



Robert E. Antonacci II, CPA  
Comptroller

COUNTY OF ONONDAGA

Office of the  
*County Comptroller*

John H. Mulroy Civic Center, 14th Floor  
421 Montgomery Street  
Syracuse, New York 13202-2998  
(315) 435-2130 • Fax (315) 435-2250  
[www.ongov.net](http://www.ongov.net)

James V. Maturo  
Deputy Comptroller/Accounting

Philip M. Britt  
Deputy Comptroller/Audit

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The Honorable County Executive  
The Honorable Members of the County Legislature  
The Honorable District Attorney  
The Honorable Onondaga County Sheriff  
The Chief Fiscal Officer  
Department Heads

Enclosed is our report on Take Home Vehicles throughout Onondaga County Government.

Our audit focused on take home vehicles in several County departments attempting to identify the number of take home vehicles, the ongoing maintenance of the take home vehicle fleet, identifying policies and procedures for assignment of take home vehicles and the rationale and reasons take home vehicles are used by various individuals and departments. While there is no standard county-wide policy on take home vehicles, we believe take home vehicles are best managed on a department by department basis because each department and function has unique characteristics and job specification.

With 139 take home vehicles spattered across County government there is opportunity for cost savings. However, as 101 of the vehicles are subject to collective bargaining agreements, the County's ability to manage its affairs and adjust take home vehicles may be limited by these collective bargaining agreements.

However, we believe each department should undertake an analysis evaluating per-diem mileage reimbursement at IRS stated rates to employees using their own personal vehicles as opposed to being assigned a county-owned vehicle. As our report establishes in its schedules, there are many instances where reimbursing an employee the standard IRS mileage rate would be much less expensive than assigning a take home vehicle. Also, we question whether various job titles need a take home vehicle to return to the place of employment. Management of each department should identify which vehicles are absolutely necessary for remote access, off-site situations, as opposed to returning to the department or building where the employee's main job functions are situated.

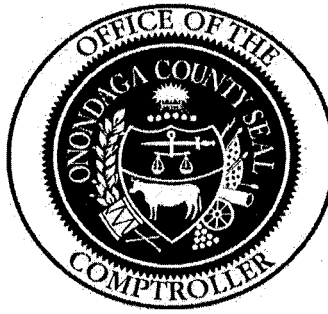
In closing, there definitely appears to be take home vehicles which are substituting for the employees own personal commute and should be eliminated. Only take home vehicles necessary to respond to emergency situations at sites not within or on County property or buildings should be used by employees.

Our office will endeavor to work with management to evaluate a per-diem mileage reimbursement program versus the current take home vehicle cost structure.

If indeed take home vehicles are a past practice or bargained for benefit subject of collective bargaining, now is the time to evaluate this practice as some contracts are in the negotiation process.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Antonacci II, CPA



**Introduction**

The Office of the Onondaga County Comptroller-Audit Division (Audit) conducted an audit of the usage of take-home vehicles by various Departments of the Onondaga County government. The following Onondaga County Departments utilize the indicated number of take-home vehicles and have available the indicated number of other vehicles utilized for County government operations:

Department	Number of Take-Home Vehicles	Number of Other Vehicles	Total Number of Vehicles
Transportation	10	18	28
Facilities	1	15	16
Water Environment Protection	24	103	127
Health	0	27	27
Corrections	1	11	12
District Attorney	19	10	29
Emergency Management	3	6	9
Parks	0	53	53
Metro Water Board	2	12	14
Sheriff's Office	76	119	195
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>510</b>

Take-home vehicles are Onondaga County owned vehicles utilized for County government operations that are allowed to be utilized by the County employees assigned to specific vehicles during their off-duty hours.

The primary reason offered for these take-home vehicles being assigned to certain County employees is to allow them quick access to and the necessary equipment available to them in order to properly respond to emergency situations during their off-duty hours. All other vehicles owned by Onondaga County aren't normally brought home by County employees during their off-duty hours and are only utilized by County employees during their normal work hours with the County.

## Collective Bargaining

Of the 136 take-home vehicles utilized by County employees, 101 of them were assigned to employees covered by collective bargaining agreements with the employees' labor unions. With some noted exceptions, collective bargaining negotiations may be required before 101 of these vehicles can be taken away or by reassignment or retirement of the individual assigned to the vehicle. (See attached award regarding the Sheriff's Office).

The following table summarizes the number of take-home vehicles, by Department, that may be subject to collective bargaining negotiations prior to elimination:

Department	Number of Non-Union Take-Home Vehicles	Number of Union Take-Home Vehicles	Total Number of Take-Home Vehicles
Transportation	3	7	10
Facilities	0	1	1
Water Environment Protection	0	24	24
Corrections	1	0	1
District Attorney	19	0	19
Emergency Management	3	0	3
Metro Water Board	2	0	2
Sheriff's Office	7	69	76
Total	35	101	136

## Methodology

Audit utilized the following information during the process of conducting this audit:

- Overtime payroll information from the Kronos software payroll system (Kronos) utilized to track County employee emergency situation incidents during 2013.
- Vehicle mileage, gasoline and maintenance costs for 2013 obtained from Department of Emergency Management (EM), Department of Transportation (DOT), Metro Water Board (MWB) and Water Environment Protection Department (WEP) personnel. Due to the fact that WEP provides gasoline for and maintains many of the other departments' vehicles other than DOT, the information provided by WEP pertained to all of the County departments' vehicles except the DOT.
- Total County equipment and vehicle listing provided by the County Fleet Manager employed by WEP.
- Vehicle mileage, justification and emergency situation accumulation information for 2013 provided by the Sheriff's Office relating to County vehicles utilized by the Sheriff's Office, and provided by EM personnel relating to County vehicles utilized by EM.

- Vehicle mileage and gasoline cost information provided by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
- Documented written policies, procedures and directives provided by some of the County departments.

## **Department of Transportation**

The methodology used to track DOT employees' usage of take-home vehicles for response purposes during their off-duty hours is based upon DOT's employees with take-home vehicles claiming overtime pay or comp time earned through Kronos. Audit identified the number of occurrences the employee exceeded their normally scheduled number of work hours on a particular day. Audit then identified the number of these instances in which the employee either showed up significantly before their start time or worked on a scheduled day off or holiday. This number was determined to be the total number of incidents of response by DOT employees stated in this report. During 2013, the 11 DOT employees with take-home vehicles responded to a total of 507 response incidents necessitating the use of their take-home vehicles during off-duty hours. One of the take-home vehicles, designated to the 'On Call Person', was assigned to 7 different DOT employees during various time periods in 2013 in which these individuals were scheduled to be 'on call' during their off-duty hours. All 7 of these 'on call' DOT employees were able to be tracked to a response situation as described above and are treated as 1 individual for purposes of this report.

The justification given by DOT for these 11 employees having take-home vehicles is that each of these employees needs quick access to a properly equipped vehicle in order to respond to an emergency situation needing the attention of DOT personnel. The following equipment is needed by DOT personnel in order to respond to emergency situations:

- Shovel and broom
- Oil Dry
- Flares
- First Aid Kit
- Portable lighting
- Camera
- Signal repair parts and Tools

Of the 10 take-home vehicles assigned to DOT, seven are subject to a collective bargaining agreement with the employees' labor union.

The 10 take-home vehicles assigned to the DOT were driven a total of 211,396 miles, consumed \$40,743.79 of gasoline, and cost \$21,843.18 to maintain during 2013.

Department/ Job Title	Status	Union	Year	Vehicle	Vehicle #	2013	2013	2013	# of 2013
		Code		Make/ Model		Miles	Gallons \$	Maint. \$	
Highway Maint. Supervisor	Sole User	M/C	2010	Ford Explorer	6	24,920	4,396.00	3,444.86	58
Section Crew Leader	Shared User	CSEA	2012	Ford F-150	72	10,398	2,224.19	1,537.34	46
Section Crew Leader	Shared User	CSEA	2012	Shares above vehicle					37
Section Crew Leader	Sole User	CSEA	2012	Ford F-150	67	34,472	5,965.91	2,039.80	70
Section Crew Leader	Sole User	CSEA	2012	Ford F-150	69	36,186	7,404.35	1,778.13	87
Highway Maint. Supervisor	Sole User	M/C	2006	Jeep Liberty	39	16,130	2,920.99	1,457.38	7
Safety Trainer	Sole User	CSEA	2008	Chevy Trail Blazer	19	11,990	2,356.92	2,167.86	10
Equip Maint. Supervisor	Sole User	M/C	2013	Chevy Tahoe	7	7,593	1,495.02	1,242.89	1
Section Crew Leader	Sole User	CSEA	2012	Ford F-150	73	32,143	6,615.29	752.60	71
Traffic Repair Supervisor	Sole User	CSEA	2012	Ford F-150	77	12,569	2,682.88	247.85	47
On Call Person	Shared Use	CSEA	2012	Ford F-150	2	24,995	4,682.24	7,174.47	73

**Department of Facilities Management**

The Facilities Management Department (Facilities) does not have a formal mechanism in place to track employees' usage of take-home vehicles during their off-duty hours. The mechanism audit used to estimate the number of instances the Facilities two 'on call' employees who share a take-home vehicle is claimed overtime in Kronos. Each time one of these employees is 'called in' to respond to an emergency response situation, an entry is made showing a 'CALLIN' code in the Kronos system. During 2013, the two Facilities 'on call' employees who share a take-home vehicle responded to a total of 20 emergency response incidents necessitating the use of the take-home vehicle during off-duty hours.

The justification given by Facilities for these two employees sharing a take-home vehicle is that each of these employees needs a van to hold all the necessary tools to deal with an emergency repair. Elimination of the one take-home vehicle assigned to Facilities may be subject to collective bargaining negotiations with the employees' labor union.

The one take-home vehicle assigned to Facilities was driven a total of 26,432 miles, consumed \$6,639.44 of gasoline, and cost \$1,713.17 to maintain during 2013. The maintenance cost information was provided by WEP as the vehicle was maintained for at WEP facilities. The gasoline consumption information was provided by WEP and was based on the fact that a significant amount of the gasoline purchases during 2013 for this vehicle appeared to have taken place at WEP facilities.

Department/ Job Title	Status	Union	Year	Vehicle	Vehicle #	2013	2013	2013	# of 2013
		Code		Make/ Model		Miles	Gallons \$	Maint. \$	
HVAC Technician	Shared Use	IUOE	2012	Ford E250 Van	2624/2625	26,432	6,639.44	1,713.17	3
		IUOE	2012	Ford E250 Van	2624/2625				17

## Department of Water Environment Protection

The Water Environment Protection Department (WEP) also utilizes Kronos as its mechanism to track 30 of its employees' usage of 24 take-home vehicles for emergency response purposes during their off-duty hours. Each time an applicable WEP employee assigned a take-home vehicle is 'called in' to respond to an emergency response situation, an entry is made in Kronos utilizing one of the 10 available 'OT Codes' that best describes the situation. During 2013, the WEP employees assigned usage of the take-home vehicles responded to a total of 1,479 emergency response incidents necessitating the use of the available take-home vehicles during off-duty hours (if an incident required the usage of five take home vehicles by five different WEP employees, it was counted as five separate incidents for purposes of this audit).

As stated above, WEP utilizes 10 different 'OT Codes' to describe the various emergency situations a WEP employee responds to. However, during this take-home vehicle audit, Audit noted several instances in which a WEP employee earning overtime didn't properly utilize any of the available 10 'OT Codes'.

The justification given by WEP for these 30 employees being assigned a take-home vehicle for only their own use or sharing a take-home vehicle is that each of these employees needs quick access to a properly equipped vehicle in order to respond to an emergency situation needing the attention of WEP personnel. Most of these 30 WEP employees volunteer for 'on call' status during their off-duty hours, and one of the most important reasons these employees state for volunteering is the access they have to take-home vehicles to respond to emergency situations during 'on call' time periods. These employees would be more reluctant to volunteer for 'on call' status during their off-duty hours if the take-home vehicles weren't available to them, which would significantly jeopardize WEP operations pertaining to emergency situations during these employees' off-duty hours. Reducing or eliminating the 24 vehicles may be subject to collective bargaining negotiations.

The 24 vehicles assigned to WEP were driven a total of 310,660 miles, consumed \$75,534.06 of gasoline, and cost \$69,182.61 to maintain during 2013.

Department/ Job Title	Status	Union	Year	Vehicle	Vehicle #	2013	2013	2013	# of 2013
		Code		Make/ Model		Miles	Gallons \$	Maint. \$	Incidents
Systems Programmer	Sole User	CSEA	2008	Ford Pickup	1792	7,091	\$1,522.78	\$3,282.59	47
Instrumentation Mech	Shared User	CSEA	2005	Ford Van	1736	8,964	\$2,357.18	\$3,344.61	10
WWTP Maint Wkr (I/E)	Shared User	CSEA	2005	Shares above vehicle					14
Electrical Maint. Coordinator	Sole User	CSEA	2008	Ford Pickup	1801	13,616	\$3,340.58	\$1,917.91	61
Electrical Maint. Coordinator	Sole User	CSEA	2010	Ford Pickup	1839	11,809	\$2,318.44	\$538.92	67
Maintenance Electrician	Sole User	CSEA	2008	Ford Van	1789	9,484	\$2,684.98	\$2,600.26	23
Instrumentation Mech	Shared User	CSEA	2012	Chevrolet Van	1849	11,209	\$2,941.26	\$834.10	11
Maintenance Electrician	Shared User	CSEA	2012	Shares above vehicle	1800	5,401	\$1,212.86	\$602.53	35
Maintenance Electrician	Sole User	CSEA	2012	Chevrolet Van	1802/1854	26,880	\$7,342.72	\$3,200.99	102
Sewer Maint. Supervisor	Sole User	CSEA	2007	Chevrolet Pickup	1760	18,012	\$4,067.70	\$3,452.05	149
Stream Maint. Supervisor	Sole User	CSEA	2008	Ford Pickup	1732	20,516	\$4,130.28	\$4,779.63	37
Stream Maint. Crew Leader	Sole User	CSEA	2008	Ford Pickup	1840	11,782	\$2,690.94	\$1,409.04	34
Sewer Maint. Supervisor	Sole User	CSEA	2005	Ford Ranger	1740	21,110	\$3,766.72	\$3,950.99	86
Sewer Maint. Crew Leader	Sole User	CSEA	2008	Ford Pickup	1815	8,102	\$2,497.24	\$982.95	44
Pump Station Maint. Supervisor	Sole User	CSEA	2004	Ford Ranger	1872	6,479	\$1,513.84	\$263.11	54
WWTP Maint. Crew Leader	Sole User	CSEA	2002	Chevrolet S-10	1871	5,821	\$1,251.60	\$263.76	39
WWTP Maint. Crew Leader	Shared User	CSEA	2008	Ford Ranger	1845	12,209	\$2,461.48	\$2,910.22	39
Pump Station Maint. Worker 2	Shared User	CSEA		Shares above vehicle	1837	19,439	\$4,836.54	\$2,472.54	108
Pump Station Maint. Worker 2	Shared User	CSEA	2010	Ford Pickup	1850	19,559	\$4,979.58	\$3,099.99	71
Pump Station Maint. Worker 1	Shared User	CSEA		Shares above vehicle					36
WWTP Maint. Crew Leader	Sole User	CSEA	2006	Dodge Pickup	1763	10,285	\$3,015.76	\$4,566.44	13
WWTP Maint. Wkr Mech	Sole User	CSEA	2006	Dodge Pickup	1875	1,103	\$527.46	\$2,061.03	21
WWTP Maint. Mechanic	Sole User	CSEA	2008	Ford Pickup	1806	7,951	\$2,521.08	\$3,554.09	61
WWTP Maint. Mechanic	Sole User	CSEA	2008	Ford Pickup	1806				67
WWTP Maint. Mechanic	Sole User	CSEA	2007	Ford Pickup	1807	10,018	\$3,373.36	\$3,728.67	24
Principal WWTP Operator	Sole User	CSEA	2008	Ford Pickup	1796/1852	20,748	\$4,398.48	\$2,987.74	49
Head WWTP Operator	Shared User	CSEA	2009	Chevrolet Pickup	1810	4,624	\$980.42	\$874.70	72
WWTP Operator	Shared User	CSEA	2009	Shares above vehicle	1753	5,641	\$1,719.46	\$6,802.42	62
Head WWTP Operator	Shared User	CSEA	2002	Ford Pickup	1704	12,807	\$3,081.32	\$4,701.33	30
Senior WWTP Operator	Shared User	CSEA	2002	Shares above vehicle	1704				13

## Department of Corrections

The justification given by the Corrections Department (CD) for the Commissioner being assigned a take-home vehicle is in order to respond to emergency situations. Per the Department, the Commissioner is not the sole driver of this vehicle and the take-home vehicle may switch from week to week. Per the Department, when the vehicle is parked, it is available for anyone's use.

The take-home vehicle assigned to the employee of CD was driven a total of 19,850 miles, consumed \$3,306.54 of gasoline, and cost \$1,482.90 to maintain during 2013. The maintenance cost information was provided by WEP as the vehicle was maintained for at WEP facilities. The gasoline consumption information was provided by OMB.

Department/ Job Title	Status	Union		Vehicle		2013	2013	2013	# of 2013
		Code	Year	Make/ Model	Vehicle #	Miles	Gallons \$	Maint. \$	Incidents
Commissioner	Sole User	M/C	2013	Ford Expl./Expl.	2448/2450	19,850	\$3,306.54	\$1,482.90	10

## Office of the Onondaga County District Attorney

The justification given by the District Attorney's Office (DA) for these employees being assigned take-home vehicles are that these employees need access to properly equipped vehicles in order to respond to emergency situations needing the attention of DA personnel. The DA's also need access to the fleet in order to do undercover surveillance work which may necessitate the rotation of different cars. The following equipment is needed by DA personnel in order to respond to emergency situations:

- Sirens
- Bulletproof vests
- Communication Radios
- Trunk-Locked Guns and Ammunition
- Computers
- DWI blood draw equipment

Most DA take-home vehicles are interchangeable between various personnel depending upon availability and assignment (DA personnel working 'undercover' don't want to follow suspects or transport important witnesses always in the same vehicle).



12 of the take-home vehicles assigned to DA were driven a total of 137,703 miles and cost \$22,592.55 to maintain during 2013. The maintenance cost information was provided by WEP as the vehicle was maintained for at WEP facilities. The remaining seven take-home vehicles assigned to DA couldn't be properly identified in order to determine the amount of miles driven or the cost to maintain during 2013.

Department/ Job Title	Status	Union		Vehicle		2013	
		Code	Year	Make/ Model	Vehicle #	Miles	Maint. \$
Sr. Asst. Dist. Attorney	Sole User	M/C	2006	Chevy Impala	2137	3,631	6,003.54
Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2009	Chevy Impala	2155	11,749	1,014.02
Investigator/Process Server	Sole User	M/C	2008	Chevy Trailblazer			
Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2013	Ford Fusion	2159	9,336	123.91
Sr. Asst. Dist. Attorney	Sole User	M/C	2011	Chevy Malibu	2157	16,422	817.81
Sr. Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2010	Chevy Traverse			
Sr. Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2009	Chevy Impala	2156	23,366	3,337.02
Sr. Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2012	Escape Hybrid			
Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2008	Chevy Impala	2142	12,421	898.73
D/C Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2013	Ford Fusion	2161	1,804	61.93
Sr. Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2010	Ford Explorer	2160	13,936	1,713.99
Sr. Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2013	Dodge	2158	8,852	247.46
Chief ADA	Sole User	M/C	2008	Dodge Avenger			
Sr. Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2007	Dodge	2139	12,307	3,700.76
Chief Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2010	Chevy Impala	2144	3,560	699.00
Sr. Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2011	Dodge Van			
Sr. Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2013	Chevy Traverse			
Investigator	Sole User	M/C	2013	Chevy Traverse			
Investigator/Process Server	Sole User	M/C	2007	Chevy Impala	2138	20,319	3,974.38

## Department of Emergency Management

The justification given by the Emergency Management Department (EM) is the Commissioner of Emergency Management, the Director of Fire, and the Director of EMS are provided take home emergency response vehicles as a condition of employment. The vehicles were acquired by grant funding, as well as the corresponding emergency equipment. Additionally, EM leadership is responsible to activate, respond and staff the Onondaga County Emergency Operations Center in times of community wide disasters. The following equipment is needed by EM personnel in order to respond to emergency situations:

- Sirens and warning lights
- Combustible gas and oxygen meters
- Thermal Imaging Camera and Radiation Detection Equipment
- Weapons of Mass Destruction Response kit and Personal Protective Equipment
- Emergency Medical Kit and Water Rescue Equipment
- Hazardous Materials Response and Product Detection Equipment

The three take-home vehicles assigned to EM were driven a total of 43,097 miles, consumed \$8,094 of gasoline, and cost \$6,870 to maintain during 2013. The maintenance cost information was provided by WEP as the vehicles were maintained for at WEP facilities.

Department/ Job Title	Status	Union	Year	Vehicle	Vehicle #	2013	2013	2013	# of 2013
		Code		Make/ Model		Miles	Gallons \$	Maint. \$	Incidents
Comm. of Emerg. Mgmt.	Sole User	M/C	2011	Chevy Tahoe	2176	16,729	3,335.62	1,842.94	240
Dir. Of Emerg. Mgmt-Fire	Sole User	M/C	2006/2007	Ford Exp./Dodge Dur.	2153/2173	15,919	2,645.86	5,028.00	120
Dir. Of Emerg. Mgmt-EMS	Sole User	M/C	2007/2013	Dodge Dur./Chevy Tah.	2173/2188	10,449	2,113.06	0.00	120

## Department of Metro Water Board

Water Plant Managers are expected to respond to calls and emergencies 24/7 and use assigned vehicles to access and inspect system-wide infrastructure throughout Onondaga and Oswego Counties. In addition, Plant Managers will respond as needed to Dig Safely New York marking requests, deliver samples to the laboratory and provide periodic inspections and of transmission lines and meter pits. Performance of these duties can often avert more serious problems or failures and reduces overtime by hourly personnel. Equipment regularly transported by Plant Managers for execution of these duties include: Line Tracer, Magnetic Locator, Chlorine Analyzer, Hand Tools, Safety Equipment and Personal Protective Equipment, Laptop Computer.

The two vehicles assigned to MWB were driven a total of 20,194 miles, consumed \$3,961.61 of gasoline, and cost \$4,401.48 to maintain during 2013. One of the vehicles may be considered seasonal, as it's used mostly during the winter months. The gasoline consumption and maintenance cost information was provided by MWB personnel. The cost of the gasoline consumed for these three take-home vehicles was provided by OMB.

Department/ Job Title	Status	Union	Year	Vehicle	Vehicle #	2013	2013	2013	# of 2013
		Code		Make/ Model		Miles	Gallons \$	Maint. \$	
Water Plant Manager	Sole User	M/C	2010/2008	Ford Expl./Ch. Trailbl.	5048/5046	13,411	2,766.93	2,057.69	30
Water Plant Manager	Sole User	M/C	2008/2010	Ch. Trailbl./Ford Expl.	5044/5048	6,783	1,194.68	2,343.79	

**Office of the Onondaga County Sheriff**

The justification given by the Sheriff’s Office for these employees being assigned take-home vehicles are that these employees need quick access to properly equipped vehicles in order to respond to emergency situations needing the attention of Sheriff’s Office personnel. The following equipment is needed by Sheriff personnel in order to respond to emergency situations:

- Sirens
- Bulletproof vests
- Communication Radios
- Trunk-Locked Guns and Ammunition
- Computers
- Handcuffs
- Gas Masks

During 2013, Sheriff’s Office personnel assigned usage of the take-home vehicles responded to a total of 376 documented emergency response incidents necessitating the use of the available take-home vehicles during off-duty hours (if an incident required the usage of five Sheriff deputies, it was counted as five separate incidents for purposes of this audit). Of these 376 documented incidents, 310 represent incidents responded to by 31 Sheriff deputies with take-home vehicles in the Criminal Investigation Division of the Sheriff’s Office. Information regarding the CID vehicles was provided in aggregate and is reflected in the above chart an average of 10 incidents per vehicle (total incidents rounded up divided by the 31 CID vehicles). This information was obtained by Audit directly from the Sheriff’s Office.

There was a 2009 written directive by the Sheriff regarding the utilization of vehicles. The requirement was, at all times when a Sheriff’s Office employee was called to respond to an emergency situation, the employee is to call the Onondaga County 911 Center and state that he/she is responding to the particular emergency situation. Based upon Audit discussion with Sheriff’s Office personnel, this written requirement is not being followed at all times.

Of the 76 take-home vehicles assigned to Sheriff’s Office personnel, 69 were identified where collective bargaining negotiations may be required. In addition, an interest arbitration award in 2008 between OCSPA and the County (see attached) regarding take home vehicles appears to grandfather in those who at that time had the benefit of a take home vehicle. “Members currently provided an assigned vehicle shall retain the vehicle for as long as they hold the assignment, position, title, rank, or any other basis for which the vehicle was assigned.” Subsequent to the award, vehicle assignment shall be made at the discretion of the Sheriff.

Subsequent to the 2008 arbitration decision, it appears there were nine instances under the previous Sheriff Administration, in which Sheriff's Office personnel were promoted and assigned take-home vehicles at the Sheriff's discretion.

There are seven vehicles not subject to collective bargaining agreements; five Department Chiefs, the Under Sheriff and the Sheriff.

The 76 take-home vehicles assigned to the Sheriff's Office were driven a total of 1,071,634 miles and cost \$227,024.37 to maintain during 2013. The maintenance cost information was provided by WEP as all 76 take-home vehicles were maintained for at WEP facilities.

The last two columns of the below chart was compiled by the Sheriff's Office (Titled- # of 2013 Incidents-and Titled- Reason). The below footnotes explain the source of the data:

Definitions for the below chart:

Call-in: this member is subject to immediate call-in for events requiring an immediate response. Most are for criminal investigations but are some search and rescue and some are building or equipment emergencies.

Command on call: Command level officers on call.

Limited Data: The source of "call in" data is an overtime database. All "limited data" entries are captains. Captains often adjust their schedules when called in after hours and do not take pay for the call in hours. As a result, there would be no entry in the overtime database.

No Data: The source of "call in" data is an overtime database. Assistant Chief's, Chiefs and Undersheriff are management confidential and do not earn overtime pay. As a result, there are no entries in the overtime database for these employees.

Department/ Job Title	Status	Union	Year	Vehicle	Vehicle #	2013	2013	# of 2013	Reason
		Code		Make/ Model		Miles	Maint. \$	Incidents	
Civil Process Supervisor	Sole User	DSBA	2005	Ford Taurus	3937	4,645	1,119.23	0	Call in
Community Relations	Sole User	OCSPA	2010	Ford Crown Vic	3131	29,318	4,040.69	8	Call in
Community Relations	Sole User	OCSPA	2013	Chevrolet Caprice	3406	924	0.00	0	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2010	Dodge Caravan	3124	22,230	3,386.25	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2010	Dodge Caravan	3125	14,527	1,326.64	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2010	Chevrolet Impala	3126	22,363	3,863.36	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2010	Chevrolet Impala	3127	15,070	2,296.99	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2010	Chevy Tahoe	3160	23,081	6,151.57	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2010	Chevrolet Impala	3161	12,439	2,224.94	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2010	Chevy Tahoe	3162	13,531	1,316.27	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2010	Chevrolet Impala	3163	19,749	4,101.89	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2013	Chevrolet Impala	3418	6,900	203.44	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2005	Ford Taurus	3931	10,850	3,547.43	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2005	Ford Taurus	3932	7,634	1,681.23	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2005	Ford Taurus	3933	13,055	2,310.20	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2005	Ford Taurus	3935	7,810	2,119.31	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3961	12,429	3,071.89	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3963	17,271	9,640.68	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3964	19,812	4,943.60	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3965	13,764	3,452.86	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3966	13,644	4,063.45	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3967	9,250	1,653.63	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3968	21,376	2,972.34	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3969	7,531	1,664.99	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3970	11,737	3,116.63	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3973	9,672	1,857.62	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3975	12,948	2,570.36	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3976	11,122	1,320.97	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3991	14,084	1,857.15	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3992	19,984	3,568.98	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3993	20,643	3,387.17	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3994	15,450	937.42	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3995	16,763	1,979.91	10	Call in
Criminal Investigation Division	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Ford Taurus	3999	17,577	2,621.25	10	Call in
Department Asst. Chief	Sole User	MC	2008	Ford Crown Vic	3018	19,850	1,789.73	No Data	Command on call
Department Asst. Chief	Sole User	MC	2008	Ford Crown Vic	3033	15,752	2,264.98	No Data	Command on call
Department Asst. Chief	Sole User	MC	2007	Ford Crown Vic	3987	8,585	649.12	No Data	Command on call
Department Chief	Sole User	MC	2007	Ford Crown Vic	3003	13,325	2,893.78	No Data	Command on call
Department Chief	Sole User	MC	2009	Ford Crown Vic	3120	17,437	6,076.11	No Data	Command on call
Division Commander	Sole User	OSCA	2005	Ford Crown Vic	3798	9,819	4,120.07	Limited data	Command on call

Department/ Job Title	Status	Union		Vehicle		2013	2013	# of 2013	Reason
		Code	Year	Make/ Model	Vehicle #	Miles	Maint. \$	Incidents	
Division Commander	Sole User	OSCA	2007	Ford Crown Vic	3988	20,805	2,162.17	Limited data	Command on call
Division Commander		OSCA	2007	Ford Taurus	3998	5,630	1,999.17	Limited data	Command on call
Division Commander	Sole User	OSCA	2013	Chevrolet Caprice	3405	4,000	0.00	Limited data	Command on call
Division Commander	Sole User	OSCA	2013	Chevrolet Impala	3419	5,874	240.72	Limited data	Command on call
Evidence Technician Unit Commander	Sole User	OCSPA	2009	Ford Crown Vic	3121	15,029	2,967.98	9	Call in
Fleet Manager	Sole User	DSBA	2003	Chevrolet Impala	3738	12,374	2,549.37	10	Call in
Human Services	Sole User	DSBA	2009	Ford Crown Vic	3115	20,730	6,185.27	2	Call in
Inspections	Sole User	DSBA	2003	Ford Crown Vic	3745	5,786	6,436.92	0	
Inspections	Sole User	OCSPA	2008	Ford Crown Vic	3024	4,092	3,830.46	0	
K-9	Sole User	OCSPA	2006	Ford Crown Vic	3950	23,650	2,566.80	1	Call in
K-9	Sole User	OCSPA	2008	Ford Crown Vic	3030	15,736	5,155.55	3	Call in
K-9	Sole User	OCSPA	2009	Ford Crown Vic	3113	13,055	1,952.42	2	Call in
K-9	Sole User	OCSPA	2013	Ford Explorer	3159	15,258	1,407.32	5	Call in
Internal Affairs	Sole User	OCSPA	2003	Ford Crown Vic	3735	5,619	2,494.31	0	Call in
Internal Affairs	Sole User	OCSPA	2007	Chevrolet Malibu	3011	12,391	1,074.01	Limited data	Call in
Internal Affairs	Sole User	OCSPA	2010	Ford Crown Vic	3130	16,226	5,833.42	0	Call in
Public Information Officer	Sole User	OCSPA	2005	Ford Taurus	3936	11,365	1,068.95	5	Call in
School Resource Officer	Sole User	OCSPA	2006	Ford Crown Vic	3952	5,835	3,584.31	0	
School Resource Officer	Sole User	OCSPA	2008	Ford Crown Vic	3031	15,001	3,375.03	0	
School Resource Officer	Sole User	OCSPA	2008	Ford Crown Vic	3017	17,848	4,678.75	0	
School Resource Officer	Sole User	OCSPA	2010	Ford Crown Vic	3144	24,426	6,629.17	0	
SERT Commander	Sole User	DSBA	2006	Ford Crown Vic	3958	7,115	1,873.03	0	Call in
Sheriff	Sole User	SHERIFF	2004	Lincoln Navigator	3168	16,229	3,783.22	No data	Command on call
Patrol Commander	Sole User	OCSPA	2012	Chevrolet Caprice	3178	18,926	1,431.45	Limited data	Command on call
Traffic Accident Control	Sole User	OCSPA	2009	Ford Crown Vic	3111	36,902	7,710.93	0	
Traffic Accident Control	Sole User	OCSPA	2010	Ford Crown Vic	3154	21,728	5,553.49	0	
Technical Operations	Sole User	OCSPA	2008	Ford Van	3989	9,947	2,130.01	13	Call in
Technical Operations	Sole User	OCSPA	2008	Ford Van	3990	27,188	2,227.45	8	Call in
Transport Commander	Sole User	DSBA	2006	Ford Crown Vic	3956	30,007	5,840.84	0	Call in
Under Sheriff	Sole User	MC	2007	Ford Crown Vic	3002	21,000	4,841.56	No data	Command on call
Watch Commander	Sole User	OCSPA	2012	Chevrolet Caprice	3176	5,799	1,454.28	0	
Watch Commander	Sole User	OCSPA	2012	Chevrolet Caprice	3175	15,245	8,687.41	0	
Watch Commander	Sole User	OCSPA	2012	Chevrolet Caprice	3177	9,457	699.59	0	
Watch Commander	Sole User	OCSPA	2013	Chevrolet Caprice	3409	3,273	941.70	0	
Watch Commander	Sole User	OCSPA	2013	Chevrolet Caprice	3407	2,716	811.34	0	
Watch Commander	Sole User	OCSPA	2013	Chevrolet Caprice	3408	1,421	681.84	0	

## Audit Findings and Recommendations

- There are no County-wide written policies and procedures regarding the utilization of take-home vehicles by County employees.
- Included in the Sheriff's Office written policies and procedures regarding the utilization of take-home vehicles is the requirement that at all times when a Sheriff's Office employee with a take-home vehicle is called to respond to an emergency situation, the employee is to call the Onondaga County 911 Center and state that he/she is responding to the particular emergency situation. Based upon Audit discussion with Sheriff's Office personnel, this written requirement is not being followed at all times.
- WEP utilizes 10 different 'OT Codes' to describe the various emergency situations a WEP employee responds to when requested in their off-duty hours as part of their employment with the County. Audit recommends that all County departments with similar multiple overtime circumstances with their union employees as WEP determine the various emergency situations in which these employees respond to in their off-duty hours. Based upon these determinations, different input 'codes' would then be added to the Departments' Kronos module for use by overtime earning employees and could then be utilized by the Departments' management to better track overtime usage by applicable County employees.
- As stated above, WEP utilizes 10 different 'OT Codes' to describe the various emergency situations a WEP employee responds to. However, during this take-home vehicle audit, Audit noted several instances in which a WEP employee earning overtime didn't properly utilize any of the available 10 'OT Codes'. Audit recommends all applicable WEP personnel be reinstructed on the required usage of the 10 available 'OT Codes' when inputting their overtime earnings in Kronos. Also, Audit recommends WEP management review the necessary Kronos information, at least on a quarterly basis, to ensure that the proper 'OT Codes' are being utilized and are reasonable with their understanding of the circumstances in which WEP overtime earning employees responded to specific emergency situations.

STATE OF NEW YORK  
PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS BOARD

\*\*\*\*\*

In the Matter of the Interest Arbitration

between

**Onondaga County Deputy Sheriffs' Police Association\***

and

**County of Onondaga and Onondaga County Sheriff**

PERB Case No: IA2007-009; M2007-3025

\*\*\*\*\*

OPINION

AND

AWARD

Before:

Ronald E. Kowalski, Ph.D.  
Arbitrator

Peter Troiano  
Public Employer Panel Member

Kenneth L. Wagner, Esq.  
Public Employee Organization Panel Member

**APPEARANCES**

**For the Public Employer**

John F. Corcoran, Esq.  
Hancock & Estabrook, LLP

**For the Public Employee Organization**

Nathaniel G. Lambright, Esq.  
Blitman & King, LLP



The Union is therefore opposed to such limitations. It believes the current practice is a benefit enjoyed by its members which has value to the County.

### **DISCUSSION**

The Panel has weighed the evidence and reviewed the testimony on the question of assigned vehicles. Clearly, the cost of maintaining this benefit has grown dramatically over the last few years. However, it is a benefit that has been part of the compensation package of many unit members for a number of years.

The Panel believes the evidence does support limitations on the future use of County-owned vehicles given the growing costs. However, a balanced approach to the issue also requires consideration and fair treatment for those for whom there is a current benefit. The Panel therefore awards the following on the issue of assigned vehicles.

### **AWARD**

#### **ASSIGNED VEHICLES**

- a.) The Sheriff shall have the discretion to assign or rescind the assignment of assigned ("take home") vehicles with respect to unit members.

- b.) Members currently provided an assigned vehicle shall retain the vehicle for as long as they hold the assignment, position, title, rank, or any other basis for which the vehicle was assigned. Any future assignment of vehicles to these members or any other members, regardless of assignment, position, title, rank, or other basis, shall be made at the discretion of the Sheriff.
- c.) Any and all personal use of assigned vehicles by any and all members shall be eliminated, except for personal use which is allowed by the express written authorization of the Sheriff.

I concur (~~do not concur~~) with the above Award.

Date: 12/8/09 Peter Troiano  
Peter Troiano  
Public Employer Panel Member

I (~~concur~~) do not concur with the above Award.

Date: 11/20/09 Kenneth L. Wagner  
Kenneth L. Wagner, Esq.  
Public Employee Organization Panel Member

### 3. Health Benefits

#### **Union**

The Union has proposed changes in the current provisions in Article 9 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement governing retiree health benefits. The OCSPA demand would replace the current