



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
1350 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20004

Phil Mendelson
Councilmember At-Large

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March 12, 2007

Cathy L. Lanier, Acting Chief
Metropolitan Police Department
300 Indiana Ave., NW Room 5080
Washington DC 20001

RE: Photo Enforcement Program

Dear Chief Lanier:

Today I met with representatives of American Traffic Solutions (ATS) which recently acquired the contract to maintain and operate the District government's photo enforcement program. The contract with ATS is monitored by the Metropolitan Police Department.

I am greatly disturbed by several facts related to the operation and maintenance of the District's photo enforcement program. According to ATS: two of the 10 stationary radar units have been out of certification for over eight months (exposing the District to evidentiary liability); at least 11 sites have been out of service for at least six months; and one of the cameras (purchased by the District) has an asset tag indicating "Property of Fairfax County." Each of these problems, if true, indicate that MPD has done a poor job of monitoring the contract.

In addition, ATS alleges that: of the 50 red light cameras, 27 are currently inoperable or significantly impaired; cameras reported as operational are simply missing; a number of cameras sites have been stripped of equipment and exposed live electrical wires were left at the site; many sites have inoperable primary or auxiliary flash units needed for proper illumination rendering them ineffective at night or during bad weather; and many sites have been out of service for at least a month. Each of these problems, if true, indicate at the least that MPD should seek restitution from the previous contractor - but these problems also suggest inadequate monitoring by MPD of the contract.

Finally, ATS alleges that "Upon move out from the V Street facility, ACS physically severed all of the network cabling within the District's facility... This resulted in the need for a complete rewiring of the facility and thousands of dollars of additional cost to the District." Further, "ACS made repeated attempts to repossess District owned equipment during hand over to ATS. District Police had to threaten to arrest ACS staff on several occasions to stop these attempts."

I would like to know what has been happening with this contract. To what extent are these allegations true? How is it, if the allegations are true, that MPD has been so poor in monitoring the contract? What steps are in place to ensure fully adequate monitoring from now on? What steps has MPD initiated to obtain restitution? Please let me know as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil Mendelson".

Phil Mendelson, Chairman
Committee on Public Safety and the Judiciary



Memo

To: Councilmember Mendelson
From: Adam Tuton
Date: March 11, 2007
Re: ACS Stewardship of the DC Photo Enforcement Program

As a result of our transitional activities, we have uncovered a large number of disturbing facts related to the operation and maintenance of the District's cameras and program by ACS.

1. Of the 50 red light cameras, 27 are currently inoperable or significantly impaired. (Table 1)
2. One of the cameras (purchased by the District) has an asset tag indicating "Property of Fairfax County" (see Photo 1)
3. Two of the 10 Stationary Radar units have been out of certification for over 8 months, exposing the District to evidentiary liability on tens of thousands of speed violation notices for millions of dollars.
4. Cameras reported as operational are simply missing. (See Photo 2)
5. A number of camera sites have been stripped of equipment and exposed live electrical wires were left at the site. (See Photo 3 and 4)
6. Many sites have inoperable primary or auxiliary flash units needed for proper illumination rendering them ineffective at night or during bad weather.
7. At least 11 sites have been out of service for at least six months.
8. Many more sites have been out of service for at least a month.
9. It is apparent that ACS' maintenance of the District's equipment was stopped or severely curtailed for some time.
10. Upon move out from the V Street facility, ACS physically severed all of the network cabling within the District's facility (see photo #8). This resulted in the need for a complete rewiring of the facility and thousands of dollars of additional cost to the District.
11. ACS continues to try to obtain acceptance of inoperable cameras.
12. ACS made repeated attempts to repossess District owned equipment during hand over to ATS. District Police had to threaten to arrest ACS staff on several occasions to stop these attempts.

