

## **Driving under adverse visibility conditions: Implications for licensing of low vision drivers**

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**Bio:** Dr. Higgins received his BA from the University of California at Berkeley in 1964, his MA from San Francisco State University in 1969, and his PhD in experimental psychology from the University of Virginia in 1971. After completing his dissertation, he spent the next two decades teaching vision science and conducting basic and clinical vision research at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry and at the Clinical Branch of the National Eye Institute of the NIH. Dr. Higgins joined the research staff of Lighthouse International in 1993 and is currently Vice President for Vision Research. His research efforts are directed at understanding the impact of aging and vision loss on such everyday activities as reading and driving.

**Abst:** This presentation will focus on some of the important issues posed by existing vision standards for driver licensure in a society expecting to see an increase in the low vision population over the next 2-3 decades. A brief review of the prevalent (recommended) standards for an unrestricted personal driver's license will be followed by a consideration of their uncertain empirical validity and meaning. "Meaning" will be examined by considering the adverse visibility conditions under which normally sighted (sober) individuals are able to drive relatively safely. Finally the potential implications of such driving by normally sighted individuals for licensure of individuals with vision loss will be considered.