

# **Red Light Camera Defense Team**

AN ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATIONS

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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The Red Light Camera Defense Team, a San Diego, California, based team of criminal defense attorneys, released a report today indicating that the red light camera enforcement program in San Diego was designed to generate revenue rather than increase public safety.

The report reveals that intersections selected for the computerized, law-enforcement devices were selected because the intersections had extremely short yellow lights and high traffic volume, not because the intersections had high accident rates. Public records confirmed that none of the intersections selected were among the top intersections in the city with high accident rates.

"The photo-enforcement program has always been about money, not safety," said attorney Arthur Tait, one of the lawyers on the defense team. "Our study of public records and more than 5,000 documents provided to us in discovery indicates that the red light camera program in San Diego actually forces people to run red lights in order to generate more revenue for the city and Lockheed Martin IMS, the private company that operates the program.

The majority of the city's photo-enforcement computers were installed at intersections with yellow light times that were shorter than 4.0 seconds, according to the report. More than half of the devices were installed at intersections with only a 3.0 second yellow light, resulting in substantial, potential revenues for the operator of the program, the report said.

One of the intersections with a 3.0 second yellow light, the intersection at North Harbor Drive and Grape Street near the city's major airport, records an average of more than 3,000 alleged violations per month, according to the report. This represents potential revenues in excess of \$400,000 per month for Lockheed Martin IMS alone, said Tait. The defense team projects that if the yellow light time at this intersection were increased by only 1.7 seconds – from 3.0 seconds to a more reasonable 4.7 seconds – the alleged violations at the intersection would decrease by more than 95%.

The report also reveals that at least two of the city's computer-enforced intersections actually had their yellow light times reduced before the devices were installed. "Shortening yellow lights to increase revenues is a danger to public safety, not a benefit," said attorney Coleen Cusack, another lawyer on the defense team.

After receiving numerous complaints from citizens, the city eventually increased yellow light times at some of the computer-enforced intersections. According to city records, most of those intersections had a substantial drop in the number of citations issued after the increase in yellow light times.

One of the computer-enforced intersections, the intersection at Grand Avenue and Mission Bay Drive, had citations drop from more than 1,000 per month to less than 50 per month when the yellow light time was increased by 1.7 seconds – from 3.0 seconds to 4.7 seconds – allowing drivers sufficient time to react.

The report also showed significant reductions in the number of violations due to increases in the yellow light duration which were shorter than 1.7 seconds. One intersection's violations dropped by more than 50% after the yellow light time was increased by less than half a second.

The defense team report comes in the middle of a moratorium on the operation of red light cameras in San Diego after city officials called for an independent audit of the program. The team's litigation efforts caused city officials to learn that at least three of the devices had been malfunctioning for more than a year after the devices were installed incorrectly. Lockheed Martin IMS apparently failed to inform police about the installation problems.

“As a result of the malfunctioning computers, hundreds of people were unfairly prosecuted and convicted based on false evidence,” said Cusack. “We are confident that our study shows the program for what it is -- privatized law enforcement operating solely for profit.”

The defense team works with experts and attorneys throughout the country to battle the ever-expanding revenue machine known as the Red Light Camera Enforcement Program. Currently, the team represents more than 400 individuals accused by the red light camera program in San Diego and other parts of California. For more information or to read the study, visit the Red Light Camera Defense Team at [www.RedLightLawyers.com](http://www.RedLightLawyers.com) or call the Team at (619) 543-1701.