



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

NEWS

URBAN MASS TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATION

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

The \$202,823 contract, signed by the Department's Urban Mass Transportation Administration, was awarded to the RCA Corporation of Camden, New Jersey. RCA will conduct tests to determine the effectiveness of a "proximity signpost" technique for tracking the movements of vehicles through city streets.

The signpost technique utilizes miniaturized low-power, low cost transmitters placed in signposts at intersections and other selected points. Each signpost broadcasts a unique code identifying that specific point. As a bus or other "signpost" vehicle passes within range of a transmitter, a small receiver on the vehicle picks up and stores the code number of that signpost transmitter until it passes within range of another signpost and stores a new number.

Wherever "questioned" by the radio of a central control center, the "signpost" vehicle equipment automatically replies with the code of the last signpost passed and the vehicle's own identity number. A computer stores this data and can locate any vehicle to within several hundred feet of its true position on any "signpost" street.

The RCA contract is part of an UMTA program aimed at helping bus and other vehicle fleet operators provide better service to the rider and utilize their fleets more effectively. Automatic Vehicle Monitoring (AVM), as the program is called, will help keep buses on schedule,

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assist in handling changes in passenger demand and enable help to be dispatched instantly to a bus with mechanical or bus driver trouble.

Other applications of AVM are expected to assist in the dispatching of police cars, taxi fleets and other public service and safety vehicles.

Previous AVM contracts have been awarded to the Teledyne Systems Company of Northridge, California, and to the Cubic Corporation of San Diego, California, to test other techniques of vehicle tracking.

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