

Kansas Criminal Justice Information System eCitation Strategic Planning Project 10 Benefits of eCitation System

1. Streamlining the often tedious task of hand writing traffic tickets.

This is accomplished because the driver and vehicle information is automatically populated into the electronic ticket form either from scanning the bar code or magnetic stripe or from an external source such as the DMV, KBI, a central repository server, NCIC, etc. The officer no longer has to write or type in the information. Certain information can be set as defaults by the officer at the start of the officer's shift such as the officer's name, identifying number, and electronic signature; the name and location information for the Court; and the court date and time. When the officer brings up the citation form at a stop the default information is automatically inserted into the citation form. The violation location can be imputed by using drop down menus or word searches. Also, violations can be recorded using drop down menus, and when selected, the code number and fine can be auto-populated into the form. Information can also be automatically populated into the form from third-party sources, such as the stop location from an integrated GPS program. Further, third-party diagramming programs can be incorporated into the system allowing for electronic diagramming of the scene. Hand held scanners can also be used to take pictures of the driver, the vehicle, the driver's license, the vehicle's license, etc., which are automatically imputed into the computer citation file.

2. Substantially reducing the time for traffic stops.

The timeline bench mark of the Indiana State Police with their eCitation system for a traffic stop and issuance of a ticket is 4 minutes. This has reduced their average field stop time by 2/3rds. Other jurisdictions estimate an approximate 1/3rd reduction (3 minutes) in the time to make a stop and issue a citation.

3. Improving the safety for the motoring public.

Because the stop takes less time, the drivers are back on the road quicker. Since their lost time due to the stop is less, they are less likely to speed to make up their lost time. Driver's attitudes in general should improve as they will likely appreciate the shorter stop times. With drivers and vehicles spending less time stopped on the side of the road, there is less opportunity for the Officer or the stopped vehicle to be hit by approaching motorists. Because Officers will spend less time during traffic stops, they will spend more time patrolling. The increased patrolling time will reduce the overall number of traffic violations by the mere increased presence of patrolling Officers on the roadways and by an increase in traffic stops and tickets issued. Further, eCitation systems are designed to provide real-time rapid identification and background checks in the field increasing the potential for identifying dangerous drivers, catching potentially dangerous criminals, and recovering stolen vehicles.



4. Improving the safety for officers.

Officer safety is increased because they are spending less time out of their vehicles on the side of roadways exposed to being hit by approaching traffic. Further, with wireless internet connection at the stop, the Officer can seamlessly check and obtain a complete current driving and criminal history of the driver, and receive a copy of the driver's license with photograph from the DMV to compare with the actual driver. This may lead to easier apprehension of criminals with outstanding warrants, identifying identity theft, and recovering stolen vehicles.

5. Improving the legibility of tickets.

This is accomplished because the Officer is no longer handwriting the tickets and most all of the information is either auto-populated into the form or imputed through the use of drop down menus or word searches. Illegible writing and errors in written entries are a serious problem in Kansas. A significant amount of time is spent at the law enforcement, court, and prosecutor levels correcting illegible or erroneous entries. While in other states, the courts regularly dismiss illegible and erroneous citations, the Kansas Municipal and District Courts liberally allow the amending of traffic citations so very few are dismissed. However, a significant amount of time is spent correcting and amending the citations. An eCitation system should virtually eliminate this issue. Law enforcement agency staff, court staff, and prosecutor staff will not have to waste precious time dealing with illegible citations.

6. Improving the accuracy of information inserted on the ticket.

This is accomplished from the auto-population of information on the driver and vehicle from the scanned driver's license and vehicle registration or an external source such as the DMV, KBI, a central repository server, NCIC, etc. This minimizes possible errors by the officer that plague hand-written citations. For entries that must be affirmatively made by the officer, such as the location and violation(s), the eCitation systems use drop down menus which can be easily selected by a single key stroke or a word search. Location information can also be auto-populated through the use of integrated GPS software. Thus, there is very little the Officer has to actually type into the form. The systems also contain verification functions which check for errors or inconsistent entries, and if found will take the Officer to the field where the error exists, highlight the error, and will not allow the ticket to be printed until the error is corrected or overridden. This should substantially reduce the need to correct citations because of illegible or erroneous entries. Because the system automatically uploads the citation information to either a central repository or the LEA server, which then automatically uploads it to different stakeholders, such as the Courts and prosecutors, the same citation information does not have to be re-typed or re-entered into the court's and prosecutor's records management systems. This eliminates the redundancy of having to enter the same information up to three times in the LEA's RMS, the Court's RMS, and the Prosecutor's RMS, which will dramatically reduce data entry time and errors.



7. Improving the overall flow of the entire process.

In addition to the above reasons, since the tickets are transmitted wirelessly to the clerks, courts, and state shortly after they are issued, the Officers and LEAs no longer have to mail them or deliver them in person to the courts. Further, if the ticket requires supervisor review and approval, this too can be handled electronically and automatically. It also saves clerical time for the clerks, courts, and agencies because data is transferred electronically and does not have to be re-entered. Since the majority of citations are not contested, the system can be designed to notify officers of only the contested citations and begin the process for an affidavit from the officer to support the prosecution of those violations. Additionally, the system can be designed to allow a person who wants to pay their ticket or a judgment to do so through the internet using a debit or credit card. This process will save significant time by clerks who are presently required to process cash or checks received at the counter or through the mail.

8. Improving the cost effectiveness and efficiency in the administration of justice.

eCitation systems save a significant amount of Officer and administrative time formerly spent on paper filing and tracking. This, together with the savings inherent in moving away from paper documentation, should result in substantial cost savings.

9. Reducing the amount of paper used throughout the process.

eCitation systems contemplate a nearly paperless process, with the only paper document being the citation issued to the driver. The citation information is stored and processed either through a central repository server or local servers. The necessary information from the citation is electronically sent to or accessed by the separate stakeholders based on their individual needs, including the LEAs, Courts, Prosecutors, OJA, KDOR/DMV, DOT, and KBI, in a form each can read and use electronically. This eliminates the need for the separate stakeholders from having to re-type or re-enter the information into their own systems.

10. Compatibility with Stakeholders' existing computer systems, so existing systems do not have to be replaced.

The Kansas Traffic Records System (TRS) has an XML schema already built into it which allows it to communicate with computer languages which are XML compatible. XML compatibility is the current norm and is commonly used. Consequently, a central repository server should be able to communicate with and translate the computer languages of the various stakeholders using their existing computer systems and languages.

