

## All Electronic Tolling Briefing Elected Officials Briefing # 5

Dear Elected Official,

We are happy to provide this key update report on the implementation status of All Electronic Tolling.

The toll demolition and roadway reconstruction project continues to trend on or ahead of schedule at all 23 toll locations. Stage 1 construction was completed well ahead of the scheduled completion date of November 22<sup>nd</sup> allowing for less congested travel than normal during the Thanksgiving holiday.

The next phase of construction involves work on the outside of the former toll plazas. This will involve demolishing the toll administration buildings and any remaining toll plazas, building the final roadway with drainage work, installation of catch basins, lighting, guardrail, and installing permanent pavement. This work will occur throughout the winter, as weather permits. Crews will also be working under more traditional construction hours, rather than the 24/7 schedule that was part of the first phase. All locations are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2017, but it is our goal to finish sooner. The more cooperative the weather is this winter, the faster construction will be completed.

On the administrative side, the first series of Pay By Plate invoices were mailed to customers starting on November 15<sup>th</sup>. We are tracking the payment rate on these invoices, and also the number of customers who are taking advantage of the Pay By Plate grace period program by converting their bill to E-ZPassMA. The customer service centers are fully staffed to handle the anticipated increase in customer inquiries. MassDOT has also surpassed the 3 million transponder milestone, with 3,051,886 Massachusetts E-ZPass transponders now in circulation.

Lastly, we are beginning to see the benefits of electronic tolling, including fewer rear-end collisions at the former toll plazas, improved air quality, and reduced traffic congestion. To that last point, we have included a comparison of travel time data for pre and post construction activities to quantitatively assess the impact of removing the toll plazas.

### All Electronic Tolling Billing and E-ZPass Distribution:

On Friday at 10:06 p.m., Massachusetts officially became a cash-free toll state when All Electronic Tolling was officially activated.

- From that time until December 4<sup>th</sup>, the overhead gantries have registered 50.3 million transactions.
  - 83% of the transactions were automatically registered as E-ZPass, and following manual image review this percentage rose to approximately 86% which puts MassDOT above its goal of 85% E-ZPass market share.

### Beginning on November 15<sup>th</sup> MassDOT began mailing the first series of Pay By Plate invoices.

- From the inception of the program to December 5<sup>th</sup>, we have mailed 589,787 invoices.
- Approximately 57% of these invoices have been paid, which is a relatively high percentage considering how new the program is and that this is the first round of invoices. As a reminder, MassDOT will mail 4 invoices before a hold is placed on registration or license renewal.

MassDOT reminds customers that the Pay By Plate “grace period” is in effect for drivers who do not have an active transponder. After receiving that Pay By Plate bill, if a customer pays their invoice in full and opens an E-ZPass account, they will receive an automatic credit on their new E-ZPass account equal to the difference between the Pay By Plate rate and E-ZPass MA rate.

For the first 6 months, this program will be offered on any Pay By Plate bill a customer receives, and then after 6 months, on the first Pay By Plate bill a new customer receives.

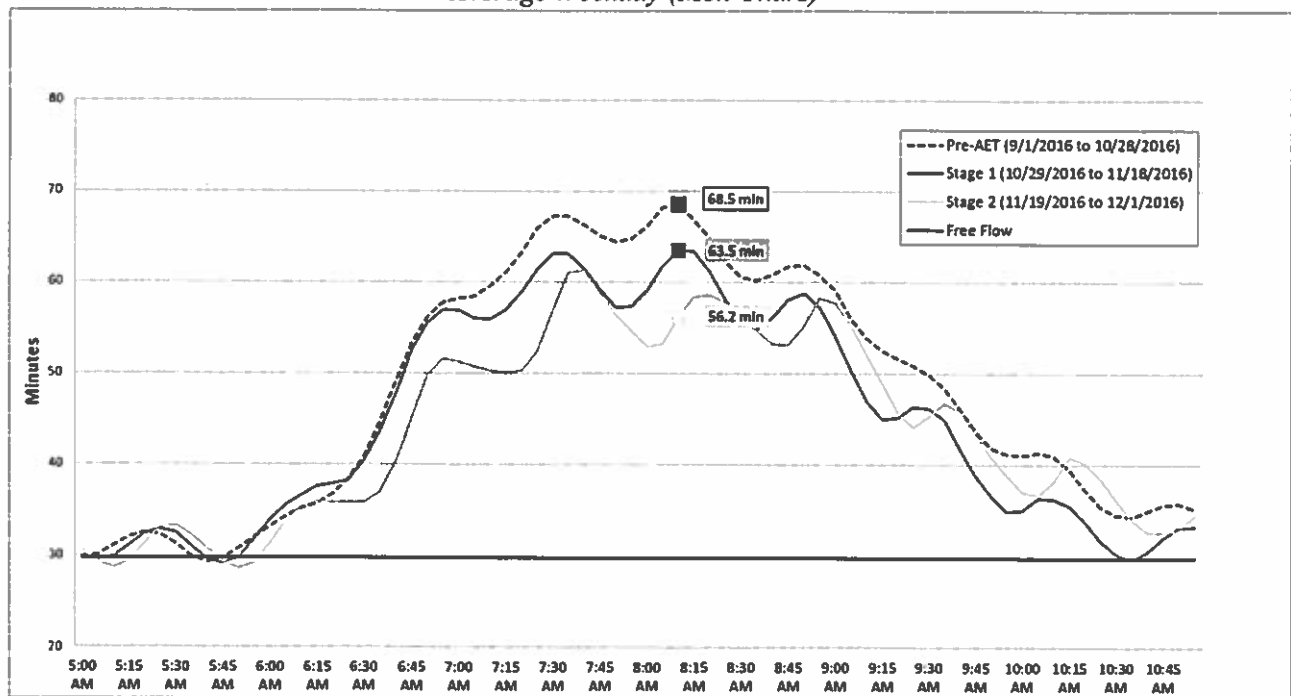
- Since the inception of the program, there have been 502 Pay By Plate conversions. This may indicate that the vast majority of customers who want E-ZPass already have one. That said, MassDOT will continue to make E-ZPass readily available to any customer who wants to sign up.
- MassDOT reminds customers that the easiest way to order a transponder or take advantage of the grace period is by going online to [www.ezdrivema.com](http://www.ezdrivema.com) or by calling the service center at 1-877-627-7745.

**Traffic Impacts:**

There were no major traffic disturbances due to the work zones during the first phase of construction, and MassDOT continues to monitor congestion and volume throughout the winter. .

It is important to note that the elimination of the toll plazas will not alleviate congestion associated with traffic volume at locations away from the former toll plazas, but we are already seeing some of the benefits of the project. The graph below shows how there has been a significant time savings from the demolition of the toll plazas compared to the pre-AET data. This time savings was up to 12.3 minutes when you compare Pre-AET to Stage 2 construction during the morning peak period.

*Eastbound: I-495/I-90 to I-90 “boat section” in South Boston  
Pre-AET vs. Stage 1 vs. Stage 2  
Average Weekday (Mon-Thurs)*



### **Next Steps:**

As progress continues, MassDOT will continue to provide briefings on a monthly basis with key updates on construction and program administration. We will also provide you with data in an effort to quantify the impact of removing the toll booths on congestion.

### **Stay Informed**

Follow @MassDOT on Twitter for updates. MassDOT implemented [AETinfo@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:AETinfo@dot.state.ma.us) as a resource for constituents with any questions comments or concerns related to construction. For constituents with E-ZPass or Pay By Plate billing questions, please contact the EZDriveMA hotline or EZDriveMA website below. As always, please reach out to your Legislative Liaison or Community Affairs Liaison for immediate assistance. If there is information not contained in this briefing that you would like reported on, please let us know.

Thank you again for your interest in this project.

Respectfully submitted.