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» California Highway Patrol to Test E-Ticketing System



July 29, 2011 By Sarah Rich

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) wants to implement a statewide electronic ticketing system for traffic citations over the next few years and is starting the process with a small-scale pilot.

The California Highway Patrol pilots 400 new Motorola handheld citation devices in three counties.

California Highway Patrol CIO Reginald

Chappelle would like to see each of California's 58 counties move from the CHP's current paper-based ticketing to processing traffic citations on handheld devices — a trend happening among law enforcement agencies nationwide. Once the new system is in place, ticketing information processed through the handheld devices would be sent to California courts in 48 hours or less.

"It takes several weeks for paper copies to make it to the courts," Chappelle said. "If it's someone that you want to revoke their driving privilege for or get them into the court system as soon as possible, sometimes you're held up by the [current system's] clerical processing."

On Sept. 30, the CHP will begin a six-month test of 400 Motorola devices running Advanced Public Safety software. The pilot will include three court jurisdictions: one CHP office in Santa Clara County, another in San Bernardino County and three CHP offices in Orange County.

The mobile devices planned for the e-ticketing pilot include a thumb-print scanner, magnetic stripe reader, camera and a Windows operation system. In some cases, officers would use the camera and thumb-print scanner for identification verification.

The CHP received a \$2.4 million grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety to complete the pilot in the three counties, with the goal of eliminating manual data entry from the CHP's clerical staff into a more than 25-year-old legacy system. If the CHP eventually opts for a statewide rollout, it would cost another \$22 million — funds California hasn't secured yet.

Chappelle said writing tickets on mobile devices takes officers less than two minutes, whereas writing a paper ticket can take five to 10 minutes.

"Right now the process for paper citations is the officer goes out, they bring it back to a local office and the CHP clerical staff will enter that data into a legacy system on a little green-screen system. But it doesn't capture all the fields from a citation," Chappelle said.

The legacy system — because of limited memory — only captures the first two violations written on a single citation, so some of the forms were incomplete, according to Chappelle. The new e-ticketing solution would be able to record multiple violations on a single ticket.

If the project goes statewide, Chappelle said the CHP will go back to the state Office of Traffic Safety for more funding to purchase the necessary hardware and software to run the handheld citation devices.

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To adequately equip the CHP's 7,000 officers, an additional 3,500 devices would need to be purchased. Each officer wouldn't need his or her own device.

"We wouldn't do all of that in one fiscal year because the courts and the jurisdictions need to be willing and ready to accept the data electronically," Chappelle explained. "Otherwise, you're still printing and sending in the citations the way we're doing it now. You're just printing it from a handheld device instead of a desktop PC."

The upcoming test in September won't be the first time the CHP has piloted handheld citation devices. In 2006, the CHP used a grant to pilot handheld citation devices for officers on a limited basis in Ventura County and in three courts in Los Angeles. After the pilot concluded, few jurisdictions wanted to expand the project into their counties.

At the time, the CHP didn't want to write separate agreements supporting e-ticketing in each of the state's 58 counties and hundreds of courts because individual projects would have been too difficult to manage, Chappelle said.

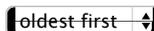
Years ago the CHP asked the state's Administrative Office of the Courts to develop a single standard for the e-ticketing data so it could be stored in one location. The CHP wants that data to go into the California Court Case Management System (CCMS), a long-awaited but delayed unification of the state's superior courts data. Started in 2003, the CCMS is still incomplete and has taken [criticism](#) from some counties, as well as judges and lawmakers.

Chappelle conceded that the CCMS would have to be operational before the e-ticketing system can be launched statewide. Consequently the CHP might have to wait at least a few years.

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Comments



RobinHood | Commented August 1, 2011

Magenetic stripe reader?? Are they giving out tickets or collecting data?

[REPLY TO THIS THREAD](#)

PD IT GUY | Commented August 2, 2011

Come on. Before making a rediculous comment, maybe you should get your facts straight. In California, there is a magnetic stripe on the back of the license which contains all the DL information which is printed on the front of the DL. This is key in the efficiency of using E-ticket devices as it eliminates officer typo errors, and makes "writing" the ticket much faster. And YES, they are collecting data. Data that can be used to provide valuable analysis about enforcement trends, problem accident locations, areas which have a higher incident of speeding, etc. You would think that would be something of value to the citizens so the CHP can focus their limited enforcement capability in "hot spots" rather than blindly driving all over the State.

Mike A | Commented August 1, 2011

Contrary to the author of this article, CCMS is NOT required for an electronic ticketing system to work. I work for a court that gets electronic cite data from several different law enforcement agencies. All but the very smallest courts have IT personnel on staff who could easily create a "translator" to get information from the CHP statewide system into their own case management systems. The smallest courts could be helped by the AOC or other courts, many of which would gladly provide assistance. CCMS is not needed for any court to function. Unlike most computer systems, CCMS does not save its users time. CCMS requires more time to perform most operations than it takes to do the same operations with the "legacy" computer systems it is intended to replace. CCMS

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