
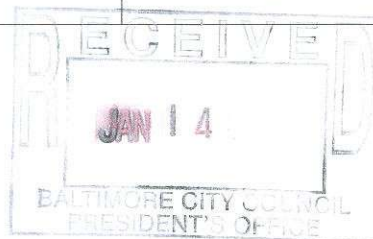


F R O M	NAME & TITLE	William M. Johnson, Director	CITY of BALTIMORE	M E M O	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	Department of Transportation 417 East Fayette Street, Room 527			
	SUBJECT	City Council Bill 12-0079R			

TO

The Honorable President and Members
of the City Council
c/o Karen Randle
Room 400 City Hall



January 13, 2014

I am herein supplementing the Department of Transportation (DOT)'s report on City Council Resolution 12-0079R. This bill, Investigative Hearing – Speed Camera Program, calls the DOT to report to the City Council on the City of Baltimore's Speed Camera Program, and to discuss both the effectiveness of the program and how the program can be improved and made more efficient and effective.

DOT supports this resolution, and welcomes the opportunity to discuss its reforms to the speed camera program with the City Council Land Use and Transportation Committee.

ATVES Contracts in 2013

As of January 1, 2013, Baltimore City officially transitioned to Brekford Corporation based in Hanover, Maryland for automated enforcement. Brekford issued citations for both red light and speed cameras from the end of February 2013 through March 2013. 17,200 speed citations and 1,477 red light citations were issued. On April 15, 2013, DOT suspended its entire Automated Traffic Violation Enforcement System (ATVES) program in order to further evaluate the performance of the system.

Complications had arisen during the transition to the new vendor. DOT decided to suspend the program upon the realization that conversion to the new system required additional internal controls to ensure accuracy. DOT decided to temporarily suspend the program when it discovered that Brekford had forwarded to the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) for review citations including incorrect information about payment options and speed limits. The City sent letters and refunded fines to motorists who were issued citations including these errors. The City also voided all outstanding citations issued on or before December 31, 2012 that were awaiting requested trials, as they were not afforded a speedy trial and the city had limited documentation available.

DOT wanted to take the time necessary to test the entire system to be sure it was fair, accurate and consistent. It was important to the Administration that the department conduct a comprehensive review of the *entire* program before determining to go back on-line. After a thorough evaluation and assessment, DOT and vendor Brekford decided to terminate their contract for the City's ATVES program. Brekford agreed to accept \$600,000 to carry out this mutually agreed-upon termination, and to resolve any outstanding disputes relating to this matter between the parties. This termination enables the City to re-evaluate the scope of its ATVES program, ensure any future vendor associated with the system is compensated in a manner other than per citation, and better execute the public safety mission of automated traffic enforcement. The total amount paid to Brekford during the term of the contract, including payment for system hardware, is \$2.8 million. The Board of Estimates (BOE) approved the contract termination on Wednesday, December 18, 2013.

As DOT strives to improve the ATVES program, it needs additional engineering resources to ensure that the system is fair, accurate and consistent. On January 8, 2014, the BOE approved a contract between DOT and URS Corporation to assist with performing site evaluations and engineering assessments at various locations contemplated for automated enforcement. DOT plans on requesting BOE approval to contract with Century Engineering, Inc., to provide additional location engineering assessments and other support functions. The contract approved on January 8 is for the amount of \$237,184.58. DOT plans to assign work to Century

Comments

Engineering, Inc. in the amount of \$160,087.12. Notably, last year, URS provided an independent audit to DOT for the city's ATVES program to help ensure accuracy and efficiency. These engineering firms will help ensure that automated enforcement is used accurately and reliably moving forward.

Mayor's ATVES Task Force

On September 28, 2012, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake established The ATVES Task Force to conduct a comprehensive review of Baltimore City's automated traffic enforcement systems and evaluate them to assure effective promotion of traffic and pedestrian safety, especially in city school zones. Members of the task force evaluated the city's camera enforcement programs by reviewing camera locations, citation accuracy rates, program management and performance. Committee members were also asked to review program data trends to ensure that the systems are designed to help reduce speeds and improve safety. One of the major changes necessary for the ATVES program is to move away from the "bounty" system of paying the vendor on a "per citation" basis. The current contract is designed for vendor reimbursement "per citation" and cannot be converted to a flat fee payment method. The current contract is inadequate to execute task force recommendations and meet the high performance standards set by the Mayor in light of past issues with the system.

City's Trial Run

Although the city's ATVES program is currently suspended, DOT has and continues to conduct comprehensive program reviews and evaluations in order to make improvements to meet the recommendations made by the Mayor's Task Force and city consultants. In October 2013, the City instituted a "trial run" of the ATVES program, when DOT captured and processed violations for internal purposes, but issued no citations to motorists. The test run was conducted to evaluate the operation of the system and the accuracy of generated citations. The Task Force recommendations, consultants' review and the City's own testing assessment allowed DOT to analyze, evaluate and assess the program to ensure that all mechanisms were functioning properly.

The Administration is working diligently to maximize program accuracy, restore the public's trust, and ensure that the program continues to improve safety on Baltimore's roads for all users. Thousands of motorists continue to run red lights and speed in school zones throughout the city. This is dangerous, and DOT remains committed to make our streets safer. DOT will not allow the program to be re-started until it can provide necessary assurances to the Mayor and the public that we have a fair, accurate and effective system. DOT has acquired significant institutional knowledge about automated enforcement through its comprehensive, hands-on oversight and evaluation of the program since January 2013. DOT is working to establish a system that will fit our goals and missions as we strive to make the roadways of Baltimore safe.


A restart date for the program has not been set yet. DOT has set its priority on having the program work as intended, in lieu of rushing for the sake of restarting a program.

Baltimore City's ATVES Program Since January 2013 (Comprehensive Overview)

- January 1, 2013 – Commencement of Brekford as City's ATVES vendor
- February to April 2013 – Citations issued to the public
- April 15, 2013 – City suspends ATVES Program
- May 2013 – City abated citations issued in error from February to April 2013, and citations from before January 1, 2013 where trials were timely requested
- February to September 2013 – With consultant and Brekford support, development and finalization of internal controls and standard operating procedures, and technical adjustments to speed cameras

- October 2013 – One month test period (no citations issued to the public)
- November to December 2013 – Negotiations with Brekford to mutually end contract with the City
- December 18, 2013 – BOE approval of contract termination
- January 8, 2014 – BOE approval of URS Corporation engineering contract

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William M. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "W" and "J".

William M. Johnson
Director

KAZ/BZ

Cc: Ms. Angela C. Gibson
Mr. Khalil A. Zaied