

On-Board Equipment Installation Procedures Nation Evaluation of a Mileage-Based Road User Charge

Step 1

Establish installation time frame and location—The selected equipment vendor uses one of its national installation contractors to install the on-board equipment in each regional site. Approximately six weeks prior to the installation in a particular region, the vendor provides the Public Policy Center (PPC) with the master schedule that provides the locations and times for installation.

Step 2

Select and train participants—As summarized in the companion document titled “Participant Recruitment Procedures,” 200 participants are selected in each of the six national evaluation sites. Participants attend a training session at which a schedule for having the necessary on-board equipment installed is provided. At this time, participants sign up for a specific date and time to take their vehicle to a designated facility for equipment installation. Participants are reminded prior to their scheduled installation time via email, postcards, and/or courtesy calls.

Step 3

Relay vehicle information—The PPC provides a completed schedule by location that contains the necessary vehicle information for the installation technicians. This information allows the on-board computers to be properly configured for the specific make, model, and year of vehicle scheduled for an installation at a particular date and time. Installation firms have no direct contact with participants; they only install and remove the equipment.

Step 4

Install units—Installation time is anticipated to be less than one hour. At the time of the installation, participants are provided contact information to enable them to reach appropriate staff at the PPC in the event that the on-board equipment appears to malfunction or if questions arise regarding operating the unit or related procedures. A financial incentive of \$200 is provided to reduce the problem of potential participants dropping out before the installation can be carried out. Dropping out at this stage has been a problem for other studies involving the need for participants to take their vehicles to a designated facility (e.g., the Puget Sound pricing study).

Step 5

Periodic follow-up—In the course of completing their bi-monthly survey questionnaires, participants are afforded an opportunity to provide feedback regarding the operation and general performance of the on-board equipment installed in their vehicles.

Step 6

Removal of on-board equipment—PPC staff contacts participants approximately two weeks prior to the end of their involvement in field-testing to schedule a time and

location for removal of the equipment. Several days prior to the scheduled removal, PPC staff reminds participants of their scheduled appointments via email messages, postcards, and/or courtesy calls.

Actual removal of the on-board equipment generally takes less than one hour. Participants are provided a financial incentive to bring their vehicle to the designated facility at their scheduled time. Specifically, a one-time payment of \$250 is made upon the removal of the equipment. The importance of this incentive is that the prototype equipment is quite valuable, and the incentive greatly reduced the possibility that participants neglect to have this equipment removed.

At the end of the first year of field testing, the removed equipment is reconfigured with technological updates developed during the course of the first year, and the equipment is reconfigured as necessary for the specific make, model, and year in which it is installed for the second year of field-testing. At the end of the second year, the removed equipment is returned to the vendor, which evaluates it and provides the PPC team with its assessment of the equipment and how it could be improved for more widespread application in the future.