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COMMISSION

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## *Memorandum*

TO: Operations Committee

DATE: July 5, 2013

FR: Executive Director

W.I. 1252

RE: FasTrak<sup>®</sup> Customer Service Center Impacts from All-Electronic Tolling (AET)

Last month, staff provided a status report on FasTrak<sup>®</sup> Customer Service Center (CSC) operations and the impact from the All Electronic Tolling (AET) program that went into full operation at the Golden Gate Bridge in March. This memorandum is to provide an update on the CSC operations in the past month. BATA and Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District (GGB) staff have been working closely with Xerox State and Local Solutions, Inc. (Xerox), the CSC contractor, to identify and correct operational issues, particularly those directly impacting customers. Though Xerox initiated numerous remedial actions in May and June, FasTrak<sup>®</sup> phone and web services to customers further degraded last month. We expect the benefits of the improvements detailed below to take effect in July.

### **Background**

On March 27, 2013 the AET program was fully launched and the toll collectors were removed from the toll booths at the Golden Gate Bridge. While April went well, FasTrak<sup>®</sup> customer phone and web services degraded in May. By June, the average wait time for calls to the CSC increased to eight minutes from under one minute on average between January and April (see Attachment A.) Causes of spiking call and web volumes included: 1) AET invoice envelopes were not easily recognized and sometimes discarded, resulting in subsequent violation notices; 2) violation notices were sent too quickly, sometimes while invoice payments were in the mail and being processed; 3) customers had more questions than anticipated and required more time with customer service representatives, generating more and longer calls; and 4) increased web demand impacted back-end systems causing web response time to slow.

Operational errors further exacerbated these initial growing pains: Xerox initially metered the outflow in invoices which resulted in a backlog, and later released 30,000 violation notices in one day. Incoming checks were not processed in a timely manner. These errors caused customer confusion and generated more calls to the service center.

### **Current Status**

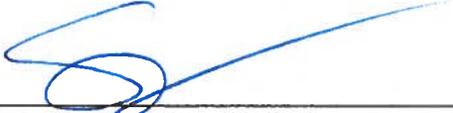
Xerox took the following actions to address operational problems and CSC web and phone capacity issues in June:

- Redesigned the invoice envelope to be more easily identifiable as a toll invoice from the Golden Gate Bridge, reducing the likelihood that customers will discard it;
- Modified the invoice format so that the information about payment options and details about automated phone and web services is more prominent, and highlighted added fees if invoice is not paid on time to motivate patrons to be timely in their payments;
- Added clearer links on the FasTrak<sup>®</sup> homepage about where to pay invoices online and added messages that invoices could be paid using the automated phone system to reduce the volume of check payments or calls to customer service representatives;
- Added night shift processors to clear a backlog of invoice check payments; incoming invoice check payments are now being processed in a timely fashion to prevent inadvertent violation notice generation;
- Added capacity to automated phone system so that callers do not get a busy message directing them to call back later; this additional capacity allows customers to access automated functions instead of waiting in the queue to talk to a service representative; and
- Rescheduled some of the system processing jobs that require more system resources to off-peak hours to avoid slowing down the account management system or the web access for customers.

Despite the actions described above, average call wait times last month increased to nearly eight minutes. In addition, increased demand has strained back-end systems causing web and phone services outages. Xerox is now taking the following additional actions:

1. Hiring customer service representatives for expanded CSC hours in the evenings and on the weekends;
2. Expanding system storage capacity which will improve system performance and ensure fast access to account data;
3. Ordering additional communication lines to expand network capacity to prevent web access problems or slow connections; and
4. Deploying automated check payment scanning to speed up time to process invoice checks.

We expect to see improvements when the upcoming activities are deployed, particularly the addition of service representatives to take more calls. We are monitoring data daily and working continuously with Xerox to ensure that they have sufficient customer service representatives on duty and that back-end systems are stable. We will provide another update at the September meeting.




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Steve Heminger

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**Attachment A**  
**FasTrak® Customer Service Center**  
**Call Answering Performance**

	<b>January</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>
<b>Total Calls</b>	125,199	114,416	146,921	167,955	183,684	183,303
<b>Calls Offered to Customer Service Representatives</b>	69,981	63,417	76,975	86,427	93,802	87,176
<b>% Answered in 1 min</b>	86%	85%	82%	84%	44%	5%
<b>% Answered in 2 min.</b>	94%	93%	92%	94%	58%	6%
<b>Abandoned Calls</b>	763	795	1,172	1,155	5,825	16,461
<b>Average Wait Time</b>	0:23	0:25	0:30	0:27	2:16	8:00
<b>Average Talk Time</b>	3:49	3:51	4:01	4:06	4:14	4:29

