1. **New Law Delays College Station Red-Light Cameras**

Legislation signed by Gov. Rick Perry regarding the use of red-light cameras by Texas municipalities has delayed the City of College Station’s planned Sept. 1 camera launch, but officials say they should be operational by year’s end. College Station will join about a dozen other Texas towns that use cameras to monitor intersections for red-light violations.

The new law requires cities using red-light cameras to conduct traffic engineering studies at each intersection to determine if design changes could reduce the number of red-light violations. The law also mandates that half of the revenue (after expenses) generated from tickets be sent to a regional trauma center.

College Station City Traffic Engineer Troy Rother was guest speaker for the May 31 Brazos Valley TexITE meeting. “In 2004, College Station issued 2,400 red-light citations and there were 65 crashes attributed to red-light running,” Rother said. “We really feel that these cameras will make a big impact on the problem. Safety is our main concern.”
Rother’s presentation included videos showing people intentionally running red lights at some city intersections. He said the cameras will first be placed at the five worst intersections for red-light running: Texas Avenue at Walton Drive; Harvey Road at George Bush Drive; Harvey Road at Munson; Wellborn Road at George Bush Drive and Wellborn Road at Harvey Mitchell Parkway.

Fines will cost drivers $75 after a one-month grace period.

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2. Cumulus Workshops: Photos a Mouse Click Away

In a year-long effort, TTI Communications employees have been downloading thousands of negatives and digital images into a file system that will eventually end the frustration of trying to locate just the right photo. Cumulus, a digital assistant management software program, enables users to search for a photograph by inputting a key word, time period or various other criteria.

Public Affairs Coordinator Michelle Hoelscher conducted a series of workshops with members of a user test group to introduce the software. “Once we have Cumulus up and running, it will be an invaluable tool for anyone needing a photo for a presentation or report,” Hoelscher said. “Right now we are getting people familiar with how Cumulus works.”

The software will be used by TTI and TxDOT and should be operational by the end of the year.
3. TTI Welcomes International Guests

On June 28, TTI hosted a group of international transportation professionals who visited the Institute as an extension of a three-day conference based in Austin. The guests were all attendees of the Transportation Research Board’s 9th International Conference on Low-Volume Roads.

The 21 visitors toured TTI’s pavements and materials laboratories and witnessed a crash test at Riverside Campus. In addition to representing several states in the U.S., the attendees included representatives from transportation entities in New Zealand, Chile, Canada, Peru, South Africa, China and India. The crash test, conducted by Dean Alberson, involved bollards manufactured by an Italian company.

Regents Fellow Dock Burke hosted the group. “The program prepared by Tom Scullion, Gene Buth and their colleagues provided our guests a memorable set of experiences that increased their knowledge of the transportation profession and polished the worldwide reputation of the Institute’s researchers and facilities,” he said.

4. TTI Anniversaries

5 Years

Tony Barboasa, Assistant Research Scientist (BFP)
Debbie Spillane, Assistant Transportation Researcher (HTP)

10 Years

Akram Abu-Odeh, Associate Research Scientist (CHS)
Melisa Finley, Assistant Research Engineer (FWZ)
Pat Harris, Associate Research Scientist (BFP)
Les Olson, Associate Research Scientist (RRI)

15 Years

Cynthia Lowery, Business Coordinator I (AEM)
Mike Vickich, Senior Systems Analyst I (JHO)
5. TTI Student Worker, Teammates Win Competition

Student Worker Whit Wilson and 25 other Texas A&M University engineering students beat out teams from dozens of other universities around the country and across the globe to win the 2007 Formula SAE West Competition. The four day event was held at the California Speedway in Fontana, Calif. on June 13-16.

“We built our car from the ground up with every team member playing a vital role in this win,” Wilson said. The senior mechanical engineering student was on the engine team and felt pressure to do well for this year’s competition. “The A&M team has performed well since it first competed in 1999. To win first place is a big relief.”

Wilson, who has worked for TTI Administration since his freshman year, will be married July 7 in his hometown of Ranger, Texas and will graduate in December. “I hope to find a job as an automotive engineer in the College Station area. I want to stay close.”

Read more:
http://engineeringnews.tamu.edu/portal/page?_pageid=37,3428&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&p_news_id=1499

6. Statistical Help Desk Extended through 2007

Statistical support for short-term, unfunded projects will continue through Dec. of this year thanks to support approved by Director Dennis Christiansen. “The free statistical help desk will continue to provide TTI staff with statistical expertise in research proposals, projects, reports and other materials,” Christiansen said.

The Short-Term Statistical Help Desk (St. Stats) will be staffed by Graduate Assistant Researcher Nathaniel Litton from the Department of Statistics, under the supervision of TTI
The help desk provides statistical support for tasks that are expected to take less than one week to complete. Larger tasks will continue to be addressed within the normal project staffing process.

Contact Administrative Assistant Pam Rowe to use St. Stats.

7. Teen Safety Program Wins Video/Safety Awards

TTI’s Teens in the Driver Seat (TDS) has received both an international film award and a safety award stemming from its work to alert teenagers of the dangers of driving.

The film honor was the result of the program’s entry for the Global Road Safety Film Awards, presented at the first World Youth Assembly for Road Safety sponsored by the United Nations and held in Geneva, Switzerland on April 23-29. The video was the idea of students at Marble Falls High School who are team members of that school’s TDS program. The script was written by the students who either acted or provided testimonials for the video.

TDS Program Director Russell Henk, Audio Visual Specialists Clyde Hance and David Martin, Research Specialist Bernie Fette and Associate Transportation Researcher Tina Collier assisted the students in creation of the video.

TDS has also been recognized by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) as its 2007 recipient of the Transportation Achievement Award for Safety. The award recognizes significant and outstanding transportation achievements by entities concerned with transportation. Director Dennis Christiansen
will accept the award on behalf of the TDS team at the ITE Annual Meeting to be held in Pittsburg on August 5-8.

View TDS winning video:
http://www.t-driver.com/materials/videos/

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8. First Summer Blood Drive Supports On-going Effort

Twenty-one people took the time and effort to donate blood June 12 as part of the Institute’s on-going blood drive program. “This was the first time we decided to conduct a blood drive for the summer,” said Transportation Operations Group Program Manager and blood drive co-organizer Nancy Stratta. “We were pleased with the turn-out especially considering the time of year.”

Stratta wants you to know that registering to donate can be done online by visiting www.giveblood.org. Click Where to Donate and find Drives by City. Click on the date of the drive and it will schedule your appointment.

The next scheduled blood drive for the Institute is Oct. 23.

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9. TTI in the News

There have been numerous mentions of TTI and our experts in recent articles. Here are links to some of the stories.

Congestion pricing (Houston Chronicle) June 25

Highway cameras (The Daily Texan) June 14

TTI’s Truck Stop Electrification project (Layover.com) June 14
San Antonio highway cameras (WOAI-TV) June 14 (Watch video after commercial)

Congestion pricing (Christian Science Monitor) June 14

Cost of transportation impacting students (Daily Bruin) June 10

Pavement repairs (The Detroit News) June 8

Telecommuting (InfoWorld) June 7

Congestion (Los Angeles Daily News) June 6

HOV lanes (Denver Business Journal) June 6

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10. Editor's Corner: Living Happily with Captions

Captions for figures and tables in document files have proven tricky in several cases lately. Here are a few tips for handling them so that both authors and readers can live happily with captions.

- **Make captions descriptive.** Use your captions to convey clearly to your readers the content of each graphic.

- **Locate captions correctly.** Place each caption close to its figure or table and leave space between the graphic and surrounding text.

- **Use a consistent appearance.** Format each figure caption alike and format each table title alike. The two may differ from each other if you choose. [In technical reports for Texas Department of Transportation Research Management Committee projects, captions follow specific formats.]
• **Consider automatic styles.** Using automatic word-processing styles maintains a consistent format throughout your document. It also enables you construct autogenerated lists of figures and tables. A general editorial rule of thumb is to create a list of tables or list of figures if you have five or more of either type of graphic.

• **Wrap captions to the same width as graphics.** When posting files online in portable document format (PDF) files, reproduction staff enlarge specific destinations such as figures and tables for easy viewing. If the caption is wider than the graphic, it limits enlargement possibilities or cuts off part of the caption. Use a soft return (SHFT+enter) to wrap caption text to fit. When viewing figures and tables in TTI’s online PDF files, readers can then use the linked references with the “Previous View” button (not the “Previous Page” button) to move back and forth between and enlargement of the graphic and the report itself.

• **Consider automatic numbering.** Letting your word processing program number figures and tables for you keeps track of numbering and will automatically adjust numbering if you add or remove graphics.

• **Consider automatic in-text references.** In discussions of graphics, automatic cross references are meant to maintain accurate callouts to corresponding graphics. Using automatic cross references has some distinct advantages, but moving files from computer to computer can corrupt automatic numbering so be sure to verify in-text references in your final file.

*Editor’s Corner is written by Rhonda Brinkmann, research editor with TTI Communications. Rhonda is happy to take requests for column topics.*

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11. Calendar/Reminders

July 10, 24—Research Development Seminar
Report Development and Deliverables Preparation
102 Gilchrist Building
July 16—Q&A with Director Dennis Christiansen
   Room 102 Gilchrist Building 10-30-12:00

July 18-20—Texas Transportation Forum, Austin
   For more information, registration:
   http://www.dot.state.tx.us/ttf/

July 27, Aug. 2—Research Development Seminar
   Interagency Agreements, Projects in Other
   States, and Pooled-Fund Studies
   Room 102 Gilchrist Building

Sept. 19-21—2007 Texas Ports and Waterways Conference
   For more information, registration:
   http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/ports07/

Oct. 16-17—81st Annual Transportation Short Course
   http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/tsc07/

Nov. 4-7—2007 National Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Safety Conference,
   San Antonio
   For more information, registration:
   http://tti.tamu.edu/conferences/rail07/

Nov. 5-8—RMC Meetings, San Antonio

CenterLine is a production of TTI Communications. We encourage your comments and suggestions for articles about TTI people and research efforts. Please send email to news@ttimail.tamu.edu or call Rick Davenport at (979) 862-3763.