

Agenda Item 4 Handout Submitted Public Comments

HRTPO Citizen Transportation Advisory Committee



October 10, 2013

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**HRTPO Public Comment**

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RE: VDOT Radio Station/VDOT Reporting of Backups at HRBT

Name: Mr. Carlton Hardy

Date: October 8, 2013

Subject: VDOT Radio Station/VDOT Reporting of Backups at HRBT

Public Comment Input (Via E-Mail)

1. Reception for the VDOT radio station, 1680 AM, is pretty good on the lower Peninsula, but not so much as you approach Ft. Eustis. On the Southside reception is often spotty, inconsistent, and difficult to understand all of which seriously negates its effectiveness – and as an AM station it is further degraded during stormy weather.
2. VDOT's recent change in measuring and reporting the length of backups at the HRBT on the Peninsula appears to be a public relations move. Peninsula residents must now add 1 mile to the reports, unless Peninsula exits have actually moved one mile closer to the HRBT entrance.
3. The lighted signs indicating travel times via I-64 vs I-664 to Virginia Beach and the OBX that were emplaced just west of exit #255 are helpful only to those entering the interstate at Ft. Eustis and points west. They provide no assistance to the bulk of the tunnel traffic entering the highway east of exit #255.
4. The VDOT radio station ALWAYS and ONLY reports westbound back-ups at the mid-town tunnel as "backed up to Redgate Ave" even though it is frequently backed up to well past Princess Anne Road, and often all the way to 21st Street, and it NEVER mentions the back up on Brambleton. Why bother with such incomplete information?

As a Peninsula resident and an active volunteer for numerous groups that meet on the Southside, I frequently travel via one of the only two ways to cross the water from the Peninsula to the Southside. My trips are at various times. Like many workers who daily commute, I really have no option about the times of my trips. Whenever feasible I tried to schedule meetings and appointments so that I could make a single trip per day, but have sometimes made the trip twice in a day. The proposed "Congestion Pricing" for tolls would not alter event times, but would cause a significant financial impact. For several months I have kept an informal diary of back up times and distances as reported on the VDOT radio station:

Day	Date	Time	HRBT West	HRBT East	Total	M&M	Notes
5/29	Wed	7:00 AM	6.75	5.75	12.5		
5/30	Thu	5:00 PM	5.25	3.5	8.75		
5/31	Fri	4:00 PM	6.75	4.75	11.5	3.75	
6/1	Sat	5:30 PM	--	5.5	5.5	2	
6/3	Mon	3:30 PM	5.25	3.25	8.5	1	
6/4	Tues	8:15 AM	--	3.25	3.25		

Day	Date	Time	HRBT West	HRBT East	Total	M&M	Notes
6/16	Sun	11:00 AM	--	8	8		
6/19	Wed	5:20 PM	11.25	4.75	16	2.75	
6/20	Thu	11:05 AM	3	3.25	6.25		
6/21	Fri	3:40 PM	7	4.75	11.75	2.75	
6/22	Sat	4:20 PM	2.5	6.75	9.25		
6/25	Mon	1:10 PM	6	5	11		
6/26	Wed	12:50 PM 5:00 PM	5 6.75	-- 4.75	5 11.5		
6/27	Thu	12:00 PM	4.25	--	4.25		
6/28	Fri	3:15 PM	6.75	5.5	12.25	5 + 2.75	
6/30	5:15 PM Sun		4.25	--	4.25		
7/2	7:30 AM Tue		10	--	10	7	
7/5	11:00 AM 4:45 PM Fri		3.25 --	3.25 3.25	6.5 3.25		
7/8	11:00 AM Mon		3.25	6.25	9.5		
7/9	4:30 PM Tue		6.25	4	10.25	2.75	
7/10	3:15 PM 3:45 PM Wed		5.25 6.75	2.5 3.25	7.5 10	-- 1	
7/11	2:00 PM Thu		6.75	3.25	10	7.5	
	Date	Time	HRBT	HRBT	Total	M&M	Notes

			West	East			
7/14	4:50 PM	Sun	-- 4				
7/16	4:30 PM	Tue	6.75	4.75	11.5	3.5	
7/17	5:00 PM	Wed	6.75	4/75	11.5	2	
7/18	4:30 PM	Thu	6.75	5.5	12.5	3.5	
7/19	10:30 AM 12:40 PM 6:00 PM	Fri	5.25 6.75 6.0	-- 3.25 5.5	5.25 10 11.5	2.75	
7/26	4:45 PM	Fri	6.75	6.75	13.5	4.25	
7/27	11:35 AM	Sat	7	4	11		Stopped west bound at Ft. Eustis with 6 mile back up
7/29	11:00 AM	Mon					12 mile back up at 238 west
8/1	3:30 PM	Thu	6.75	2.5	9/25		
8/2	3:15 PM	Fri	5.25	7.75	13		
8/4	10:45 AM	Sun	5	3.25	8.25		
8/11	10:20 AM	Sun	6.75	--	6.75		
8/14	5:00 PM	Wed	6.75	4	10.75	2.75	
8/15	4:00 PM	Thu	8	4	12		
8/22	4:00 PM	Thu	6.25	3	9.25	1.25+1.5	
Day	Date	Time	HRBT West	HRBT East	Total	M&M	Notes
9/6	3:00 PM	Fri	6.25	1.5	7/75		

9/11	10:40 AM	Wed	27	26			Truck inspections for bomb threat used James River Bridge
9/19	4:30 PM	Thu	6.25	--	6.25		
10/4	2:30 PM 4:00 PM	Fri	6.25 6.5	-- 4	6.25 10.5		

10/8/2013

Staff Response (Italicized)

Thank you for submitting your public comment to the HRTPO. We have broken your comment into sections and provided answers to each point you have raised

1. Reception for the VDOT radio station, 1680 AM, is pretty good on the lower Peninsula, but not so much as you approach Ft. Eustis. On the Southside reception is often spotty, inconsistent, and difficult to understand all of which seriously negates its effectiveness – and as an AM station it is further degraded during stormy weather.

We have forwarded this comment to Eric Stringfield of VDOT for his response.

2. VDOT's recent change in measuring and reporting the length of backups at the HRBT on the Peninsula appears to be a public relations move. Peninsula residents must now add 1 mile to the reports, unless Peninsula exits have actually moved one mile closer to the HRBT entrance.

We have forwarded this comment to Eric Stringfield of VDOT for his response.

3. The lighted signs indicating travel times via I-64 vs I-664 to Virginia Beach and the OBX that were emplaced just west of exit #255 are helpful only to those entering the interstate at Ft. Eustis and points west. They provide no assistance to the bulk of the tunnel traffic entering the highway east of exit #255.

We believe this sign was originally designed to alert and inform tourists entering/visiting the region from points north and west. We have forwarded this comment to VDOT for a more detailed response.

4. The VDOT radio station ALWAYS and ONLY reports westbound back-ups at the mid-town tunnel as "backed up to Redgate Ave" even though it is frequently backed up to well past Princess Anne Road, and often all the way to 21st Street, and it NEVER mentions the back up on Brambleton. Why bother with such incomplete information?

This is a good point and will be brought to VDOT/Elizabeth River Crossing (ERC) attention.

As a Peninsula resident and an active volunteer for numerous groups that meet on the Southside, I frequently travel via one of the only two ways to cross the water from the Peninsula to the Southside. My trips are at various times. Like many workers who daily commute, I really have no option about the times of my trips. Whenever feasible I tried to schedule meetings and appointments so that I could make a single trip per day, but have sometimes made the trip twice in a day. The proposed "Congestion Pricing" for tolls would not alter event times, but would cause a significant financial impact. For several months I have kept an informal diary of back up times and distances as reported on the VDOT radio station. See attached.

We will consider and share with VDOT while developing and completing the study.