



## **The Facts about Maryland's *SafeZones* Program**

### **Fact: SafeZones equipment is, and always has been, calibrated properly.**

*SafeZones* equipment is calibrated by the manufacturer, which is a separate entity from the vendor that operates the *SafeZone* equipment. The manufacturer is not involved in the program's daily operation. SHA has added another independent third party to review the calibration of the *SafeZones* equipment before its initial deployment and then continue to review the calibration on an annual basis. The laser equipment now undergoes calibration certifications by the manufacturer, an independent entity, MRA Digital, based in Columbia and by the operator prior to each deployment. In addition, the *SafeZones* equipment is equipped with a self check/self calibration. The operator reviews the system and should an error message display, he/she will power down the equipment and re-power. If the error message continues, the system is not deployed. This self-check is done daily.

### **Fact: The vendor is paid per shift, and not by citation.**

The law specifies that the work zone automated speed enforcement program vendor is not to be paid per citation. SHA carefully administers a contract in which Xerox is paid for each eight-hour shift deployment when a speed camera unit is deployed in Maryland work zones. The fee for the eight-hour shift remains the same regardless of citations issued.

Revenue generated by citations pays for the operation of the *SafeZones* program with the balance going to the Maryland State Police.

Traffic safety is the goal of the program. In fact, large, colorful warning signs and a digital speed trailer provide on-site, real time information that provides drivers with ample opportunity to slow down prior to entering the work zone. Since law enforcement began using speed cameras in highway construction areas, speeding violations in *SafeZones* construction sites have decreased by more than 80 percent. When the program began, approximately seven out of every 100 drivers in the *SafeZones* construction areas were exceeding the speed limit by 12 mph or more; currently less than two drivers out of every 100 are receiving citations. The lower violation rates prove people are slowing down and that the program works.

### **Fact: *SafeZones* is accurate and law enforcement reviews every citation.**

The Maryland *SafeZones* program prides itself on accuracy. Law enforcement officers from the Maryland State Police and Maryland Transportation Authority Police review every citation to

ensure fairness and accuracy. The *SafeZones* contractor is required to ensure that more than 90 percent of violations recorded are clear and valid. As of this date, more than 95 percent of violations recorded have been determined to be clear and valid. Out of nearly one million citations issued, five were determined to be in error. Three of these citations were discovered prior to being mailed and the two that were issued were refunded. The system has checks and balances built in to ensure the highest accuracy rate.

**Fact: *SafeZones* is for your safety as well as workers.**

The purpose of the *SafeZones* program is to not only safeguard workers, but also protect the drivers and passengers traveling through work zones. Nationally, in four out of five work zone crashes, it is a driver or passenger who is injured or killed. Active work zones with lane shifts, reduced lane widths, jersey barriers, uneven pavement and construction equipment leave little margin for driver error, regardless of whether workers are actively working in the work zone or not.

**Fact: *SafeZones* works.**

In the work zones where *SafeZones* is deployed, drivers are slowing down, evidenced by the drop in the percentage of citations issued at these work zones. ***In fact, there has been a more than 80 percent reduction in the violate rate of vehicles traveling above the 12 mph threshold. As a result, the majority of motorists are slowing down prior to entering the work zone.***

**Fact: Maryland *SafeZones* program is used only in highway work zones and has no involvement with local school zone enforcement programs.**

While the same Maryland law authorizes automated speed enforcement in highway work zones and school zones, the *SafeZones* program, which operates only in highway work zones, is the only program administered by the State Highway Administration, Maryland Transportation Authority and Maryland State Police. Local counties and municipalities operate school zone automated speed enforcement along local and state roads. Neither the State Highway Administration, the Maryland State Police nor the Maryland Transportation Authority Police have any involvement in the management or operation of local school zone automated speed enforcement programs.

