

City of Madison
Metro Transit

Memo to: Transit & Parking Commission
From: Transit Service Manager
Subject: Cameras in Buses and at South Transfer Point
Date: October 25, 2005

Recommendation – Cameras on Buses

Since our last discussion of video surveillance on the buses, staff has looked at a variety of options; traditional analog cameras and recorders, digital cameras with a recorder on the bus, digital cameras transmitting the pictures to Metro, and digital recorders that are downloaded onto Metro computers at the end of each day.

Low End: Analog
Medium: Digital, with recorder on bus
Medium: Digital, with images downloaded at end of day to hard drive at Metro.
High End: Digital, with images transmitted to Metro

We recommend digital cameras, with the recorder on the bus. The cameras will be tied in to the ignition switch and the emergency alarm. When the bus is operating the camera will be operating. Activation of the emergency alarm by the driver will place a 'bookmark' on the recording, preventing it from being recorded over and allowing quick access to the relevant images. The hard drive will be pulled when an incident is reported (by bus operators or the public). Otherwise, the hard drives will be recorded over.

It is not necessary to install a download portal to store all the images from the recorders on a daily basis. Likewise, the expense of enabling remote monitoring of 'live' action cameras is not necessary. Do not have staffing to watch live streaming on the buses and do not need to maintain video records of activity on the bus, other than specific incidents. It is sufficient to have the capability to change out the hard drive when drivers or the public reports an incident.

Up to fifteen buses will be equipped with cameras; 10 buses used primarily in fixed route service and five buses used primarily in supplemental school service. We will use feedback from bus operators and customers to identify appropriate routes for the camera-equipped buses on a daily basis.

We recommend a three-camera system, covering the interior of the coach and the farebox area and bus entryway. Cameras will be equipped with audio.

- Camera at front of bus looking toward back will capture roughly front half of bus.
- A second one will be positioned to monitor the rear area of the coach.
- Third camera will be at the driver-side wall, to view the fare box and entryway.

Recommendation – Cameras at South Transfer Point

Concerning STP, the Request for Proposals will ask responders to also provide quote for fixed cameras at STP. We anticipate 3-4 cameras, with images transmitted to a recorder. The Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District has a lift station in a utility building on site, and is amenable to our placing the recording device in that building.

Selection of Equipment

Staff is preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP). The technology is evolving rapidly, and the purchase process will include a presentation by qualified vendors of their equipment. Following the presentations, we will inform the vendors exactly which equipment we want them to bid on, and Best and Final offers will be obtained. Depending on the cost of the equipment, we may need to phase the installation of the equipment through a multi-year contract. The TPC will take action on the resolution authorizing the award of the contract.