

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE May 7, 2021

Honorable Members of the Public Safety Committee

TO Jennifer Staubach Gates (Chair), Lee Kleinman (Vice Chair), Carolyn King Arnold, Adam Bazaldua, David Blewett, Adam McGough, Adam Medrano, Cara Mendelsohn, Casey Thomas.

SUBJECT **Dallas Fire-Rescue's Blocker Pilot Program**

The pilot program to utilize "Blocker" apparatus on freeway incidents was instituted by Dallas Fire-Rescue on April 1, 2019. The trial was designed to mitigate the danger to personnel and equipment in areas identified as high-risk locations for fire apparatus being struck. Blocker 1, running out of Station 43 (2844 Lombardy Ln.), has responded to incidents on I-35, north and south bound, from West Mockingbird Lane up to I-635. Blocker 2, currently running out of Station 44 (2025 Lagow St.), has responded to incidents on I-30, east and west bound, from 1st Avenue to Jim Miller Road.

Blockers are out of service Fire Engines that have been retrofitted with safety signage and arrow boards for traffic control and filled with sand for collision absorption. These engines would ordinarily go to auction for a normal return of \$2000 - \$3000. The conversion cost for an engine to be retrofitted to a Blocker is approximately \$9500. These Blockers protect first responders and civilians on highway accident scenes, as well as DFR and DPD apparatus.

Since its inception, the Blocker Program has been extremely successful in fulfilling stated goals by effectively protecting responders and apparatus present at highway incidents. From April 1, 2019 to May 2, 2021, Blockers have been struck 12 times. When present, Blockers have absorbed 100% of collisions that have occurred at highway emergency incident scenes. By comparison, during that same time, 33 DFR and 52 DPD apparatus have been struck with no Blocker present.

The pilot program has been viewed as a successful initiative within the department. Expectations have been exceeded, with members reporting feeling safer on scene. We look forward to much more anticipated success with the planned expansion of the DFR Blocker Program and welcome a partnership with DPD to offer wider protection city wide. We appreciate our city officials working with us to provide Dallas with the kind of service and safety it deserves.

Jon Fortune
Assistant City Manager

cc: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager
Chris Caso, City Attorney
Mark Swann, City Auditor
Biliera Johnson, City Secretary
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge
Kimberly Bizzor Tolbert, Chief of Staff to the City Manager

Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager
Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager
Dr. Eric A. Johnson, Chief of Economic Development and Neighborhood Services
M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer
M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira, Chief of Equity, and Inclusion
Directors and Assistant Directors