



## Guidance for Permitting Red Light Running Photo Enforcement Systems

### Background

Nationally, more than 800 people die in Red Light Running (RLR) crashes each year. Georgia averages 25 fatalities annually in RLR crashes, with more than 3,800 injuries in 5,200 crashes. The most severe crashes at intersections are angle or side impact. Reducing this type of crash should improve safety at an intersection. RLR cameras are considered an effective countermeasure that can potentially reduce the severity of crashes by deterring violators who receive citations and civil monetary penalties.

The goal of this guidance is to utilize all available countermeasures, including sound engineering at an intersection. Combining engineering solutions with long-term and effective enforcement activities, particularly automated enforcement, should help achieve the stated goal of reducing injuries and crashes.

[House Bill 77](#) was passed in May 2008. It amends Georgia Codes governing “red light cameras” to require the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to permit and approve all potential intersections based on a traffic engineering study indicating that the camera is placed solely for safety purposes. Applicable [Georgia Codes](#) are: 40-6-20, 40-14-20, 40-14-21, 40-14-22, and 40-14-24, as well as new Georgia Codes 40-14-25 and 40-14-26.

The legislation requires Local Governments to obtain a permit from GDOT to install a Red Light Running Photo Enforcement System (RLRPES) for all locations. The legislation calls for any system that would go into service after December 31, 2008 to obtain a permit before starting any work within the public right of way. Any governing authority operating a RLRPES prior to December 31, 2008, is allowed by legislation until January 1, 2010 to obtain a permit for the operation of such device.

### Applying

The Local Government must apply for the permit at the appropriate GDOT District Office (located on GDOT main website) and provide the following:

- Payment of non-refundable administrative fees for the processing of RLRPES Permits.
  - For the first year GDOT will be charging a \$450 application fee. This application fee will apply to all permit requests, including requests to retain existing RLRPES installed prior to December 31, 2008. Applications will not be processed without the application fee.
  - The current fee to renew a RLRPES permit is \$300. This renewal fee must be submitted along with the renewal request letter if a renewal is desired by the Local Government.
  - All checks should be made payable to: Georgia Department of Transportation
  - As costs go up from year to year GDOT will adjust the fees accordingly. GDOT will assess the fees at the end of each calendar year and establish new fee rates for the coming year.

- Data confirming that there is a safety need at the intersection:
  - Number, frequency, and severity of crashes attributed to RLR (include a collision diagram). (GDOT can provide crash data upon request – see “Request for Crash Data” form.)
  - Number of citations issued (indicating potential for crashes) or electronically generated counts of the number of violations at the intersection.
- The [Proposed Clearance](#) times calculation and the current clearance intervals with the submittal (preferably in a chart format that includes existing, calculated, calculated-plus 1 second, and proposed times).
  - The minimum yellow light change interval time shall be established in accordance with nationally recognized engineering standards, and any such established time shall not be less than the minimum recognized national standard and practices plus one (1) additional second [(Y+1) - see the attached formulas for yellow interval(Y)].
- A design showing the existing traffic signal configuration including locations of all field equipment, and proposed location of all devices (GDOT prefers that the plans are stamped by a Professional Engineer) (see attached checklist and sample design).
- A Traffic Engineering Study (see the attached example) to determine whether, in addition to or as an alternative to the RLRPES, there are other possible designs or operational changes likely to reduce the number of crashes or red light violations at that intersection. This TE Study should include:
  - A list of RLR countermeasures attempted at the intersection and documentation of how these previously implemented countermeasures affected/improved red light running crashes. A description of potential countermeasures and when they are appropriate can be found in FHWA/ITE’s 2003 publication, [“Making Intersections Safer: A Toolbox of Engineering Countermeasures to Reduce Red-Light Running: An Informational Report”](#).
  - If countermeasures have not been attempted, provide documentation of why these countermeasures would not have been effective, or any cost constraints which make such countermeasures impracticable.
  - If appropriate countermeasures have not yet been attempted, the local government may be requested to assist with implementing new countermeasures as a condition of the RLRPES approval.
  - A description in the TE Study of the lanes to be photo enforced by the RLRPES (i.e., the SB left turn lane, the NB thru lane, etc).
  - A location map of the intersection where the RLRPES is/will be installed.
- Documentation of the following as required by GA Code 40-14-21:
  - The local ordinance or resolution approving the use of RLRPES.
  - Approval by the “Chief Law Enforcement Officer” of the governing authority.
  - A copy of the Public Hearing where the RLRPES is/will be installed.
- A completed Permit Requirements Checklist of the required items.

### **Materials and Equipment requirements**

- All material such as poles, pull boxes, conduit, etc. shall conform to national standards.
- All poles installed within the clear zone on right of way must be frangible or breakaway.

- The District Traffic Engineer or their designee must approve all connections to GDOT equipment. A wiring detail must appear on the plan sheet. Connection to the cabinet shall be by inductance loop on the output wire.
- All detection devices must be non-intrusive. In-pavement detection is not permitted on State Routes unless already existing.
- RLRPES signs must conform to Georgia Code Section 40-14-23. R10-18 or R10-19 signs (as shown in the MUTCD) must be placed at the jurisdictional boundaries.
- GDOT will assert any applicable immunity conferred by state law if a claim is made against GDOT related to any damages to RLRPES equipment, including damage caused by routine maintenance or by construction projects.

### **General Information:**

- Safe and efficient signalized intersections are a high priority for GDOT. Considerable technical equipment is located throughout a modern signalized intersection. Highly trained technicians maintain and operate these systems. Only personnel trained to work on this equipment will be allowed to work within the cabinet.
- GDOT will not allow access to, or any installation work around, any GDOT maintained traffic signal component unless a GDOT traffic signal technician has been notified. GDOT will require a detailed plan as to what work is scheduled and how it is proposed to be accomplished. Forty-eight (48) hours of notice must be given to the District Traffic Engineer, who will decide if a GDOT signal technician needs to be present. Qualifications of those performing work for a Local Government must be submitted and approved by GDOT. Routine maintenance of RLRPES equipment near GDOT signal equipment will be allowed with advance notice to GDOT.
- The local government is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the RLRPES as long as the system is in place. If the intersection is included in an active upgrade or resurfacing project, the local government shall inform the prime contractor and GDOT before entering the work zone to repair equipment, which the prime contractor or GDOT may refuse for good cause shown.
- The primary adjudication of any citations issued by a RLRPES will be assumed by the local government.
- The Local Government is also responsible for conveying all requirements of the permit to the RLRPES vendor / installation contractor, and providing the contact information of the vendor and subcontractors for 24-hour access.
- If the proposed location for a RLRPES falls within a current construction project being managed by GDOT, the Local Government Contractor approved for the system installation will coordinate any work and installation with GDOT's Project Manager and the Project Contractor for any installation or work activity. In no instance will the RLRPES contractor interfere with construction or cause delay to the project. Prior to any work within a current GDOT Construction project, the RLRPES vendor/contractor shall submit to the District's Project Manager/Traffic Engineer, materials proposed for installation, for review and approval.

- If future construction requires the relocation of the RLRPES equipment, the local government must request a revision to the RLRPES permit. The local government will be responsible for the relocation of the RLRPES equipment. Written permission from the prime contractor is required for GDOT projects.
- If the local government requires the services of a signal contractor for maintenance, operation and signal timing, the contractor must be approved by the District Traffic Engineer.
- Contractor work times shall be in accordance with appropriate GDOT District recommendations.

### **Annual Requirements for Local Governments**

- Providing annual reports for the preceding calendar year on the RLRPES to be sent to the GDOT Office of Traffic Operations (Attn: State Traffic Engineer, 935 E. Confederate Ave, Bldg. 24, Atlanta, GA 30316) by February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. In accordance with Georgia Code 40-14-24, such report shall include, without limitation:
  - 1) A description of the locations where traffic-control signal monitoring devices were used;
  - 2) The number of violations recorded at each location and in the aggregate on a monthly basis;
  - 3) The total number of citations issued;
  - 4) The number of civil monetary penalties and total amount of such penalties paid after citation without contest;
  - 5) The number of violations adjudicated and results of such adjudications, including a breakdown of dispositions made;
  - 6) The total amount of civil monetary penalties paid; and
  - 7) The quality of the adjudication process and its results.

If the Local Government fails to provide this report, all revenues generated from the operation of the RLRPES from the date the report was due shall be forwarded to the GDOT Office of Traffic Operations (Attn: State Traffic Engineer, 935 E. Confederate Ave, Bldg. 24, Atlanta, GA 30316). The Local Government shall not be entitled to retain any revenue until the annual report is filed.

### **GDOT Requirements and responsibilities:**

- Reviewing application and issuing permits or denials within three months of receiving a completed permit package from a Local Government. An application for amendment to an existing permit and an application for a renewal permit following a suspension or revocation of a permit shall also be processed within three months of receipt of such application, provided that the application is complete. GDOT's goal will be to issue permits within 30 days. A permit shall authorize use of a RLRPES for only those designated intersections approved as having demonstrable evidence of a genuine safety need by GDOT.
- Investigating complaints concerning the acts and practices of the Local Government pertaining to the RLRPES.
- Periodically reviewing the signal timing at approved RLRPES locations to ensure proper clearance intervals.

- Providing assistance with crash records (see attached Request for Crash Data form).
- In the event of a denial, revocation or suspension of a RLRPES, GDOT shall state the reason for such denial, revocation or suspension.

### **Revocation or suspension of a permit**

Revocation or suspension will not be done without working closely with the local government to resolve issues. General items that may result in revocation or suspension are:

- Violation of any section of any of the Georgia Codes mentioned in this Guidance.
- Field determination of improper clearance intervals.
- Field determination of the installation of equipment not included on the approved permit.
- Non-submittal of annual reports.

### **Appeal Process**

Upon issuance by GDOT of an order denying an application for or suspending or revoking a RLRPES permit, the local government shall be afforded a hearing, to be held within 30 days of the effective date of the order. The hearing shall be held before GDOT, and, within 30 days following the hearing, the local government shall be served with a written decision announcing whether the permit shall remain denied, suspended, or revoked or whether it shall be granted or reinstated.

Only after the expiration of three years following the revocation of a RLRPES permit, shall the local government make application, upon a change of circumstances being shown, to GDOT for a reconsideration of whether the local government should be permitted to use RLRPES.

### **Renewal Process**

If the Local Government wants to renew the permit for the RLRPES, they shall submit a renewal request letter 2 ½ years after the date of issuance of the permit or date of the most recent extension. If a renewal request letter and the renewal fee are not received by GDOT prior to 2 ¾ years from the date of issuance, GDOT will start the process to cancel the permit.

GDOT will finish the review of all permit renewal requests within three years from the date of issuance or date of the most recent extension unless the permit has been revoked or suspended by GDOT. The review shall be conducted in the same manner as the original permit application. If it is determined by GDOT that the RLRPES should be removed, the local government will be responsible for the removal of all RLRPES equipment within 60 days of the revocation of the permit, during which time the Local Government can appeal the revocation or suspension. These reports will be sent to the Lieutenant Governor.

If the crash history has shown reductions in rate or numbers then the permit will typically be renewed. An example of a condition that may not be renewed would be if the three year review indicated that the location had experienced an increase in angle intersection crashes and that the RLRPES may not be the appropriate countermeasure.