

New camera systems are modernizing policing in Halton

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A pair of successful pilot projects undertaken by the Halton Regional Police Service are well on their

way to becoming part of daily operations.

In May 2015, Halton police installed in-car cameras in three of their cruisers to test the feasibility and effectiveness of video

monitoring of traffic infraction and interactions with officers.

Two separate in-car camera systems were tested in Oakville and Burlington with the pilot project

wrapping up in September 2016.

The technology involves installing three cameras in each cruiser - a dash cam, rear-view cam and another camera to monitor those in custody in the back of the cruiser. A microphone attached to the officer records audio.

The system is activated either manually by the officer or automatically when the cruiser's emergency lights are switched on and works on a five-second delay in order to record what the officer saw.

According to Sgt. Julie Craddock-Bijl from the office of continuous im-

provement and strategic management, the system was employed mainly in traffic offence monitoring and proved to be very successful. Nineteen officers were trained to use the system.

Out of more than 4,100 events captured by the cameras throughout the study duration, officers issued 2,750 non-criminal provincial offence tickets. There were also 17 disclosure requests for video in criminal cases such as impaired driving.

Of the non-criminal tickets handed out, Craddock-Bijl said only two to three per cent went to trial.

While statistics weren't readily available for comparison purposes, she said the camera system takes a lot of the guess work out of the equation both pre and at trial and increases conviction rates.

"We do know for the 2,700 related provincial offence notices that were written, of those only 637 actually requested disclosure on those. So what that tells us is that a lot of people are just actually paying the ticket before they ever even go to trial," said Craddock-Bijl.

"The percentage that ac-

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