



CITY OF WINSTON-SALEM REPORT ON AVL SPEEDING AND IDLING COMPLIANCE AUDIT

For the 3 Months Ended February 28, 2021

Submitted by:
Office of Budget and Performance Management
Internal Audit Division
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Overview of Vehicle Management Policy

The Vehicle Management Policy governs vehicle/equipment requirements for City officials and employees on City business. As City-owned vehicles represent the City and are for official City business only, the City may use tracking or other electronic surveillance devices to ensure City vehicles are being used in accordance with the guidelines or for other administrative purposes. Furthermore, department heads are responsible for City vehicle operation as covered by the policy as well as any other related procedures put into place by the City Manager; department heads are to take disciplinary action (including suspension or dismissal) pursuant to the disciplinary schedules contained within the Vehicle Management Policy or pursuant to the City's Personnel Policy.

Definition of Compliance Requirements

Compliance requirements are defined in the City's Administrative Policy – dated 8/01/2019 (Vehicle Management Policy). The policy provides the aforementioned guidelines as well as expectations for speeding and idling.

4.3 Speeding Policy Excerpt:

"All vehicles, without exception shall be tracked for exceeding the posted speed limit by 10 mph for more than 2 minutes and for exceeding 15 mph over the posted speed limit for any period of time. Though it is a violation of state law and of City policy for any City vehicle to exceed the posted speed limit, the purpose of this policy is to discipline the obvious disregard for state law and City policy. Violations of these speeding limits shall be disciplined pursuant to the disciplinary schedule [in Section 4.9 of the Vehicle Management Policy]. Unless justified by state law with regards to emergency vehicles, there is no justification for violating this policy."

"The Winston-Salem Police Department (WSPD) shall track the speed of their vehicles and shall investigate every instance in which a police vehicle exceeds 70 mph (except on any roads with 65 mph speed limits). The department will investigate all incidents when a WSPD vehicle exceeds 10 mph on a highway with a stated speed limit of 65 mph. An officer who exceeds 70 mph in violation of state law shall be disciplined pursuant to the disciplinary schedule in Section 4.9 of the Vehicle Management Policy."

4.4 Idling Policy Excerpt:

"No vehicle shall idle for more than 10 minutes unless required to do so because of heavy traffic or to operate hydraulic or other equipment, such as computers, radios, and multiple lighting systems. Violation of this idling limit shall be disciplined pursuant to the disciplinary schedule [in Section 4.9 of the Vehicle Management Policy]."

4.9 Disciplinary Actions Excerpt:

"Disciplinary actions related to violations of sections 4.3 through 4.8 shall be as follows:

- First violation within any 12-month period: Documented Verbal Warning
- Second violation within any 12-month period: Written Reprimand
- Third violation within any 12-month period: 1-day Suspension
- Fourth violation within any 12-month period: 3-day Suspension
- Fifth violation within any 12-month period: Termination

The 12-month period is a rolling 12-month period. Five confirmed violations of these policies, whether of the same or multiple policies, within a 12-month period shall result in termination of the employee. The disciplinary actions set out in this section are the minimum actions to be taken by the department. The department may impose a more strenuous disciplinary action, including Termination, if warranted by the employee's disciplinary history, the facts of the violation or related violations of other City policies or the employee code of conduct.”

Scope of Audit Procedures Performed

The audit concentrated on speeding and idling violations occurring between November 1, 2020 and February 28, 2021. Fleet Services (Fleet) provided Internal Audit (IA) with a listing of all speeding and idling violations for these aforementioned months. Fifteen different departments/divisions were contacted regarding speeding violations. Eleven different departments/divisions were contacted regarding idling violations. Samples were judgmentally chosen from amongst the more significant violations for these entities. These violations were reviewed for compliance with City administrative policies concerning vehicle and equipment management by asking the departments or divisions to provide answers to the following questions:

- What follow-up activity was pursued as it relates to each of the incident(s).
- For each occurrence where the incident was determined to NOT be in violation of the policy, please provide support for how this determination was made; please further include name of employee and date of determination.
- For each occurrence where the incident was determined to be in violation, please provide a description of the disciplinary action taken; please include name of employee and date of disciplinary action.

As it relates to speeding, IA was able to confirm that WSPD uses their own internal AVL system to track and monitor the speeds of assigned police vehicles. WSPD’s IT department has set up their system to produce weekly reports for those vehicles which reach 70 miles per hour or higher. These reports are generated based on assignments and are disseminated accordingly. It is a WSPD supervisor’s responsibility to ensure adherence to the City’s speeding policy. These supervisors investigate and juxtapose the report with their own computer-aided dispatch notes. This allows the Police supervisor to determine when the speeding is associated with a call for service (justifiable by policy and law) or whether the incident is a violation of City policy. This procedure is applicable regardless of whether the vehicle reached the 70 miles per hour speed threshold or the 10 miles per hour on the highway with the stated speed limit of 65 miles per hour. The WSPD further adheres to the disciplinary schedule outlined in section 4.9 of the Vehicle Management Policy.

Scope Limitations

Although Fleet attempted many adjustments to the AVL software, the audit testing timeframe was limited due to the AVL software’s inability to produce many reports outside of a month timeframe. Additionally,

IA was unable to verify whether speeding violations exceeding 10mph for more than 2 minutes were being investigated by departments/divisions for compliance with the disciplinary schedule due to AVL system limitations. IA confirmed that Fleet had their speed violation parameters set up for violations of 10mph for 9 consecutive minutes instead of the required 2 consecutive minutes. IA inquired of the various departments/divisions based on Fleet's violations reports.

Findings and Recommendations

1. Non police vehicles are not being tracked for speeding per Section 4.9 of the Vehicle Management Policy.

The current filters for speeding violation reporting do not match the Vehicle Management Policy. Policy requires violations to be triggered by the system at 10mph over the speed limit for 2 minutes and at 15mph over the speed limit for any period of time; however, Fleet's filter is set at 10mph over the speed limit for 9 minutes and at 15mph over the speed limit for 1 minute. IA recommends that Fleet updates these filters so that the AVL system matches the Vehicle Management Policy.

Management Response: Fleet services will make corrections in the systems to become compliant with the Vehicle Management Policy.

2. Numerous departments and divisions are neither monitoring nor enforcing Speeding and Idling violations.

IA inquired of departments/divisions about their processes concerning speeding and idling AVL notifications. Numerous departments/divisions' responses indicated neither monitoring nor enforcement were occurring. Common responses by departments/divisions included:

- Monitoring has not occurred due to known system issues.
- Violation notifications are not being received.
- Violation notifications are being received by the incorrect employee.

IA found inaccuracies with the AVL software's results for speeding violations. However, these inaccuracies do not provide City departments and divisions justification for dismissing the Vehicle Management Policy as it relates to both speeding and idling violations. IA recommends that City departments/divisions adhere to the Vehicle Management Policy by investigating speeding and idling violations and documenting the results.

Management Response: There are considerable issues with the current AVL technology that hinders the effectiveness of vehicle speed and idling enforcements. Secondly, staffing deficiencies within city departments have resulted in departments prioritizing other critical responsibilities over AVL monitoring. The remedy for this problem will be to work to fill staff vacancies, obtain new AVL technology, and hold departments more accountable for failing to carry out their monitoring and enforcement efforts.

3. Salem Parkway's speed limit was inaccurate within the AVL system.

IA found numerous violations in error due to the AVL software's inaccurate speed limit for Salem Parkway. IA recommends that Fleet periodically assesses whether changes to the posted speed limits throughout

the City have been updated in the AVL system in order to confirm the accuracy of speeding violations.

Management Response: Staff will need to require the new vendor to provide accurate speed limit information and commit to constantly monitoring and adjusting speed limits in the system within a reasonable time period.

4. *Numerous speeding violations were found in error due to posted speed limits not adjusting within the AVL system in a timely manner.*

IA found numerous violations were in error due to inaccurate speed limits where the AVL software retained the slower originating posted speed limit prior to City vehicles merging onto faster roadways. Essentially, this earlier slower posted speed was retained within the AVL residual memory and subsequently 'flagged' City vehicles for speeding once they merged onto a faster posted road. IA found 44 instances of the AVL software's misapplication of posted speed limits. IA recommends that Fleet contacts the AVL system vendor to determine a fix for these inaccuracies.

Management Response: Staff will need to work with the new AVL provider to assure the system can accurately distinguish between different segments that are either parallel or in close proximity to one another.

Observations and Recommendations

1. *Idling violation exemptions need to be clarified.*

During the audit, many instances were identified where departments/divisions were unclear as to what constitutes an exemption from the Idling policy. It is recommended that management revises the Vehicle Management Policy to provide clarification.

Management Response: Staff will develop a means of clearly defining the exemptions allowed for the AVL idling policies.

2. *AVL system violation notification contacts are not being kept up-to-date.*

During the audit, instances were identified where departments/divisions confirmed that they were not receiving notifications for speeding and idling violations. Moreover, IA determined that there were instances where departments and divisions had not been proactively updating their AVL system contact information to receive speeding and idling violations. It is recommended that management whose staff operate City vehicles with AVL devices should ensure their AVL system liaison's contact information is updated. It is further recommended that Fleet periodically verifies that their AVL system liaison's contact information does not include any separated employees (retired, voluntary, involuntary) by contacting the Human Resources Department.

Management Response: Fleet services will work with departments to ensure the notification lists' accuracy.

3. *City Departments and Divisions can alter idling and speeding notifications within the AVL system.*

During the audit, an instance was identified where a department confirmed that they altered the idling violation notifications within the AVL system. As a consequence of notification altering, idling notifications between the policy's stated 10 minutes and the adjusted time were not sent. Violation notification constraints should follow requirements set forth in the Vehicle Management Policy. It is recommended that Fleet resets altered constraints to conform to these requirements. It is further recommended that management assesses whether the ability to alter said constraints can and should be removed from AVL system liaisons.

Management Response: Fleet services will remove the ability of departments and divisions to adjust idling and speeding notifications without prior approval from fleet services and written notification from the Department Director.

Respectfully submitted,



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