident investigators who are relatively new to the field. The introductory section of the book is extremely complete in terms of evidence at the scene, classification of accidents, reaction time, driver perception, and is quite complete with tables on reaction time for the easy use of the investigator. Included in the main body of the text are sections on the dynamics of vehicle behavior, and vehicle damage. A section on speed estimates is inclusive and will be useful for all involved in accident investigations. A section on photography at the scene of the accident is a bit on the thin side, although it does include directions for the novice on how to take photographs and record pertinent information concerning them. The section on field measurements and scaled diagrams is extremely complete and the suggestions and recommendations therein, if followed by all investigators, would make accident drawings extremely detailed and complete.

Of value to many will be the numerous charts, graphs, and tables, as well as the US/metric measurement conversion tables.

The difficulty with the book is that it is sub-divided into very short paragraphs, making it difficult to read and to follow the flow of materials contained therein. Although this book is designed for the novice, the detailed charts and tables are useful to all working the area of traffic accident investigation, this book does not stand alone in its field.

D. F. HUELKE
University of Michigan

BRIEF NOTICES

Appraisal of the Existing Traffic Accident Data Collection and Recording System-South Australia. B. V. Howard, M. F. Young and J. P. Ellis. Department of Transport, Office of Road Safety, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, 1979. 74 pp.

Traffic accident data collection in South Australia has been appraised with the intention of answering two questions: What can reasonably be expected of the mass accident data system, and what improvements could be achieved by alterations to the system or to the demands made of it?

Dummy accident reports, compiled by a Survey Team attending accidents in metropolitan Adelaide, were compared with computer accident records prepared by the Australian Bureau of Statistics using police accident reports edited and coded by the South Australian Highways Department. Also, data from multiple reports for a sample of accidents not attended by police were checked for consistency. Results show that the mass data system has a very high error rate, with at least 60% of items analysed in both comparisons having error rates exceeding 5%.

Analysis of police activities at the scene shows that considerable time is spent on-site; on average 2 police man-hours at personal injury or property damage accidents and 9.5 police man-hours at fatal accidents. However, provided an accident data item is not required to be collected during the first 10 minutes, there appears to be sufficient time for police to accurately collect information.

Recommendations for changes to the system are included.

Industrial Explosion Prevention and Protection. Frank T. Bodurtha. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, N.Y., 1980. 167pp. \$21.50.

This book was written to help fill a need for improved training of engineering students and engineers in the principles and practice of industrial explosion prevention and protection. The