

Jane's

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Energy-saving system powers fleet of cars

System has been developed to meet demands from police fleet managers for greater fuel efficiency

DALLAS Police Department (DPD) is using a power management storage system to power the electrical systems in their fleet cars during stops without having to leave the engine running.

The system has been developed to meet demands from police fleet managers for greater fuel efficiency and lower emissions. According to vehicle manufacturers, an average of one US gallon (approximately 3.8 l) of fuel is burned every hour that a vehicle's engine idles. In addition, fleet managers are concerned about wear and tear to car batteries.

Since March 2009, DPD has used the Independence Package Law Enforcement Series system, which operates a car's electrical system while the engine is turned off.

The system is mounted in the boot of the car and connects to



KIT POWER: The storage system is mounted in the boot of the police car

its alternator, where it draws and stores excess power during the car's normal operation. When the officer turns off the engine, the system engages and provides power to the vehicle's electrical system.

The system can provide power for

at least four hours while the engine is off. When the engine is restarted, the system automatically begins recharging. During one month of use, DPD found that, on average, it relied on the system for 4.85 hours of power per day. Normally, this power

would have been generated by the car's petrol engine.

Lt Dale Barnard, fleet manager for the force, said: 'The system has prevented the patrol car from having a dead battery and has allowed the officers to run their equipment without the engine running.'

Using the system, the DPD saved more than 3.5 gallons (13.24 l) of petrol a day, saving more than \$2,500 in fuel costs for each car using the system, annually. The police department was also able to eliminate 97 lbs (44 kg) a day of carbon dioxide emissions. This translates to an annual reduction of more than 30,000 lbs (13,636 kg) of carbon dioxide for every police cruiser.

The system has been developed by Energy Xtreme and the company says a number of other law enforcement agencies are using the system.

Austin officers catch incidents on camera

PATROL officers in Austin, Texas, have conducted trials with nine different body-worn video camera systems with a view to adopting the technology for routine use.

The nine different models that have been assessed by officers from the Austin Police Department (APD) were supplied by four different vendors: CopVu from WatchGuard, VieVu, First Vu from Digital Ally and the Taser Axon system.

The units being tested by APD officers cost between \$800 and \$3500. During trials that started in April, nine different officers each wore one of the models during a test period lasting between 30 and 60 days.

Art Acevedo, APD chief of police, believes the body-worn cameras will help provide evidence, accountability, and transparency. He said: 'We want to be able to fill in the blanks and capture the



LENS TEST: During the police trials nine different models were used

entire incident in the future; from what led to the contact, to what happened in the contact, to after contact.'

Acevedo could not give a timetable for when the department would start using the cameras permanently, but said he preferred to wait until the technology got better and price dropped. The chief did add that he believed all

officers at all major departments would be wearing cameras in the next five to seven years.

Officers in the state's Lakeway Police Department are also testing body-worn video camera systems. The department is considering using the body-worn cameras instead of replacing dashboard cameras already fitted in patrol vehicles.

Force raises the Barre on record management

WILKES-BARRE City Police Department in Pennsylvania is to install a new electronic records management system supplied by Total Enforcement.

The mayor of Wilkes-Barre, Tom Leighton, said the new system would allow officers to write and access reports and search city databases of problem properties directly from their patrol cars.

In addition to being able to write and access reports from their vehicles on computers, officers will be able to check the status of cases and query addresses. The system will help officers share information with code enforcement and the community action team on nuisance properties.