

Questions left unanswered by the end of the Webinar were sent to panelists whom IBTTA believes the questions were directed.

Q: How do you distinguish between HOV and AVI participants?

✚ Transurban: Motorists are required to self-nominate via a switchable E-ZPass Flex transponder. VSP have equipment within their vehicles and at the toll point to support identification of motorists claiming HOV.

Q: How are the gates reversed, controled and monitored - manually, system, combination?

✚ Transurban: I answered this question

Q: Can you comment on percentage of HOT traffic on 495 and 95 that are commuters? Does that affect confusion and/or violation rates?

✚ Transurban: I answered this question

Q: please explain snow removal on the 495 lanes.

✚ Transurban: I answered this question

Q: What effective methods are used to enforce HOV participation?

✚ Transurban: See my response to question #2

Q: What is the % of vehicles entering the express lanes without a transponder? and what % of vehicles with tags violating the occupancy rule?

✚ Transurban: Approximately 5% of traffic.

✚ MdTA: Currently, 8% of vehicles enter the I-95 ETLs without a transponder. We do not have an occupancy rule on the ETLs.

Q: Have you looked at before-and-after congestion stats to assess how well express lanes mitigate congestion?

✚ MdTA: We are in the middle of the before - after study right now.

Q: How long was needed for complete end to end testing prior to opening?

✚ MdTA: 7 – 10 days.

Q: What percentage of customers complain they were not charged the displayed rate?

✚ MdTA: No significant complaints

Q: Is there a standard spec the plastic channelizing posts must meet? How many hits? How do you keep them white? Do you have any issues with lane diving and drivers running over them?

✚ Transurban: The product was agreed with VDOT during the design period. They are generally not hit with the exception of accidents and snow removal. Reflectivity is important so we replace the posts regularly. Generally speaking, no issues with motorists inadvertently hitting them (as noted, almost exclusively incident-based).

Q: What specific other types of analysis is recommended for dynamic pricing?

✚ MdTA: Analysis of historical traffic volumes – look at day-to-day variations, peak hours, etc.; conduct T&R projections; financial affordability analysis.

Q: How soon before the lanes opened did you begin marketing the facility?

✚ MdTA: Our marketing/outreach campaign started November 17, 2014, and the ETL opened on December 6, 2014.

Q: What is spacing of pylons on 495 in Virginia? were other spacings considered?

✚ Transurban: Spacing is approximately 8 feet. Compliance is very strong and we believe we could push it out if necessary.

Q: Can I ask what percentage of video toll revenue you can actually collect?

✚ MdTA: In 2014, we had a collection rate of 65%.

Q: Any thoughts on why the weekend express lane use is so far above the forecast?

✚ MdTA: We expected with the absence of congestion in the GP lanes on weekends, more customers would choose to use the GP lanes. However, the opposite has happened and we believe that is due to a combination of things: more reliable travel times – customers are taking advantage of this benefit even on weekends; reduced rates on weekends; higher volumes of out-of-state vehicles over the weekends.

Q: What is the financial impact of having to close the N or S bound ETLs for maintenance and are you considering retrofitting the walkway enclosure, if possible?

✚ MdTA: The financial impact is minimized by implementing the closures during our nighttime periods (generally, between 11pm – 4am). We also try to piggyback on roadway maintenance closures, e.g., pavement repair, re-striping, etc. We are looking now at installing gates to be able to close the ETLs more efficiently.

Q: How do you prepare and implement for homeland security issues?

✚ MDTA: The MDTA & State police and MDTA's Tunnel and Northern Region maintenance staff will respond to homeland security issues. The MDTA will call upon the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), local medical, fire and rescue and HAZMAT control/containment resources as needed. All these agencies were engaged during the design & construction of the ETLs and participated in tabletop and modified functional exercises. There are also incident management plan for diverting traffic in the event of any disruptions on the facility. In addition, our AOC uses an automated Incident Detection system (IDS) and visually monitors the 21 CCTV cameras placed strategically along the roadway to identify and respond to traffic disruptions and to assist with facility security.

Q: For planning purposes, is there an equation or model for determining future distribution of traffic between the general purpose lanes and HOV lanes?

✚ MDTA: There are no HOV lanes on the ETLs

Q: Is there any proof that a buffer wider than 4 ft would be safer?

✚ Transurban: No "proof", but fewer collisions from the general lanes would end up on the Express Lanes with a wider buffer.

Q: For HOV lanes converted to HOT lanes, did you need federal approval to require HOV users to have a tag?

✚ Transurban: I don't believe so.

Q: Do any of the presenters enforce speed

✚ MDTA: ETLs – yes, the speed limit is 60mph and it is enforced by MDTAP and Maryland State Police patrols.