



Former technician strengthens cop's case

Says radar guns in 2001 Crown Victoria reliable, a reversal of earlier testimony.

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EASTON -- A former radar technician admitted Friday he gave incorrect testimony last month regarding a Pennsylvania state police moratorium on the use of radar guns.

Last month, technician J.T. Shingara said state police Cpl. Edgardo Colon should not have used a Decatur Genesis Handheld radar gun while clocking speeders on Dec. 4, 2003.

On that date, Colon had stopped Whitehall resident Joshua Losito on Route 22 in Hanover Township and charged him with speeding and drunken driving.

Shingara had said a moratorium on the use of radar guns went into effect Sept. 3, 2003, and was lifted Dec. 14, 2003. But he admitted Friday that the moratorium was modified in a Sept. 4, 2003, memo from state police.

The memo said the guns should not be used in Ford Crown Victoria cars manufactured in 2003 or later. Colon was in a 2001 Crown Victoria at the time of Losito's arrest.

Last month, Shingara said radar guns can give false readings when plugged into the cigarette lighter socket in running police cruisers. The electronic noise from the alternator interferes with the radar's ability to function, he said.

Shingara maintains the radar guns get interference from alternators in Crown Victoria models of varying years. He said interference from Crown Victoria alternators caused radar guns to malfunction in 1999, and he had designed a small filter to put in the guns to eliminate the interference.

He said the problem arose again in 2003 because the alternators produced considerably more electronic noise. Shingara said the manufacturer offered to provide larger filters for free, but the filters couldn't fit inside the radar guns.

The manufacturer also agreed to provide free battery packs for each gun so police wouldn't have to plug them into the lighter sockets, Shingara said. The manufacturer agreed to absorb the \$30,000 cost, but state police declined, Shingara said.

State police spokesman Jack Lewis said authorities were confident the guns were giving accurate readings when pointed at moving cars. The battery packs, he said, would be just one more unnecessary piece of equipment for officers to carry.

Colon testified last month the gun worked properly and had been tested.

Northampton County Assistant District Attorney Abraham Kassis objected to Shingara's testimony because Shingara is not an engineer and isn't qualified to say whether the guns

work.

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