

NEW BUSINESS

9(a)

March 18, 2013

Subject: Fine for Blocking Intersections

Chair Stintz

One of my recurring observations of surface transit operations is the continual blocking of intersections by cars stuck in intersection after the light turns red particularly in the downtown core.

Brian Leck TTC General Counsel kindly did some research as to the fine for blocking an intersection in Toronto and in other North American cities. The result of his departments work is attached.

The current fine in Toronto is only \$40 for blocking an intersection which is very small for a traffic offense that inconveniences 1,000's of TTC customers. This is a trivial fine that based on my observations has very little deterrence impact. Comparable fines in other large US cities are \$75-150. Although there are many jurisdictions in Canada with comparably low fines the cities affected by these fines do not have the extensive surface transit operations that Toronto does that are unseparated from traffic.

It is my opinion that one of our priorities as a Board should be to try to do whatever possible to improve surface transit and reduce travel times.

Recommendation:

1. The Commission request that TTC staff review this matter and report back to the Commission's April meeting with staff recommendations in this regard.

Respectfully

Alan Heisey

Attachment

Re: Set Fine for Blocking Intersections in other Major Cities in North American and Europe

Introduction – Blocking Intersections in Toronto

The offence of blocking an intersection is not an offence that is found within Ontario's *Highway Traffic Act*.¹ As a result, the Ontario Court of Justice schedule that lists the set fine amounts for each individual *HTA* offence does not have a set fine listed for blocking an intersection.²

Although there is no specific *HTA* offence for blocking an intersection, the *HTA* does provide municipalities the authority to create a by-law that prohibits the act of blocking an intersection.³ The City of Toronto established a by-law prohibiting the act of blocking an intersection under By-law No. 88-82, being a by-law "To prohibit the blockage of signalized intersections in the Metropolitan Toronto Area."⁴ Although there is no online version of By-law No. 88-82 (the City of Toronto's website only has by-laws listed as far back as 1998), the City of Toronto By-Law No. 1409-2011 confirms that By-law No. 88-82 is still under effect in Toronto.⁵

The exact wording of By-Law No. 88-82 states that "The operator of a motor vehicle who enters an intersection on a green light and subsequently fails to clear his or her motor vehicle from the intersection upon the traffic signal turning red thereby preventing traffic proceeding from an opposing direction, commits an offence that carries a minimum fine of \$40."⁶

It therefore appears that the act of blocking an intersection in Toronto results in a fine within the \$40.00 range, as provided by the City of Toronto By-Law No. 88-82.

Blocking Intersections in Other Jurisdictions

After conducting a search on Google for a number of hours, I managed to find the set fine for blocking an intersection within 16 other jurisdictions. These other jurisdictions consisted of other Canadian cities, American states, American cities, and the country of New Zealand. The country of New Zealand was the only country outside of North America that I was able to find the set fine listed. After examining the set fines within the 16 other jurisdictions that I managed to find, it is evident that the set fine for blocking intersections within other jurisdictions ranges between \$36.00 and \$150.00. Please refer to the table on the next page in order to view the set fines within other jurisdictions.

Blocking Intersection Fines in other Jurisdictions

¹R.S.O. 1990, Ch. H.8 ["*HTA*"].

²*Ibid*, Sch. 43.

³*Ibid*, s. 145.

⁴City of Toronto By-Law 1409-2011, s. 950-1202.

⁵ *Ibid*.

⁶InsideToronto.com, "Blocking intersections causes gridlock", March 8, 2007. [<http://www.insidetoronto.com/news-story/7034-blocking-intersections-causes-gridlock/>].

City/Province /State	Set Fine	Source
Boston, Massachusetts	\$150.00 (as of 2012)	http://bostinno.com/2012/08/29/boston-police-crackdown-on-drivers/
Country of New Zealand	\$150.00 (as of 2012)	http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/1999/0099/latest/whole.html
Minneapolis, Minnesota	\$128.00 (as of 2011)	http://www.startribune.com/local/west/113820509.html?refer=y
State of Connecticut	\$117.00 (as of 2012)	http://www.jud.ct.gov/Publications/Infractions/infractions.pdf
New York, New York	\$115.00 (as of 2009)	http://www.nytrafficticket.com/Obstructing_Intersection/
Knoxville, Tennessee	\$111.50 (as of 2013)	http://www.cityofknoxville.org/citycourt/fines.asp
San Francisco, California	\$90.00 (as of 2012)	http://www.google.ca/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=blocking%20intersection%20fine%20amount&source=web&cd=15&cad=rja&ved=0CEsQFjAEOAo&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.sfmta.com%2Fcms%2Fpnews%2Fdocuments%2FaccParkingandTrafficFeeFarFineIncreaseListJuly2011110509rev.pdf&ei=haAnUcrXMI_6qAGLo4FA&usq=AFQjCNEEFkzdsC7Nr7IBWVVICkyRpgZ-Lw&bvm=bv.42768644,d.aWM
Branson, Missouri	\$90.00 (as of 2009)	http://www.cityofbranson.org/court/index.htm
Chicago, Illinois	\$75.00 (as of 2013)	http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/fin/supp_info/revenue/parking_meter_information/parking_and_standingviolations.html
Ottawa, Ontario	\$75.00 (as of 2010)	http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/story/2010/10/06/ottawa-police-intersections.html
State of Maryland	\$70.00 (as of 2012)	http://www.courts.state.md.us/district/forms/criminal/dccr090.pdf
District of Columbia	\$45.00 (as of 2012)	http://www.lefande.com/COLLATERAL2012.pdf
Richmond, Virginia	\$40.00 (as of 2011)	http://www.richmondgov.com/Parking/ParkingInformation.aspx
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan	\$40.00 (as of 2012)	http://www.saskatoon.ca/DEPARTMENTS/City%20Clerks%20Office/Documents/bylaws/7200.pdf
Province of British Columbia	\$40.00 (as of 2012)	http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/fr eside/89_97_04
Calgary, Alberta	\$36.00 (as of 2011)	https://www.calgaryparking.com/c/document_library/get_file?p_l_id=85944&folderId=139075&name=DLFE-6703.pdf