



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

## URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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DOT -- 7371  
Phone: (202) 426-4043

The Department of Transportation today awarded the second in a series of contracts to test advanced methods of electronically locating and tracking transit vehicles operating in urban areas.

The \$188,299 contract, to be administered by the Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA), was awarded to the Cubic Corporation of San Diego, California.

Cubic will conduct experiments to determine the effectiveness of a technique known as "radio-frequency trilateration" when it is used to track the movements of a vehicle through city streets. The technique locates a vehicle by measuring the time it takes for radio waves emitted by the vehicle to reach certain measurement points. A computer translates the arrival times to distances and plots the vehicle's position.

The Cubic contract is part of an UMTA development program designed to enable bus companies to run their fleet more effectively by providing continual information on the whereabouts of buses and related vehicles. A vehicle tracking system allows bus dispatchers to maintain schedules, control the separation between buses, handle fluctuations in passenger demand and respond rapidly to all types of emergencies.

This UMTA tracking program began over two years ago in Chicago, where one form of bus-monitoring actually is in experimental operation today. The present series of tests, of which the Cubic experiment is one, will evaluate additional techniques, such as radio-frequency trilateration.

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A previous contract, awarded last month to the Teledyne Systems Company of Northridge California, provides for testing the feasibility of using an existing LORAN radio navigation system for vehicle tracking.

While the UMTA test program is aimed at improving bus transit in particular, there are many other possible potential users of a vehicle tracking system. Among them are law-enforcement agencies, taxi fleets, delivery and service trucks, fire and rescue vehicles, boats, and even private vehicles whose owners may want their cars' positions in case of theft or other emergency circumstances.

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For further information, contact the UMTA Office of Public Affairs at (202) 426-4043.