

SHRP 2 Safety Data Update Number 10

Frequent visitors to and users of the InSight web portal might have noticed some changes in the last several months with the respect to the display of forward video (the external view to the front of the subject vehicle) and displays of continuous sensor data such as acceleration and deceleration in what is termed the “event viewer”. The reason for changes in what has been displayed is that a couple of attempts were discovered being made by registered InSight users to “scrape” data that were only being provided on the web portal for users to view and not to download. The Terms of Use Agreement for InSight which all registered users must agree to prior to viewing data on InSight does not allow either continuous sensor data or forward video to be downloaded.

Forward video, while not generally considered personally identifying information (PII), is original data under the research protocol for the SHRP 2 naturalistic driving study. So is continuous sensor data. Both types of data must be tracked by the data host for Phase 1 (Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, or VTTI for short) so that the original data can be destroyed after either 30 or 40 years. Destruction of the original data is mandated by the research protocol approved for the SHRP 2 Naturalistic Driving Study. Original data such as these are available to qualified users via the InDepth data use licensing process, generally for a two year time period. When the data license reaches the end of its term, the data need to be returned to the VTTI or destroyed by the licensee.

In order to return the very valuable functionality of qualified researchers being able to view forward video and continuous sensor data for events such as crashes and near crashes, the following steps have recently been accomplished:

1. The terms of service for InSight has been strengthened and clarified so that registered users should all understand that “data scraping” is a violation of the terms of service. Users are required to acknowledge the terms prior to using InSight. Violations of the terms of service may result in the termination of data access and InSight privileges.
2. There is now a highly visible watermark on the forward video. The watermark indicates the source of the data. The watermark moves around the display such that it cannot be trimmed out or removed without an extensive amount of labor-intensive work.
3. The continuous sensor data that are displayed on InSight are now an approximation of the data rather than a plot of the actual, original data. Data splining--a curve fitting process--is used to accomplish an approximation. The curves shown are still very useful for understanding what was going on before and during events. For example, braking episodes are clearly visible on the curves displayed in the event viewer. However, qualified users need to understand that what is displayed on InSight is only a rough approximation of the original sensor data. Any research conducted with scraped sensor data will therefore be invalid. As before, the original data are available to qualified users through the InDepth data use licensing process. (See Safety Data Update Number 7 from July 21, 2015 for further information about data licensing)

The InSight web portal is available at:

<https://insight.shrp2nds.us/>