Speed Awareness

Problem Identification

The Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) is committed to the reduction of property and personal injury vehicle crashes that occur within the County. To accomplish our mission, the Department studies empirical data to best assign and allocate our limited resources.

The ACPD targets our enforcement efforts based upon our Traffic Accident Reduction Program (TARP). TARP areas are geographic locations that have experienced ten (10) or more accidents, two (2) years in a row. The list of the locations is shared with the District Policing Commanders, Patrol Commanders and the Department of Environmental Services (DES) – Transportation Engineering and Operations. The Police Department has created a Traffic Analyst position within the Systems Management Division to enhance our ability to assign personnel and assets where they will prove most effective. It is the responsibility of supervisors to assign officers to take strict enforcement action at the identified locations.

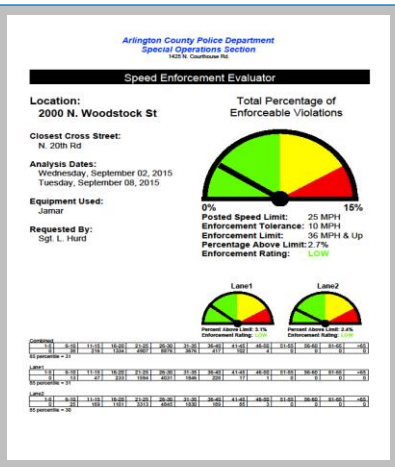
In 2015, within Arlington County there were a total of 2,851 reported vehicle crashes, of which 178 unsafe speed was listed as a contributing factor. Of the 178 unsafe speed related crashes, none were fatal.

The Department utilizes a database maintained by the Special Operations Section – Traffic Safety Unit (SOS – TSU) to effectively track and investigate all citizen traffic complaints. Upon receiving a complaint (via email, internet, Twitter, Facebook, Nextdoor or voicemail), a supervisor checks the Traffic Complaint Database to see if there are current speed classifier studies or if the issue has been addressed in the past. If so, the complainant is advised that the issue has recently been addressed. If not, the supervisor enters the complaint into the database and the citizen is advised that the complaint will investigated. The supervisor is then responsible for coordinating enforcement efforts, deploying mobile radar speed displays, conferring with traffic engineering, and/ or acquiring any additional resources.

The Police Department and the DES often receive the same traffic complaints. When DES receives a complaint, they forward it to the Police Department for resolution if it involves any enforcement action. Conversely, a complaint that involves an engineering issue is forwarded to DES for analysis.

All complaint locations receive at least four (4) hours of enforcement over a month's time and are then evaluated as to the complaint's legitimacy. If the complaint does not appear to warrant additional resources or attention, the citizen reporting the issue is contacted and advised of this evaluation. If the complaint appears to be valid, the enforcement efforts are extended for an additional 30 days. The citizen is contacted at the conclusion of the enforcement and provided the results of the Police Department's efforts.

Speed Awareness



Pictured above is the summary from the Jamar Radar Recorder. It provides data on speed, speed tolerance, percent above limit, and enforcement rating. This is one of seven reports used to assess enforcement options/efforts.

The ACPD utilizes the Jamar Radar Recorder (traffic classifier) to identify speeding problems and confirm or dispute the nature of complaints received. The collection of data at school zones, TARP and citizen complaint locations allows us to efficiently assign and deploy our limited resources. The traffic classifier data identifies peak times for enforcement, average speed and provides an enforcement rating (Low, Medium, High) based on preset tolerance or limit. The Jamar Radar Recorder is a non-descript device (housed in a small Pelican case) that can easily be attached to a utility pole.

Policy

The Arlington County Police Department places a priority on officer safety and traffic enforcement.

Below are excerpts the Department Policy relating to police vehicle operation:

517.02 Police Vehicles

"Officers on routine patrol, or otherwise operating in a non-emergency or off-duty status, will obey all applicable traffic laws. All officers are responsible for operating vehicles in a safe manner.

Department vehicles shall be operated with due regard for community safety, in a manner prescribed by VA Code Section §46.2-920.

A Department vehicle shall not be driven at a speed that would constitute reckless disregard for the safety of persons or property. Officers responding to an emergency shall be particularly cautious when proceeding against a red light or stop sign."

The Arlington County Police Department has specific policies that deal with Speed and Traffic Enforcement.

Below are excerpts the Department Policy:

541.02 Speed Enforcement

*"**Enforcement** - Citizen requests for speed enforcement shall be forwarded to the Special Operations Section (SOS) for action. A SOS supervisor will review the request and will take into*

consideration such factors as previous traffic classification studies of the location and previous or current enforcement at the location. If the supervisor determines enforcement action is warranted, employees will be assigned to the location. The SOS will maintain all records of complaints received and action taken.

The following are priority assignments when working speed enforcement:

1. *Areas where high accident rates are identified*
2. *School zones during appropriate times*
3. *Areas where complaints are received*
4. *Areas identified by County Transportation staff*

*A tolerance of ten miles per hour is not inconsistent with the Department's speed enforcement efforts.**"***

*"**Repairs and Calibration** - The Special Operations Section Commander's Office is responsible for coordinating all repairs to the RADAR/LASER equipment. Officers shall take all reasonable steps to protect RADAR/LASER equipment, including protection from inclement weather. Any malfunction or damage noticed by the officer shall be immediately reported to their supervisor followed by a memorandum to the SOS Commander, via the chain of command. The damaged unit shall be given to the SOS MPO, along with the corresponding key from the KeyWatcher System. Under no circumstances shall any employee attempt to make any mechanical adjustment to the equipment.*

Tuning forks and LASER units shall be calibrated every six months. At the appropriate time, SOS personnel shall deliver the equipment to a qualified laboratory that has been approved for such work by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Following calibration, the resulting documentation shall be stored in the SOS office. Original calibration certificates are stored in the Operations Roll Call room, General District courtroom and Courtroom 3C."

541.04 Traffic Enforcement

"It is the policy and intended purpose of the Department to reduce the frequency and severity of traffic accidents, and to promote a safe, efficient movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

In these regards, the Department shall not render enforcement decisions or engineering recommendations based upon revenue generation or the pursuit of artificial statistical goals and quotas. The Department places a priority on the enforcement of speeding, occupancy protection and the detection of impaired drivers, thus every uniformed officer of the Department shall be expected to participate in traffic enforcement activities, when appropriate, and do so without compensation or reward for the number or types of citations issued.

***Traffic Enforcement** – enforcement of traffic laws to reduce traffic collisions, their resulting injuries, and to promote the safe flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.*

***Speeding** - driving at an excessive or illegal rate. As utilized in this directive, speeding problems are further characterized as either "moderate" or "excessive."*

Speed Awareness

A moderate speeding problem is one in which more than fifteen percent of the vehicles on a street are exceeding the speed limit by 5 or more miles per hour. An excessive speeding problem is one in which more than fifteen percent of the vehicles on a street are exceeding the speed limit by more than 10 miles per hour."

The ACPD considers speed enforcement a priority to increasing and keeping our roadways safe. Officers are directed to actively engage in Radar and Lidar speed enforcement throughout Arlington County; with directed attention to school zones and TARP locations. New officers are trained in speed measuring equipment (Laser). Veteran officers are recertified every three (3) years.

Planning

The Special Operations Section – Traffic Safety Unit's (SOS – TSU) mission is to safeguard life and property through traffic enforcement to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic through and around Arlington County.

Goals

SOS – Traffic Safety Unit Goals for 2015

- *Reduce the number of property damage and personal injury accidents that occur within the County.*
- *Regular participation in traffic safety initiatives.*
- *Collaboration with and fostering relationships with the public, other police sections/units and other agencies*.
- *Conduct child safety seat educational events.*
    - *Conduct safety seat inspections.*
- *To conduct training in DUI,* ***speed enforcement****, child safety seat training and pedestrian/bicycle safety.*

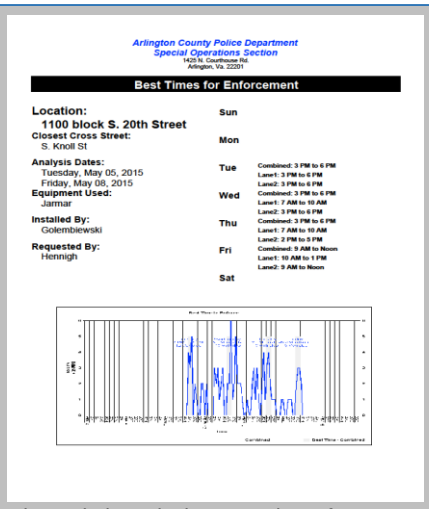
These goals serve as our annual guide to ensure we are continually prioritizing our resources in the most efficient and targeted manner. Supervisors are assigned to create, organize and oversee "mini-traffic safety" initiatives in addition to the national and regional campaigns. Our traffic safety campaigns are prioritized in the following manner:

- School zones and school bus routes
- High Accident locations and intersections (TARP)
- Problem areas identified by citizen complaints and other means
- Problem areas identified by high volume of violations

Data captured from highway safety programs and DMV Grant funded Speed Awareness enforcement is submitted to the Commonwealth on a quarterly bases or at the conclusion of a planned enforcement effort (such as Click It or Ticket). By submitting this data, the Virginia Highway Safety Office (VAHSO) is able to analyze our data and identify behavioral trends that

assist us in directing our resources to meet the Virginia Strategic Highway Plan. Additionally, this data is reviewed to ensure our plan(s) are being effective and implemented properly.

Problem Identification/Confirmation



Arlington County Police Department
Special Operations Section
1425 N. Courthouse Rd.
Arlington, Va. 22201

Best Times for Enforcement

Location:
1100 block S. 20th Street
Closest Cross Street:
S. Knoll St
Analysis Dates:
Tuesday, May 05, 2015
Friday, May 08, 2015
Equipment Used:
Jamar
Installed By:
Golembiewski
Requested By:
Hennigh

Sun	
Mon	
Tue	Combined: 3 PM to 6 PM Lane1: 3 PM to 6 PM Lane2: 3 PM to 6 PM
Wed	Combined: 3 PM to 6 PM Lane1: 7 AM to 10 AM Lane2: 3 PM to 6 PM
Thu	Combined: 3 PM to 6 PM Lane1: 7 AM to 10 AM Lane2: 2 PM to 5 PM
Fri	Combined: 9 AM to Noon Lane1: 10 AM to 1 PM Lane2: 9 AM to Noon
Sat	

Pictured above is the Best Times for Enforcement report from the Jamar Radar Recorder. This is one of seven reports used to assess enforcement options/efforts.

Traffic Classifier – The ACPD routinely deploys the traffic classifier in response to TARP data, citizen complaints, and at the request of the Department of Environmental Services – Transportation Engineering and Operations.

Once data compiled from the traffic classifier is reviewed, and problem areas are confirmed, the SOS – TSU utilizes that information to best allocate our resources: Traffic Incident Management Equipment, unit personnel and personnel from other Sections or Units. The collection of data at school zones, TARP and citizen complaint locations allows us to efficiently assign and deploy our limited resources. The traffic classifier data identifies peak times for enforcement, average speed and provides an enforcement rating (Low, Medium, High) based on preset tolerance or limit.

Training

Speed Measurement

During 2015, 29 officers received training in Radar/Lidar; 27 police officers were certified as Lidar operators and two (2) of those officers was recertified in Radar. The ACPD no longer cross trains officers in both Radar and Lidar. Officers who still hold certification in Radar are able to recertify every three (3) years.

Recruit Officer

The Arlington County Police Department is a member of the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy (NVCJTA). As part of our recruit officer's training program they receive instruction on speed awareness, accident investigation and emergency vehicle operations. In 2015, a total of 27 (Arlington County Police) recruits received this training.

All police recruit officers receive 820 hours of training at the NVCJTA.

- 12 hours – Virginia State Code which includes DCJS requirements that require the student to identify the elements of speeding and aggressive driving violations.
- 23 hours – Accident Investigation
- 57 hours – Emergency Vehicle Operations

Mandatory Emergency Vehicle Operations (MEVO)

In 2013, the ACPD implemented a training program to reduce the number of vehicle crashes that involved police personnel. All sworn personnel are required to attend Mandatory Emergency Vehicle Operations (MEVO) refresher training every three (3) years. Through the end of 2015, 293 officers participated in MEVO and received training on the Below 100 Program.

In order to accomplish this cycle in an orderly, traceable and efficient manner, sworn personnel are assigned according to alphabetical order. This cycle repeats every three (3) years; 2013-2015, 2016-2018, etc.

- 2013: A-Gl
- 2014: Go-Nu
- 2015: Ob-Z

As part of this one (1) day refresher training course officers are trained on the five (5) key tenants of the Below 100 Program.

- Wear your seat belt
- Wear you vest
- ***Watch your speed***
- WIN – What's Important Now
- Remember: Complacency kills

Additional Courses

- Advanced Skills & Technical Driving
  - Numerous dates throughout 2015 – 76 officers
- EVOC Instructor Recertification
  - March 2, 2015 and November 16, 2015 – five (5) officers
- 2015 National Interdiction Conference (VSP – Virginia State Police Academy)
  - March 8-13, 2015 – two (2) officers
- EVOC Instructor Certification
  - June 1-12, 2015 – two (2) officers
- Conducting Complete Traffic Stops (NCTC – Northeast Counterdrug Training Center)
  - July 14-15, 2015 –12 officers
- National Traffic Incident Management Training (VSP - Virginia State Police)
  - August 1-6, 2015 – eight (8) officers
- Speed Measurement Instructor
  - August 10-14, 2015 – one (1) officer
- Speed Measurement Instructor Recertification
  - December 9, 2015 – two (2) officers

Public Information and Education

During 2015, the ACPD took a three-pronged approach to speed awareness: public awareness, education and strict enforcement.

Public Awareness

As previously noted the ACPD incorporates a wide approach in raising public awareness through the traditional media outlets (media release) and through social media; Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor and to a lesser extend the use of the Arlington County YouTube and Vimeo accounts. The SOS routinely deploys variable message boards and S.M.A.R.T Sets at strategic locations throughout the County which display safety reminders and remind motorists to be cognizant of their speed.

During the bi-annual Street Smart, Click It or Ticket and our "mini awareness" campaigns messages on the department's variable message boards and social media sites remind everyone to slow down, watch for other drivers, cyclists and pedestrians; therefore, keeping our roadways safe. We advise the community of our enforcement efforts, consequences and ramifications of not "slowing down".

- Twitter
  - Twitter is widely used by all ACPD Divisions and Sections as an effectual method of distributing public awareness and traffic safety messages.
- Facebook
  - The ACPD Media Office continually seeks new and efficient methods of reaching our community. One of the many goals of using Facebook is to remind motorists of safe travelling practices (vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian).
- Instagram – The ACPD Media Office launched this in December 2015.
- Nextdoor – This is a private social media site that allows the PD to disseminate information to anyone who has joined in Arlington County. In order to join, Nextdoor must verify their address.
- Variable Message Boards
  - Place strategically around the County. Verbiage is chosen to grab the attention and remind motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians of safe travelling practices.
- Aggressive Driver Notice Program
  - The Aggressive Driver Notice Program is a joint effort between Arlington County motorists and the Police Department. If someone observes a driver operating in an aggressive manner, they can report the incident on-line, in person, or by phone. The Special Operations Section will then send a letter to the vehicle's registered owner explaining that their vehicle was observed being operated in an aggressive manner. It does not result in an investigation or citation and is designed solely as a deterrent to dangerous driving behavior and as an educational tool.

- Speed Monitoring Awareness Radar Trailer (SMART Set)
    - The SMART Set is a portable radar trailer designed to promote speed awareness. This self-contained educational equipment is positioned at locations that have experienced frequent speed related problems. The SMART Set displays the speed of oncoming vehicles on a digital display panel visible from up to 100 yards away. The display reminds motorists to pay attention and slow down. In 2015, the SMART Set was deployed at schools, TARP locations and upon request by citizen groups and civic associations.
- Permanent Speed Display Units
    - Permanent speed display units are electronic radar devices that display the travel speeds of each vehicle approaching the device. There are currently 12 permanent speed display units operating in Arlington County and three more proposed. Two (2) display units are synchronized with nearby traffic signals whereas vehicles exceeding the speed limit will initiate a stop sequence.
- Back to School
    - In September 2015, Arlington County Officers participated in the "Back to School" program where officers were directed to perform speed enforcement in school zones, enforce passing stopped school bus laws, and educated pedestrians and bicyclists on safe habits.

Education

Prior to each detail officers are briefed on the objectives, goals and premise of the safety campaign. This is conducted as roll call training where applicable laws are reviewed and assignments are given.

Typically, the first day of any campaign is focused on distributing flyers and posters in our targeted areas. Social media, along with invitations to traditional media outlets, is used publicize the same message coinciding with the "boots on the ground" efforts.

Strict Enforcement

Following every campaign, be it a large regional campaign (Street Smart, Click It or Ticket) or a smaller targeted effort, our officers are directed to follow-up our education efforts with strict enforcement.

This approach, public awareness and education coupled with strict enforcement, has led to a consistent, methodical and effective tactic in the reduction of speeding and aggressive driving in Arlington County.

Enforcement

In 2015, ACPD dedicated approximately 67,200 regular duty hours directed at Speed Awareness. The regular duty efforts were supported by 3,365 hours of department overtime and 190 hours from DMV grant funding. The vast majority of our traffic safety programs are

centered on our Traffic Accident Reduction Program (TARP). Organized details and SOS – Traffic Safety Unit enforcement efforts are supported by our patrol squads to enforce speeding violations. SOS officers are assigned daily to our TARP locations.

2015 Off-Duty/DMV Programs - Time Targeted Enforcement

	0600-1000 Hours		1500-1900 Hours	
	Speed	TARP	Speed	TARP
Monday	639	56	498	13
Tuesday	429	43	392	54
Wednesday	531	42	408	22
Thursday	417	70	344	39
Friday	554	46	343	8
Totals	2570	257	1985	136

62.1 % of all **Speed** Tickets were written during target times

67.3 % of all **TARP** Tickets were written during target times

Street Smart and Click It or Ticket Campaigns

Street Smart is an annual public education, awareness and behavioral change campaign in the Washington, DC, suburban Maryland and northern Virginia area. This program emphasizes education of motorists, cyclists and pedestrians through mass media. It is meant to complement, not replace, the efforts of state and local governments and agencies to build safer streets and sidewalks, enforce laws, and train better drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians. Officers are strongly encouraged to be proactive in identifying violations and to issue summonses, as opposed to a warning ticket, during these campaign periods.

Street Smart and Click it or Ticket – Enforcement Results

Traffic Violation	Spring 2015	Fall 2015	Total Summonses
Speeding	1,930	729	2,659
Speeding (School Zone)	17	19	36
Reckless Driving	106	36	142
Totals	2,053	784	2,837

**These campaigns ran March 23-April 19 / May 18-31, 2015 (Spring) and October 26-November 15 / November 19-26, 2015 (Fall).*

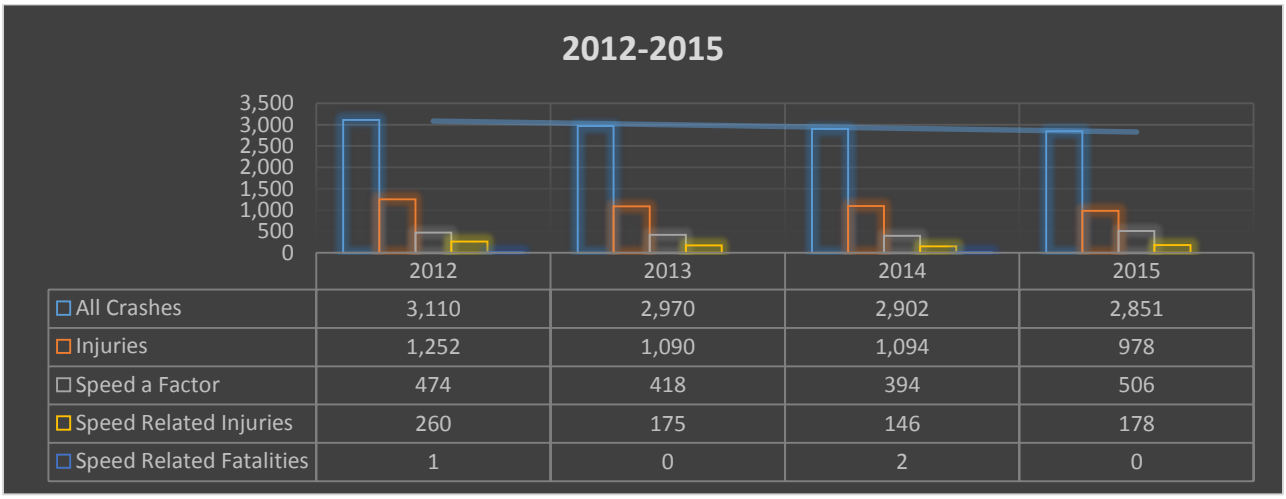
Outcomes

The Arlington County Police Department has a systematic methodology towards traffic enforcement. We are proud of the fact that the number of fatal vehicle crashes has remained low. The ACPD is committed to providing our officers with superior training, meaningful public education and strict enforcement efforts to continually reinforce safe driving practices.

Speed Awareness

Deploying personnel to strategic locations, (school zones and TARP locations) ensures the community observes a high police presence; center piece of our mission is, "*the reduction of the incidence of crime and the improvement in the quality of life in Arlington County by making it a place where all people can live safely and without fear."*

In 2015 there were 2,851 reported vehicle crashes in Arlington County; speed was a factor in 506 crashes.



	2012	2013	2014	2015
All Crashes	3,110	2,970	2,902	2,851
Injuries	1,252	1,090	1,094	978
Speed a Factor	474	418	394	506
Speed Related Injuries	260	175	146	178
Speed Related Fatalities	1	0	2	0

** In 2015 there were 5 fatality crashes in Arlington County – one (1) was pedestrian struck, two (2) were distracted driving, two (2) were impaired driving.*

During the last three (3) years, Arlington County has seen a clear downward trend in our total vehicle crashes, injuries, speed factors and continued low fatality rate. This trend is a direct reflection of the positive impact our TARP program is having in our community; making Arlington a safer place. Conversely, our "high crime" areas overlap with our TARP locations and we have seen a positive impact in reducing incidents of crime in these same areas.

Awards and Recognition

October 15, 2015 – MPO Adam Stone and Officer Erik Einbinder is presented with the NVCJTA Director's Award for Training Excellence.

NVCJTA Director's Award for Training Excellence – In October 2015, MPO Adam Stone and Officer Erik Einbinder were the recipients of this award for their countless hours of high quality instruction in radar/laser.