TWIN FALLS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE'S IN-CAR CAMERAS

BYRNE JAG SUBAWARD ASSESSMENT REPORT

Idaho Statistical Analysis Center
Pass-Through Grants and Research
Idaho State Police

Twin Falls County Sheriff's Office's In-Car Cameras: Byrne JAG Subaward Assessment Report

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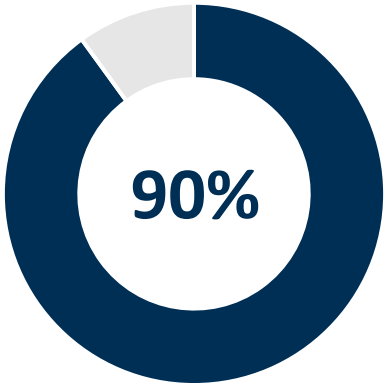
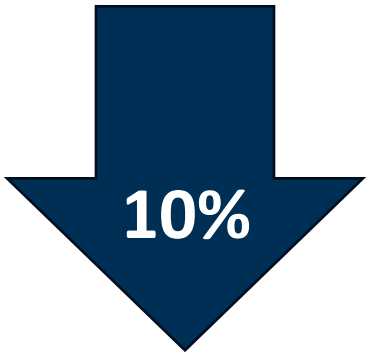
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, the Twin Falls County Sheriff's Office applied for and received funds from the Idaho State Police's Pass-Through Grants and Research Department, through the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) Program, to purchase and install 38 in-car camera bundles for its patrol vehicles. The cameras were installed in January and February 2025. This report presents preliminary data on the effect of the cameras, focusing on the eight months during and after camera installation (January – August 2025), and comparing that period to the same eight-month period in 2024 to examine any shifts in patterns related to citizen complaints, traffic citations, and overtime hours spent on such cases that proceed to court.

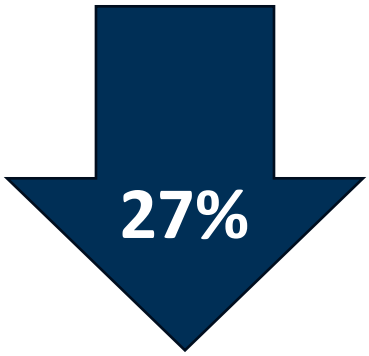
Program Highlights



Percentage of **citizen complaints dropped** in the eight months following camera installation *(compared to 75% during the same period in the previous year)*



Decrease in the number of **traffic citations issued** after camera installation



Decrease in the number of **TFCSO overtime hours spent on traffic court cases** after camera installation

- In the first eight months after the in-car cameras were installed (January – August 2025), 90% of citizen complaints made were ultimately dropped (9 of 10). During the same time frame in 2024, 75% of citizen complaints made were dropped (3 of 4).

- Between January and August 2025, TFCSO averaged 10% fewer traffic citations issued per month (268 citations issued per month) compared to the same period in 2024 (298).

- Between January and August 2025, TFCSO spent an average of 27% fewer overtime hours on traffic court cases per month (14 hours per month) compared to the same period in 2024 (19.1).

Key Recommendations

Adjust data collection to both improve grant reporting and gain data for internal use

Use improved data collection to perform a more rigorous assessment with a longer follow-up time

- Two major limitations of this assessment are related to data quality and the follow-up time for measuring program impacts.

- The data included in this report suggests that the cameras have positive effects. However, due to the limitations of this study, one of which is a lack of high-quality longitudinal data, the conclusions able to be drawn from these data are weak. Expanding data collection and tracking that data regularly would improve the available data and make for a stronger research project at a later date. Further, regular tracking of key data points would allow TFCSO to compile the data on an as-needed basis to demonstrate to stakeholders (e.g., the Twin Falls County Commission) how the program is impacting their operations.

- Improving data collection and extending the follow-up period would allow for a more rigorous research project to be conducted in the future. Because of the large scope of an expanded research project, TFCSO should partner with a professional research team to conduct this type of project. Because there is a limited evidence base for the effectiveness and impact of in-car cameras, a larger project like this would represent an opportunity for TFCSO and their chosen research partner to make a significant contribution to the knowledge base on the subject, potentially impacting law enforcement agencies around the state and the nation.

BACKGROUND

The Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) Program is the primary federal formula grant program that provides funding to states, tribal, and local governments for programs that fall into one of eight broad areas of the criminal justice system. Byrne JAG is administered by states on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and the amount of funds allocated to each state are determined based on its share of the U.S. population along with the state's share of the nation's violent crime (FBI-reported Part 1 violent crime data), with a minimum amount guaranteed to every state. The Twin Falls County Sheriff's Office's in-car camera program was funded through a Byrne JAG subaward administered by the Idaho State Police's Pass-through Grants & Research Department (the State Administering Agency for Idaho's Byrne JAG funds) under the "Law Enforcement" program area.

Twin Falls County Sheriff's Office (TFCSO) requested funds to buy 38 in-car camera bundles (camera, microphone, charging base, cloud support) and redaction software. In support of their request to fund in-camera cars for their fleet, TFCSO cited multiple potential benefits. TFCSO found that local prosecutors, judges, and juries were expecting tangible evidence to be presented during cases and in support of citations. The Sheriff's Office believed that many cases and citations were being thrown out without video footage available for review. They also argued that without such evidence, violators may feel emboldened to disregard laws and public safety. Implementing video recording was expected to enhance roadway safety and help deescalate hostile encounters by making individuals aware that their actions are being documented. Additionally, TFCSO suspected recorded interactions could foster greater public trust and accountability between patrol officers and the community.

In the TFCSO's JAG grant application, TFCSO developed one goal with two objectives. The goal was to "use video evidence to enforce the law." The objectives included providing video evidence to the court system to hold violators accountable and utilizing in-car cameras to improve transparency and accountability within the county. Performance measures (specific data to be collected as indicators of whether the program met its goals and objectives) included reducing citations thrown out of court by 50% compared to the previous year and reducing citizen-officer complaints by 50% compared with the previous year.

Through local news media, while beginning to install the dash cameras in December of 2024, TFCSO noted further benefits they anticipated coming from the installation of the cameras.[1] The key benefits TFCSO noted in these interviews included the following: the collection of video and audio evidence of crimes (particularly traffic stops), being able to provide citizens with video footage easily, increasing transparency, and responding to increase demand for video evidence from courts. It was further noted that the cameras will strengthen accountability for both the public and the deputies in their day-to-day encounters.

Prior Research

Much of the research on police use of cameras focuses on body-worm cameras for a few reasons. Body-worn cameras rose in popularity quickly after their introduction, not too long after in-car camera use

[1] Orue, M. (2024, December 7). *Twin Falls County Sheriff's Office installing new dashcams*. KMVT. https://www.kmvt.com/2024/12/07/twin-falls-county-sheriffs-office-installing-new-dashcams/
Nettleton, L. (2024, December 9). *New dash cams for sheriff's deputies aim for greater transparency, better evidence collection*. KIVI-TV. https://www.kivitv.com/twin-falls/new-dash-cams-for-sheriffs-deputies-aim-for-greater-transparency-better-evidence-collection

became widespread. Body-worn cameras have become a popular research topic from which some things could be transferred to our understanding of in-car cameras but with the slightly different features and functionality, research specifically on in-car cameras is more relevant in this context. Even though in-car camera research is limited, there are a few key studies that may inform us on the potential benefits.

One of the most comprehensive studies was an evaluation completed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) in 2002.[2] This evaluation included an 18-month study of 47 agencies and intensive site visits to 21 agencies. This evaluation documented multiple benefits including enhancing officer safety, improving agency accountability, reducing agency liability, simplifying incident review, enhancing recruit and in-service training (post-incident use of videos), improving community/media perceptions, strengthening police leadership, advancing prosecution/case resolution, enhancing officer performance and professionalism, increasing homeland security, and upgrading technology policies and procedures. This evaluation also documented and presented several lessons learned, stating that the most important one was the need for agencies to conduct a thorough planning effort before implementing in-car cameras.

More updated research has continued to find positive impacts for agencies that implement in-car cameras. In-car cameras have been associated with increased numbers of dismissed cases and citizen complaints.[3] The same study also stressed that in-car cameras may not have as much impact on use-of-force cases due to the inherent boundaries of the cameras and potential lack of visual coverage if an incident occurs out of the camera's sight. This highlights the importance of keeping the affordances of in-car cameras in mind when considering the potential positive impacts they may have. Overall, recent studies that specifically examine police use of in-car cameras are less prevalent than those that examine body-worn camera use but seem to echo similar findings.

DATA COLLECTION

TFCSO's cameras were fully installed in all patrol cars by the end of January 2025. To understand the impact of the cameras, TFCSO provided ISAC with monthly data spanning from August 2023 through August 2025. Data included the number and type of citizen complaints, the number of video recordings shared with complainants, the number of complaints dropped, the number of traffic citations issued, and the number of overtime hours for officers related to traffic court proceedings. Unfortunately, court outcome data was harder for TFCSO to access for specific types of cases or specific outcomes. ISAC was also provided with limited data about the number of traffic court dismissals and citation outcomes. This included 6 months of data, October through December 2024 (pre-camera installation) and February though Aprill 2025 (post-camera installation). Due to difficulties with accessing court outcome data, this smaller sample of months was all that was available at the time of this report.

[2] International Association of Chiefs of Police. (2003). *The impact of video evidence on modern policing: Research and best practices from the IACP study on in-car cameras*. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/impact-video-evidence-modern-policing

[3] Sahin, N. M., & Cubukcu, S. (2022). In-car cameras and police accountability in use of force incidents. *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology, 37*, 512–525. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11896-021-09472-9

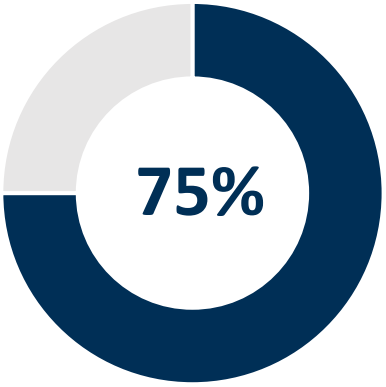
RESULTS

Complaints

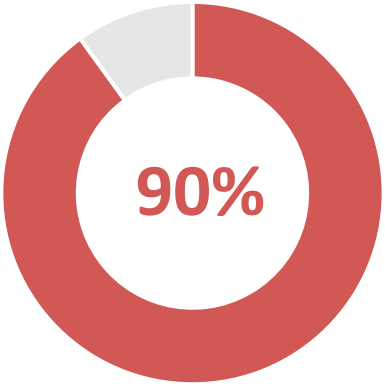
After the cameras were installed, video evidence was easier for TFCSO to share with complainants, and there was also a corresponding increase in the percentage of complaints dropped. In the eight months following the installation of the cameras, 90% of citizen complaints (9 of 10) were ultimately dropped, compared with 75% (3 of 4) during the same time frame in 2024 (see Figure 1). This is promising evidence but with so few citizen complaints each year, there will need to be more extensive follow-up to determine if the cameras are truly making a difference.

Figure 1. Percentage of citizen complaints against TFCSO officers dropped, January – August 2024 and 2025.

January through August 2024 (before cameras were installed), 3 of 4 **complaints were dropped.**



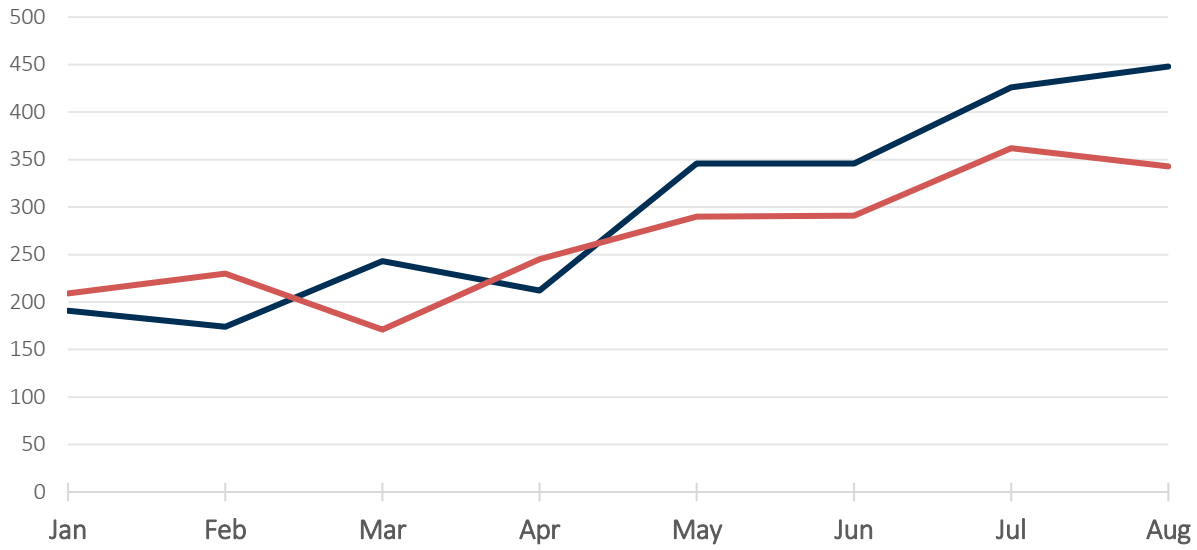
January through August 2025 (after cameras were installed), 9 of 10 **complaints were dropped.**



Citation Outcomes

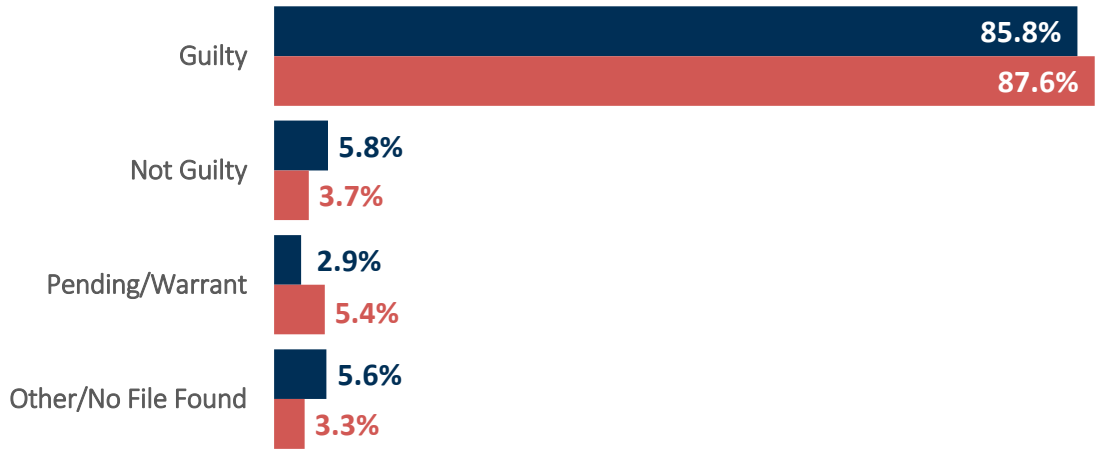
In their grant application, TFCSO did not state that it expected an impact of cameras on the actual number of citations issued, but this context should be examined before moving into other analyses. In examining the number of traffic citations TFCSO issued by month, there were about 10% more citations issued before cameras were installed (about 298 per month, January – August 2024) as compared to the same period in 2025, after cameras were installed (268 per month, January – August 2025; see Figure 2 on page 9). This difference should be considered when evaluating data such as overtime hours. However, because the decrease in overtime hours appears larger than the decrease in citations, additional factors beyond the in-car cameras may still be influencing the results.

*Figure 2. On average, TFCSO issued about 10% more citations in the months **before cameras were installed (298 per month, Jan. – Aug. 2024)** than **after in-car cameras were installed (268 per month, Jan. – Aug. 2025)**.*



As mentioned above, court outcome data for each of these citations was much harder to assess. With the limited amount of data that was provided, there were no statistical tests that could be done, but there does seem to be some preliminary impact that could benefit from further exploration. During October through December 2024 (before camera installation) about 86% of citations resulted in a finding of guilty, while after (February – April 2025) this percentage increased slightly to 88% (see Figure 3). During these same time periods there was also a greater proportion of citations resulting in a finding of not guilty before camera installation than after and less dismissals of traffic citations by the court.

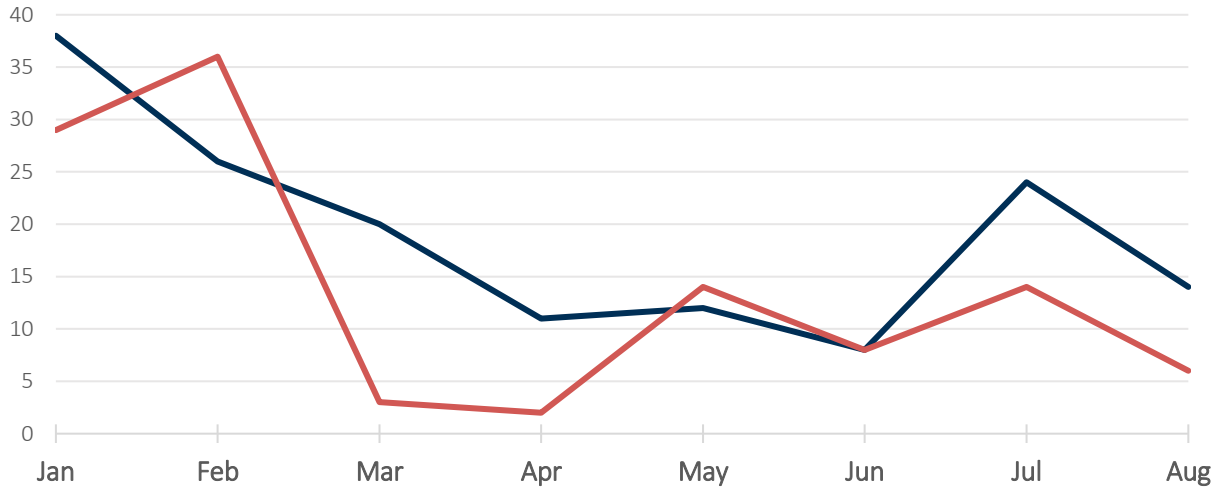
*Figure 3. When compared to the **three months prior to installation**, citations issued in the **three months after in-car camera installation** were slightly more likely to result in a finding of guilty and slightly less likely to result in a finding of not guilty.*



Overtime Hours

During discussions with ISAC staff, TFCSO identified an immediate impact that had not been included in the original grant objectives or measures: a reduction in staff overtime hours spent on traffic cases that went to court. In examining this data, there was an observed decrease in overtime hours from an average of 24.4 hours per month in 2024 down to about 14.0 hours per month after the cameras were installed. Looking more specifically at the months that cameras were in place as compared to the same months in the year before (January through August; see Figure 4), there was still a decrease from an average of 19.1 hours per month to 14.0 in 2025. This reflects a decrease of 27%, on average, in overtime hours worked each month by TFCSO staff on traffic court cases.

Figure 4. After the cameras were installed in 2025, overtime hours dropped noticeably and then followed a pattern similar to 2024, but at a consistently lower level.



Because there were not many months of data available, only a limited set of statistical approaches could be used. An interrupted time series (ITS) analysis was completed as it is useful for identifying both changes in the frequency with which events occur at specific times and broader trends over time after an intervention is introduced. Findings from this analysis were largely inconclusive and did not identify any statistical difference from the 17 months before the cameras were installed to after installation.[4] Although overtime hours did decrease, and there was even a noticeable drop in March 2025, the evidence is weak, and a longer follow-up period would be needed to determine whether this change is truly meaningful.

This analysis was complicated by several factors. Overtime hours from before and after the camera installation may have overlapped because of court processing times, and the cameras were not all installed at the same time. To account for this, models were tested with a one and two-month lag, but there were not significant findings from either model. ISAC also considered the number of citations issued each month, which could influence overtime. Adding this as a control did not change the results, again suggesting that more follow-up time is needed to clearly understand the impact of the cameras.

[4] See Appendix A for a full table with results from ITS models.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Shortly after some cameras were installed, a TFCSO deputy was involved in a shooting that unfortunately resulted in the death of a juvenile.[5] This event had significant impact on all the parties involved, including the Sheriff's Office and the family of the juvenile. The in-car camera captured video and audio documentation that was critical in the investigation and review of the incident. This footage was able to be censored and shared out with news media and the public for review. In this case, the availability of dash camera footage improved the transparency of the Sheriff's Office and allowed for a more thorough and impartial review of the incident. While this incident represents a rare and serious event, it underscores the importance and potential of in-car cameras to provide accountability and transparency in all interactions between deputies and the public.

That incident and the findings in this report represent a starting point for understanding the impact of in-car cameras on the TFCSO. These preliminary findings seem to indicate that the cameras offer promising benefits, but much more data and time is needed to confirm any statistical impact. This project specifically suffered from a lack of follow-up time and easy access to data that would be helpful in evaluating the cameras' impact on court cases, limiting ISAC's ability to draw strong conclusions about the cameras so soon after implementation. Further, complaint numbers are too small to serve as a reliable metric, with only seven total complaints lodged in 2024 and 10 in the first eight months of 2025, leaving no meaningful baseline for comparison. Court-related outcome data was also difficult to access, which prevents us from understanding trends in case processing and outcomes beyond anecdotal evidence from attorneys or judges. While overtime data was the only dataset with enough volume to analyze, these data could be influenced by many factors and are not a clean indicator of the impact of the new in-car cameras. At this point, there is a lack of straightforward, accessible data points that could help us understand the effects of this program, making it important to identify tangible measures that TFCSO can realistically collect and track moving forward.

While it would be ideal to have more robust measures like those used by IACP in their evaluation of in-car cameras, that evaluation relied mostly on survey, interview, and focus group data. Collecting this type of information on a continuous basis is not feasible for the agency, as it would be time consuming and difficult to gather. However, it could be possible for TFCSO to partner with ISAC or other researchers to complete an expanded study using methods similar to the IACP report to assess the impact of in-car cameras more thoroughly. In the meantime, the TFCSO could adjust their goals, objectives, and performance measures for the remainder of their JAG grant to capture the same data used in this report on a longer time scale. A full list of recommended data points for collection is provided in Appendix B.

Based on these findings, ISAC makes the following recommendations:

1. ***TFCSO should adjust the data it collects on this program, both for grant reporting purposes and as internal data that can demonstrate the value of the cameras after the end of their JAG grant.*** The data included in this report suggests that the cameras are having positive effects on the TFCSO. In comparing the eight months after cameras were installed to the same period the previous year, the percentage of citizen complaints that were ultimately dropped increased, the

[5] CBS2 News - KMVT. (2025, April 24). Twin Falls tragedy: New details emerge in family stabbing and police shooting incident. CBS2 Idaho News. https://idahonews.com/news/local/twin-falls-tragedy-new-details-emerge-in-family-stabbing-and-police-shooting-incident

number of traffic citations issued decreased, and the number of overtime hours TFCSO staff logged for traffic court cases decreased. However, due to the limitations of this study, one of which is a lack of high-quality longitudinal data, the conclusions able to be drawn from these data are weak. Extending the follow-up time and tracking data regularly during that time would improve the available data and make for a stronger research project at a later date. Further, regular tracking of key data points would allow TFCSO to compile the data on an as-needed basis to demonstrate to stakeholders (e.g., the Twin Falls County Commission) how the program is impacting their operations. A list of recommended data points for regular tracking is included in Appendix B.

2. *To better understand the full impact of in-car camera implementation, TFCSO could partner with ISAC or another research team to conduct a more rigorous study of the program.*

   As noted in Recommendation #1, improving data collection and extending the follow-up period would allow for a more rigorous research project to be conducted in the future. Such a project could also include elements of the 2002 IACP study. Because of the large scope of an expanded research project, TFCSO should partner with a professional research team to conduct this type of project. ISAC would be one option for a research partner; another might be one of the state's colleges or universities. Because there is a limited evidence base for the effectiveness and impact of in-car cameras, a larger project like this would represent an opportunity for TFCSO and their chosen research partner to make a significant contribution to the knowledge base on the subject, potentially impacting law enforcement agencies around the state and the nation.

APPENDIX A

Interrupted Time Series Models

To understand when the intervention may have made a difference, we estimated four interrupted time series models, two with a February intervention date and two with a March date, each with and without traffic citations as a covariate. The February models showed no meaningful effect, with small, non-significant level changes (β = 4.29, p = .79; β = 3.46, p = .84) and comparatively poorer fit. In contrast, the March models indicated a large negative level change (β = −31.52, p = .069; β = −33.91, p = .056) and consistently better fit. Traffic citations themselves weren't related to overtime and didn't change the size or direction of the intervention effect. Overall, the evidence points to a true shift occurring in March. Because the follow-up period after the intervention is short, more time would be needed to fully understand how lasting or large the effect truly is.

Table 1. Parameter estimates for ITS models: February and March intervention dates.

Predictor	February (No Citations)	February (With Citations)	March (No Citations)	March (With Citations)
Intercept	36.61 (13.47)*	33.50 (14.50)*	42.63 (11.77)**	40.02 (12.39)**
Time	–0.63 (0.82)	–0.69 (0.88)	–0.52 (0.67)	–0.54 (0.71)
Camera (Level Change)	4.29 (16.08)	3.46 (16.93)	–31.52 (16.43)	–33.91 (16.68)
After Camera (Slope Change)	–1.46 (3.17)	–1.27 (3.35)	3.68 (3.33)	4.48 (3.27)
Traffic Citations	—	–0.011 (0.047)	—	–0.040 (0.041)
AR(1) Phi	0.308	0.305	0.341	0.227
Residual SD	14.43	14.74	13.58	**12.95**
AIC	193.92	200.16	**190.48**	196.26

* p < .05. ** p < .01.

Note. Values represent unstandardized coefficients from generalized least squares models with AR(1) error structure. Standard errors appear in parentheses. Lower AIC and residual standard deviation indicate better model fit.

APPENDIX B

Table 2. Recommended monthly data collection for in-car camera program.

Category	Metric	Description/Notes	Currently Collected?	Grant Objective Addressed*	Data Source
Camera Usage and Administration	Hours captured**	Total hours of video recorded			TFCSO
	How often cameras are activated, Recordings per shift	Average number of recordings per shift			TFCSO
	Missing or corrupt video files	Number or percentage of missing/corrupted files			TFCSO
	Maintenance issues	Frequency or severity of camera maintenance problems			TFCSO
	Citations issued	Number of traffic citations	✔		TFCSO
Resources	Overtime for court cases**	Hours and cost of court-related overtime	✔	1	TFCSO
	Other time savings**	E.g. report writing, investigations?			TFCSO
Community Interaction	Complaints resolved with video footage	Number and percentage of complaints resolved using video	✔	2	TFCSO
	Time to resolution of complaint	Compare resolution times pre- and post-video use		2	TFCSO
Court Cases	Cases using video evidence**	% or number of cases where video was submitted as evidence		1	TFCSO
	Case processing time**	Compare processing times pre- and post-video use		1	TFCSO/Court
	Plea rates**	Compare plea rates pre- and post-video use		1	Court
	Citation outcomes**	Pending/Warrant, Not Guilty, Guilty, Dismissed (with reason why)		1	Court

*Objective 1: Provide video evidence to Court system to hold violators accountable.
Objective 2: Utilize in-car cameras to improve transparency and accountability within the County.
** Traffic citations should be tracked separately when appropriate.

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