



REPORT TO COMMITTEE

TO: Community Safety Committee

DATE: June 06, 2001.

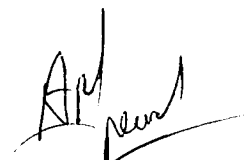
FROM: A R. Speevak, Inspector
Acting OIC Richmond Detachment

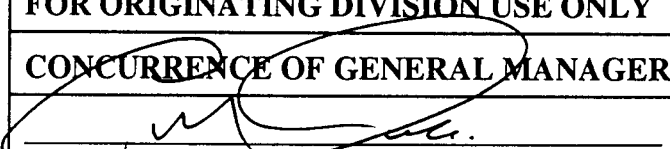
RE: The History of Photo Radar in Richmond

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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That this report be received for information.


A R. Speevak (Inspector)
Acting OIC Richmond Detachment

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER


1. **ORIGIN:**

- a. At the Community Safety Committee meeting of May 17, 2001 it was moved and seconded:
 - i. **“That the report (dated April 26th, 2001...) regarding the History of Photo Radar in the City, be referred to staff for a report to the Community Safety Committee on (i) the approval process followed for the utilization of photo radar in the City; and (ii) situations when the use of photo radar might be more appropriate than police officers.”**
- b. This report will provide further information in response to the issues raised above.

2. **BACKGROUND:** =

- a. The early history concerning the implementation of photo-radar in Richmond is as follows, (this information is from documents on file at the RCMP Detachment):
 - i. A community consultative process was carried out in Richmond by staff from the Integrated Traffic Camera Unit (ITCU). A two hour stakeholder forum was held on Sept 19, 1995 which included Councillor Bill McNulty as the Richmond Council representative. Other stakeholders included the Vancouver Airport Authority, ICBC, insurance brokers, Indo-Canadian representatives, Richmond Chamber of Commerce, School District No. 38, Speedwatch volunteers, and municipal department representatives.
 - ii. On November 16, 1995 the Acting Officer in -charge of the Integrated Camera Unit and Richmond’s Traffic Sergeant appeared on the Richmond Roger’s Cable “Open Line”.
 - iii. A presentation on December 5, 1995 was made to the Mayor and Council at the Richmond Municipal Hall. On February 13, 1996 presentations were made to Richmond MLAs regarding the speed management program.
 - iv. On March 6, 1996 the Detachment provided ITCU with a list of four primary locations for the use of photo radar. This list included the Knight Street Bridge, just south of the bridge, No. 5 Road northbound, just south of Cambie Road, No. 2 Road southbound, south of the 2 Road Bridge, and No. 2 Road southbound, 7500 block prior to Blundell Street. All of these locations were chose due to the high rate of accidents at nearby intersections.

- b. The specific history related to Council in addition to the above is as follows:
- i. On March 12, 1996 Mayor Halsey-Brandt wrote the OIC for an explanation of the consultation process, with the impression that communities would be asked whether they wanted photo radar used. The Mayor attached a document which actually stated that, "communities throughout BC are being asked *where* they wanted photo radar used."
 - ii. On March 26, 1996, the OIC wrote back to the Mayor, citing the public consultative process that was followed (as described above), and he provided the operational guidelines that would be followed in determining photo radar locations. Citing the public input, the OIC provided the Mayor with a list of the four locations where photo radar would initially be used. Last the OIC offered to facilitate any further desired consultation on the issue.
 - iii. On October 9, 1996 a Mr. John D. Symchyck wrote and on October 15, 1996 appeared before Council to complain about speeding vehicles on No. 6 Road approaching Bridgeport and on River Road from No. 6 Road to No. 8 Road. On October 16, 1996 the Mayor wrote the OIC citing Mr. Symchyck's issues, and the Mayor asked for a determination of whether photo radar could be deployed in these areas in response to a community concern about speeding vehicles. The detachment acknowledged the issue advising that followup action with photo radar would be taken.
 - iv. On November 12, 1996 Mr. Symchyck again appeared before Council regarding too many accidents as No. 4 Road and Alder bridge Way and a continuing problem of speeding vehicles on No. 6 Road from Cambie St. to Vulcan Way. On Dec. 20, 1996 the OIC wrote the Mayor to advise that photo radar would be deployed at two site locations identified by Mr. Symchyck. Full publicly advertised use of photo radar would commence at these sites in January 1997. The Finance and Safety Committee of Council asked the OIC for information concerning whether the implementation of photo radar had contributed to any decline in traffic tickets written by Detachment personnel, and to provide statistics on the use of photo radar in Richmond.
 - v. On September 8, 1997, Mr Symchyck again appeared before Council with similar complaints of speeders on No. 6 Road and Bridgeport Road, and that more police supervision was needed to slow drivers down. This report was received for information. Photo radar continued at these locations.

- vi. On July 9, 1997 the OIC responded to a question from the City Clerk pertaining to a motion in the District of North Vancouver which in effect stated that photo radar would be opposed until there was a satisfactory revenue sharing arrangement between the City and the Province. The OIC correctly pointed out that the sharing of revenue is a purely political issue that is separate and distinct from issues concerning the deployment of police resources which is a police decision, and that Council in Richmond have supported all of the provincial traffic safety initiatives which have been designed to reduce fatalities, injuries and property damage on our highways.
- vii. In May 1999, the General Manager Finance and Corporate Services advised the General Purposes Committee that the sharing of traffic fines revenue was based on the percentage of Richmond's total policing costs to the total aggregate of municipal policing costs in the Province. That revenue was \$444,966. or 3.37 % of \$13.2m of traffic fines revenue allocated for sharing.
- viii. At General Purposes Committee on May 17, 1999 an opinion voiced by members of Council was noted, to the effect that the revenue needed to operate the photo-radar vans would be better spent installing intersection cameras to catch red light violators. Council endorsed the permanent installation of two intersection cameras.
- ix. On June 2, 1999 at the Transport and Safety Committee, residents of Hamilton area made a presentation on traffic safety, expressing concerns about speeding on Westminster Highway among other concerns, and specifically requested additional enforcement including photo radar.

3. ANALYSIS

- a. This section of this report will deal with the second issue raised by Committee that concerning the appropriate use of photo radar and other tools by police.
- b. First it must be clarified that the RCMP is not in the business of photo radar, but rather traffic services in which photo radar is one of the tools utilized.
- c. The ITCU always conducted traffic speed surveys and location analysis in order to determine a suitable site for photo radar. These sites were always identified by the Detachment as being near high accident locations, and often these were also locations where speed enforcement by police officers was difficult because of insufficient area to pull a violator over safely, such a two lane roadway with little shoulder and large ditches. Conversely ITCU expected photo radar sites would be supported by the local police, city administrators (transportation

experts) and/or citizen complaints about speeders. The photo radar sites referred to in our report presented to Committee on May 17, 2001 identified those sites where the deployment of photo radar was deemed more appropriate than deployment of traffic officers.

- d. ITCU surveyed traffic conditions on Steveston Highway, and found that speeds far exceeded the posted speed limit and members of Council were asked would accept an increase in the speed limit on Steveston Highway, which Council was not in favour of.
- e. In terms of more imaginative approaches by police, the *Speed Watch* program operative for several years, using community volunteers, often in conjunction with Traffic member support, is aimed at *educating* speeding drivers by informing drivers of their speed at particular locations of high accidents, citizen complaints, or special areas such as school zones.
 - i. In 1999, Speed Watch volunteers identified 10,555 vehicles in excess of 11 kph over the speed limit, while passing by a speed reader board. In 2000, some 8,356 vehicles were similarly identified.
 - ii. The Detachment will expand the Speed Watch program subject to the expansion of the community policing model to other areas of the City and the supply of equipment by ICBC the sponsors for the program.
- f. Another alternative could be to ask the Province to
 - i. increase the number of red light cameras deployed at high accident intersection locations, and/or
 - ii. program the red light cameras deployed at high accident intersection locations to record vehicles crossing on yellow in addition to red lights.
 - iii. The advantage to ii above, is that the traffic cameras take two photos of intersection violators. The registered time/distance between the two photos, provides that actual *speed* of the offending vehicle. The occurrence of collisions at controlled intersections is due to driver error in going through a red light and/or drivers going too fast to be able to stop for the red light. Hence if photos were taken of both red light and yellow light violators,
 - (1) red light violators could be automatically ticketed as at present for failing to obey the traffic signal device; AND

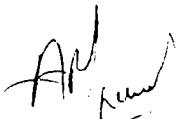
- (2) yellow light violators significantly above the speed limit could be ticketed for *speeding*.

g. Comparative Statistics:

- i. Statistics for Photo Radar are on hand for 1999-2000. These show:
 - (1) 1999 - 5,500 photo radar tickets could have been issued for violations at the photo radar locations in Richmond.
 - (2) 2000 - 4,653 photo radar tickets could have been issued for violations at the photo radar locations in Richmond.
 - (3) The efficiency/effectiveness of the photo radar tool in capturing a larger number of violators per officer in a given time period, is a key strength of this tool.
- ii. Statistics for the enforcement by our Traffic Section are available for the same period. Note the Traffic establishment is 17 members, but the strength has varied between 12 and 16 members since 1999.
 - (1) 1999 - 6,009 violation tickets and 4,653 traffic notices were issued by Richmond Traffic members on regular duty time.
 - (2) 2000 - 4,254 violation tickets and 3,217 traffic notices were issued by Richmond Traffic members on regular duty time.
 - (3) 1999 - 316 violation tickets and 308 traffic notices were issued by Richmond Traffic members on Counterattack and Speed Corridor duties.
 - (4) 2000 - 510 violation tickets and 467 traffic notices were issued by Richmond Traffic members on Counterattack and Speed Corridor duties.

4. **RECOMMENDATION**

- a. That this report be received for information purposes as this time.


 Allan R. Speevak, Inspector
 A. OIC Richmond Detachment