Speed Enforcement

Problem Identification

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Police Department has committed itself to the enforcement and increasing of public awareness of speed enforcement laws. Our department recognizes the importance of increasing the awareness of drivers to the dangers of speeding and realizes that many drivers do not see speeding as an immediate threat to their safety. The Police Department considers speed enforcement a top priority of our enforcement efforts.

Each year, the Police Department conducts speed enforcement as a part of our routine patrol of our roadways. Although we did not participate in a specific speed enforcement campaign during 2015, we have multiple units assigned specifically to the roadways in our jurisdiction that concentrate on the enforcement of traffic laws, including speed enforcement and working traffic crashes. When we have extra patrol units working, supervisors organize speeding details to provide further enforcement and awareness to the public.

The MWAA PD uses speed surveys of the roadways in our jurisdiction to attempt to locate areas in need of extra enforcement attention. We conducted a speed survey of a designated section of roadway within our jurisdiction and found that 58% of the vehicles traveling on that roadway were traveling in violation of the posted speed limit. Through this study, we found that the timeframes of these increases in speed were associated with shift

Example of speed awareness signs placed throughout our jurisdiction.

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Problem Identification (continued)

changes of airport employees, so we could better assign officers to target areas and timeframes. The MWAA PD also strongly considers citizen complaints about speeding when determining the target places and timeframes to conduct enforcement activities.

Our department uses both regular and extra patrols to conduct speed enforcement. Many details are located within construction work zones to increase awareness and worker safety. We work in conjunction with construction companies to provide officers within work zones and lane closures to increase safety and slow down traffic. The MWAA PD actively solicits feedback from these companies to gain information on where conditions are the most dangerous and to increase our presence and enforcement within those identified areas.

Example of Work Zone speed awareness sign placed at key locations within work zones.

Policy

The department has a policy directing that police officers will provide for safe and orderly traffic flow within its jurisdiction to include fair and unbiased enforcement of traffic

Speed Enforcement

Policy (continued)

laws. The department states within policy that officers can carry out speed enforcement using multiple methods such as the use of RADAR, LIDAR or vehicle pace.

Below is the portion of the Department General Orders referencing speed enforcement by officers:

4-111.01 POLICY

It is the policy of the Police Department to provide for safe, orderly vehicular and pedestrian traffic flow within its jurisdiction. The Department will accomplish this through a multi-prong approach to include traffic direction and control, fair and unbiased enforcement of traffic laws, and addressing roadway hazards.

4-111.05 MOVING VIOLATIONS

A. Speed enforcement may be carried out with either of the following methods:

1. Speed detection equipment, e.g. RADAR or LIDAR

2. Vehicle pace

B. Officers using speed detection equipment shall be trained in the device's operation and a current copy of their certification is on file with the Training Section.

C. Officers shall ensure that the equipment functions properly and is used in conformance with methods demonstrated in training.

D. Cruiser operators working stationary enforcement shall notify the Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC) of their location, prior to beginning enforcement activities. Officers on foot, manually signaling drivers to stop, shall wear high visibility clothing to enhance their visibility to motorists. Officers shall not place themselves in the path of any moving vehicle.

E. Cruiser operators working mobile enforcement shall take into consideration traffic flow, roadway conditions, visibility and the violator's driving behavior. Officers following a speeder may use reasonable speed and techniques to reduce distance and maintain visual contact with the violator to signal their intention to stop the vehicle. Following/pacing a

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Policy (continued)

vehicle becomes a pursuit when, the violator demonstrates his/her awareness of the officer's presence and intent to stop them, and the violator eludes by speed or evasive maneuvers. Pursuits are governed by G.O. 4-101.

F. Officers conducting traffic enforcement shall observe the following guidelines for stopping violators:

- **On roadways with a speed limit greater than 35 mph or when the violator's vehicle is estimated to be traveling at speeds greater than 35 mph, the officer must use a police vehicle to stop the violator. Officers are not permitted to step into the path of oncoming traffic to stop a violator in a speed zone that is higher than 35 mph. Once the violator passes, the officer will pull onto the roadway, when it is safe to do so, in order to catch up to the violator and conduct the traffic stop.**

- **Officers are permitted to use stationary traffic enforcement on roadways with speed limits of 35 mph or lower. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure the safety of the officers and the general public.**

Sgt. Scott Morris is seen above checking that his LIDAR is functioning properly.

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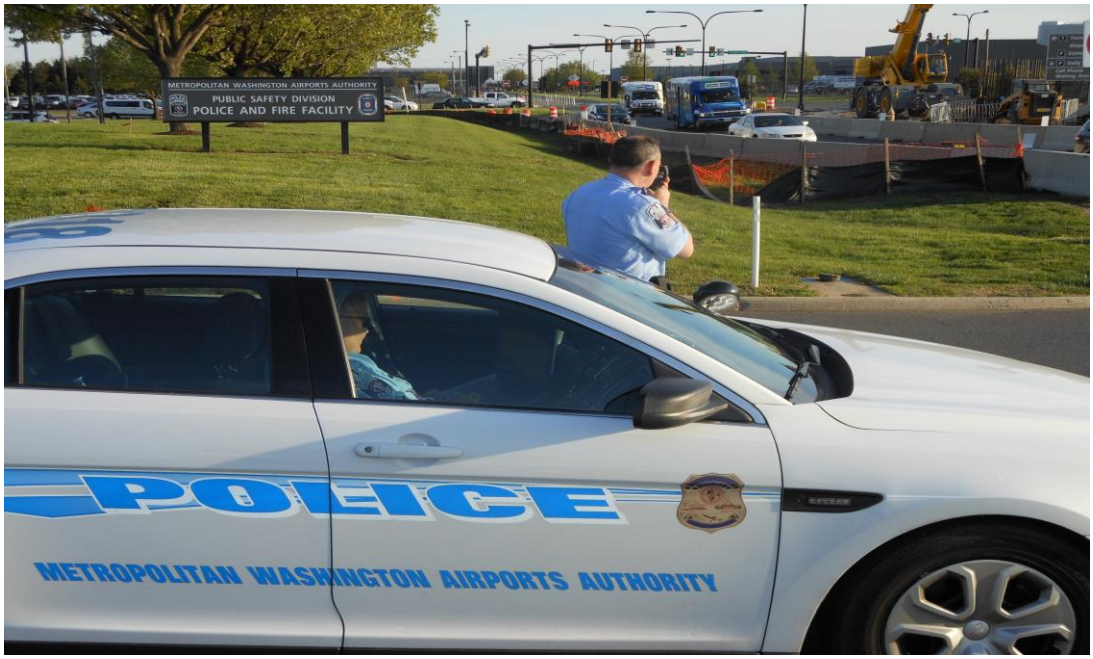
Planning

Each year, speed enforcement is conducted by the patrol officers during their routine patrols or during special enforcement details. The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Police Department conducts speed surveys on roadways throughout its jurisdiction to determine areas and timeframes that require the greatest attention to education and enforcement efforts. Through our speed surveys, we established that areas that showed a higher than usual percentage of drivers violating the posted speed limit and assigned officers to those areas to conduct enforcement and education. As part of this speed survey, it was determined that a large majority of the speeding violations were committed within a section of Autopilot Drive, north of Rudder Road, by airport employees during shift change. The timeframes of these shift changes and speeding violations were 0500 – 0700 hours, 1300 – 1500 hours and 2100 – 2330 hours.

During our main survey, it was discovered that at the beginning of 2015, 58% of vehicles traveling on that roadway were in excess of the posted speed limit. It was our goal and plan to lower the number of accidents where speeding was the primary reason for the crash and to



Ofc. Edward Morris is shown above using his LIDAR during his routine patrol.

Speed Enforcement

Planning (continued)

lower the percentage of violators on our roadways by at least half a percent below the previous year's percentage of 8.5%.

This was accomplish by ensuring an emphasis was placed on speed enforcement during routine patrols and coordinating three speed enforcement details on target areas during target timeframes.

Training

During 2015, all of our officers that work on the roadways received refresher training and recertification in the use of speed measuring (RADAR and LIDAR) enforcement equipment that is utilized within our agency. Police recruits receive speed measuring equipment (RADAR and LIDAR) training and certification prior to being released to their Field Training Officers. Seventeen recruits attended the academy for our department during 2015 and received this RADAR and LIDAR training.

During 2015, the department also conducted roll call refresher training for all officers on speed measuring equipment, speeding laws and reckless driving by speeding laws within the Commonwealth of Virginia. With the training and recertification processes in place at our agency, we have approximately 180 officers that are trained and certified in the operation of the RADAR and LIDAR Speed Measuring Equipment.

Public Information and Education

During 2015, the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Police Department used many different methods to inform the public about the dangers of speeding. Our department utilized its officers to educate the public of the importance of traveling at safe speeds on the roadways and how traveling above the speed limit can significantly increase the chances of a serious accident. Many events were attended by the MWAA PD Community Liaison Team. These outreach officers helped to remind the public that speeding substantially reduces vehicle control and reaction time.

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Public Information and Education (continued)

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Police Department also utilized variable message boards to communicate its message and notify the public of ongoing traffic safety initiatives and campaigns. Multiple variable message boards were strategically placed around our jurisdiction displaying posted speed limits along with vehicle speed messages in an attempt to produce the maximum exposure to the public.

The department also utilized different airport events to educate the public and airport employees on safe driving habits and the dangers of speeding. Many of these events were specific to airport employees, which afforded us the great opportunity to speak with the group that we found to be the largest percentage of our speed violators. Some of these events were the Dulles Day Plane Pull Event which occurred on September 19th from 1030 to 1600 hours. Also, officers attended multiple health fairs including the Dulles International Airport Health Fair on November 3rd, 2015 from 1130 to 1530 hours, and MWAA job fairs.

Our agency also utilized portable speed display signs that we were able to move between different locations to help educate the drivers of their current speeds and make them

Example of Speed awareness signs placed throughout our jurisdiction.

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Public Information and Education (continued)

aware of the posted speed limit. These devices were also used to quickly download speeding data to identify high speed areas within our jurisdiction.

Enforcement

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Police Department conducted its enforcement by conducting routine patrols and conducting special enforcement efforts. During 2015, the Airports Authority Police Department issued 3425 speed related summonses. Our officers also issued a significant number of warnings for speed to drivers to increase public awareness and education. We are unable to provide an accurate number of warnings due to our system not tracking warnings given. Our department accomplishes this through the use of routine patrols without the use of any grant funded overtime.

During 2015, over of 25,000 hours of regular duty time was directed at speed enforcement within our department. Although the department did use overtime to also enforce and educate the public on speed, none of the overtime was grant-funded. There were also 76 contacts that did not involve summons being issued, but afforded the officer the opportunity to educate a member of the public.

Example of Variable Message Board used for speed education and awareness.

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Enforcement (continued)

During 2015, three speed enforcement specific details were conducted that were not part of routine patrol. During these efforts, a team of officers worked a specific target area during a target timeframe to conduct RADAR or LIDAR speed enforcement. The officers were given the discretion to educate the public or issue summons for the violation. These occurred on May 14th, 2015 during the dayshift, June 16th, 2015 during the evening shift, and July 7th, 2015 during the evening shift.

Outcomes

Due to continual efforts of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Police Department, we have experienced extremely low numbers of fatalities and injuries due to speed related crashes on our roadways. In 2015, we experienced two fatality accidents, both of which were determined to not have speed as a contributing factor in the crashes. We have been able to maintain two or less fatalities each year for the last 4 years, which we attribute in part to our continued efforts to enforce and educate the public about traveling at safe speeds on the roadways.

We also have seen a decrease in injury crashes involving drivers traveling in excess of the speed limit as the primary cause for the crash. In 2015, we had 93 total injury crashes including the two fatality crashes. Only 35 of the 454 crashes reported that the vehicle was traveling in excess of the speed limit being the main cause of the crash, of those 7 involved injury crashes or fatalities, equaling 7.7% of reported injury and fatality crashes. This number is down from the 8.5% reported in 2014. Due to our speed enforcement and education efforts, we experienced a 0.8% drop in injury crashes involving a vehicle traveling in excess of the speed limit as the primary cause, which exceeded our 0.5% reduction goal.

During 2015, the department set a goal to decrease the average number of drivers traveling in excess of the posted speed limit by 5% within our jurisdiction. We were able to meet our goal. The year began with a 58% average of drivers on our roadways traveling in excess of the posted speed limit. By the end of 2015, the survey revealed that we had decreased to a 49% average for drivers traveling in excess of the posted speed limit on our roadways. This was a 9% decrease of drivers speeding. Our speed enforcement efforts also

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Outcomes (continued)

provided additional benefits such as additional criminal activities being uncovered due to the traffic stops conducted as part of speed enforcement. Our agency and our officers received numerous compliments from the public and airport employees throughout the year recognizing our efforts and activities attempting to reduce speeding within our jurisdiction.

Ofc. Edward Morris
304 Speed related
Summons for 2015

Cpl. Michael Sheirich
245 Speed related
Summons for 2015

Cpl. Kenneth Bucy
239 Speed related
Summons for 2015

Cpl. Christopher Conboy
170 Speed related
Summons for 2015

Cpl. Gregory Belden
163 Speed related
Summons for 2015