

**THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES
AGENCY PERFORMANCE OVERSIGHT HEARING
ON FISCAL YEARS 2009 – 2010**



**Testimony of
Lucinda Babers, Director
Department of Motor Vehicles**

**Before the
Committee on Public Works and Transportation
Jim Graham, Chairperson**

**Wednesday, March 10, 2010
10:00 am – Room 123
The Wilson Building
Washington, DC**

Good Morning, Chairperson Graham, members of the Committee and Council, and your staffs. My name is Lucinda Babers, and I am the Director of the District's Department of Motor Vehicles.

Prior to sharing the major FY09 and year to date FY10 DMV accomplishments, I would like to thank our customers, our employees and this Committee and the rest of the Council for your support. We often rely on all of you to provide the necessary feedback that guides our decisions for service improvements. I also must extend a special thanks to the men and women in the department whose dedication and efforts make it possible for us to service the needs of the District. As I always say, I am truly humbled to be able to call such dedicated individuals my "co-workers" and thank them for all they do for Team DMV.

DMV provides service to approximately 453,000 licensed drivers/identification card holders and 269,000 registered vehicles at three service centers. We provide adjudication services and collect ticket payments for more than 2.5 million tickets each year. We also conduct over 223,000 annual vehicle inspections. DMV interacts with DC residents and non-residents, with an average of 2,700 daily customer contacts, more than almost any other government agency.

During Fiscal Year 2009 and year-to-date Fiscal Year 2010, we continued our efforts to streamline and improve service delivery. Following are the highlights of our past year – some are completed – others are in progress. Several of the initiatives were cost saving measures necessary to maintain a balanced budget. However, they are all necessary in ensuring we have the components in place to meet regulatory requirements, while providing service excellence.

For FY09, we had several major goals in our agency performance plan. The implementation of our new knowledge testing system, available in the District's seven required languages, ensured new drivers mastered the rules of the road.

We also added teen driver safety and driver education information on our website. Further, we delivered a two day customer service course, attended by over 98% of DMV employees.

We continued to rely on mail and online services to decrease in-person customer visits and improve operational efficiencies. We introduced e-mail renewal notifications, which allow us to decrease postage and reach customers through a more popular, electronic communication channel. We also implemented an online ticket customer account which allows customers to manage any tickets received and receive email alerts before ticket fines double. Our latest online enhancement was rolled out on January 31, 2010 and allows residents to change their addresses online. The increased use of mail and online services helps decrease in-person volume at our facilities; thereby, allowing capacity for those customers who truly must visit us in person to complete their transactions. In FY09, the agency received an American Association of Motor Vehicles Administrators' International Customer Service Excellence Award for our 41% increase in online service use. We also received an International Parking Institute Award in FY09 for creating a paperless ticket management and adjudication process.

Last year's biggest initiatives were the elimination of in-person registration renewals, the closure of our Brentwood Service Center and the elimination of safety inspections for passenger vehicles. The closure of the Brentwood Service Center in August 2009 resulted in FY10 savings of \$1.6M. However, in order to decrease customer volume at the remaining DMV service centers to accommodate this closure, we also eliminated in-person registration renewals in July 2009. Customers must now renew their registrations online, by mail or at a drop box in the service center. We also saved \$581,000 in FY10 by eliminating safety inspection for passenger vehicles. The savings were the result of decreased inspection station staffing and reduced operational hours.

Thus far in FY10, we installed computer kiosks in each licensing/registration service center to assist customers with online transactions and avoid the wait. We also implemented the Performance and Registration Information Systems Management (PRISM) which assists jurisdictions in identifying at-risk motor carriers with a history of safety problems. We also rolled out an online driver record transaction that allows customers to obtain their driver history online.

Additional projects we're working on this fiscal year include expansion of the Penn Branch Service Center to provide a larger customer waiting area and to relocate our Brentwood Road Test and Commercial Driver License Office. We are also working to provide a process for submitting adjudication requests online and a first level review process for adjudication requests. Additionally, we are in the process of providing management customer service training and fraudulent document training for employees who issue driver licenses and identification cards.

Prior to closing, I would like to provide the listening public with a few important DMV tips. To avoid insurance lapse fines and possible registration suspension, insurance must be maintained on all vehicles that are currently registered in the District. Therefore, prior to cancelling your insurance, please also cancel your vehicle registration by turning in your license plates to DMV. Also, if you receive a ticket which doubles (i.e., has a penalty added), and you wish to contest just the penalty amount, you should not pay the original fine amount. Payment of any portion of the ticket is an admission of liability and prevents you from adjudicating any part of the ticket. Finally, an emission inspection is still required for all passenger vehicles every two years; only the safety portion of the inspection was eliminated.

Although we have made major improvements during the past year, we are still aware that much more is needed...and yes, we have embraced the challenge. Again, we appreciate the support we've received from the Council and look

forward to continuing our efforts to improve the quality of service to the residents of the District of Columbia. We're happy to respond to any questions you may have.

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