

BUSINESS ITEM

STAFF REPORT

DATE: JUNE 4, 2009
TO: EL DORADO COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
FROM: WOODROW DELORIA, ASSISTANT TRANSPORTATION PLANNER
SUBJECT: CAPITOL VALLEY FREEWAY SERVICE PATROL PROGRAM

REQUESTED ACTION

Provide direction to EDCTC staff regarding participation in the Capitol Valley Freeway Service Patrol program.

BACKGROUND

The Freeway Service Patrol program (FSP) is a program managed by the California Highway Patrol and a regional or local entity which provides emergency roadside assistance on a freeway in an urban area. The FSP was established by the California legislature through the Freeway Service Patrol Act, Streets and Highways Code Section 2560-2565, to provide for the implementation of a freeway service patrol system using a formula-based allocation. The FSP is designed to increase roadway safety, reduce motorist delays, reduce freeway congestion, reduce air pollution, and improve overall efficiency of freeway operations.

EDCTC's participation in the Capitol Valley FSP program would provide service for El Dorado County along Highway 50 from the county line to El Dorado Hills and eventually further east to the City of Placerville. Capitol Valley Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) funds would provide the necessary 25% match for the state grant funding that El Dorado County would be eligible to receive.

DISCUSSION

Mark Heiman, SACOG 511/ITS Program Manager and David Ghiorso, SACOG SAFE Program Manager, will be present at the June 4th EDCTC meeting to discuss the FSP program and answer questions.

Approved for Agenda:

Kathryn F. Mathews, AICP
Executive Director

Attachments: A) Freeway Service Patrol Overview

FREEWAY SERVICE PATROL OVERVIEW

Basic Framework of Freeway Service Patrol

- "Freeway Service Patrol" means a program managed by the California Highway Patrol and a regional or local entity which provides emergency roadside assistance on a freeway in an urban area.
- The Freeway Service Patrol is designed to increase roadway safety, reduce motorist delays, reduce freeway congestion, reduce air pollution, and improve overall efficiency of freeway operations. FSP is a fleet of roving white tow trucks on the lookout for stalls and accidents during peak commute hours. Over 350 CHP certified and supervised tow truck drivers assist 50,000 motorists monthly on California freeways absolutely free.
- FSP tow truck drivers will assist any stranded motorist that they come upon as they rove the freeways. FSP tow truck drivers may also be dispatched by the CHP to assist a motorist that has used a call box to request assistance. The FSP will change a flat tire, jump start a car, provide a gallon of fuel, provide water, tape a hose or provide other minor assistance, the FSP driver will tow disabled vehicles away from the traffic lanes to a location designated by the CHP where the motorist can contact someone for further assistance.
- The program is funded by a combination of State, local and federal funds. The state funds are authorized yearly through the State budget process and are distributed to the agencies that run Freeway Service Patrol programs using a formula that takes into consideration population, urban freeway miles, and traffic congestion. The state funds require a 25% local match from the local or regional agencies.
- The Freeway Service Patrol was established by the California legislature through the Freeway Service Patrol Act, Streets and Highways Code Section 2560-2565, to provide for the implementation of a freeway service patrol system using a formula-based allocation, referred to as baseline funding allocation, to all eligible regional and local agencies for traffic-congested urban freeways throughout the state, involving a cooperative effort between state and local agencies. In addition to the formula-based allocation program established, subject to funds being appropriated in the annual Budget Act, in subdivision (a), there is hereby established a Competitive Freeway Service Patrol Grant Program to provide funding of a freeway service patrol system to reduce traffic congestion.

FSP Participating Local Agencies as of July 2007

Fresno COG - Fresno County Council of Governments

MTA - Metropolitan Transportation Authority

MTC - Metropolitan Transportation Commission

OCTA - Orange County Transportation Authority

PCTPA - Placer County Transportation Planning Agency

RCTC - Riverside County Transportation Commission

SANBAG - San Bernardino Associated Governments

SANDAG - San Diego Association of Governments

SBCAG - Santa Barbara County Association of Governments

SCCRTC - Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

SJCOG - San Joaquin Council of Governments

STA - Sacramento Transportation Authority

TAMC - Transportation Authority of Monterey County

YTD - Yolo Transportation District

Who Operates FSP Services in the Sacramento Region

The Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) services are managed and directed by the Sacramento Transportation Authority (STA), through MOU agreements with Sacramento County and the Yolo County Transportation District (YCTD). STA operates the Yolo County program and receives reimbursement from YCTD. Placer County is a FSP agency that receives funding through the statewide allocation; however, they are not affiliated with the STA operations.

Norman Hom, the FSP Manager for Sacramento and Yolo County, stated the following:

“Freeway Service Patrol is received very positively by the motoring public and, because of that, we are often asked to expand and/or extend service. However, we always have to consider how expanding or extending service to new areas would negatively impact existing core service areas (which are the most-congested highways in our region). Because of our limited funding, any changes to the current FSP would simply mean a realignment of already-allocated resources unless we can secure more funding. With the likelihood of finding more money for the program being extremely low, we are committed to spending the monies we do have in the most cost-effective manner. What that means is that not all highway segments that could benefit from new FSP service will get it if other highway segments benefit more from it and there is not enough money to go around.”

Issues Related to El Dorado County Transportation Commission (EDCTC) Participating in the FSP Program

EDCTC is not currently a member of the Statewide FSP program. EDCTC would need to submit an application to join the FSP program by December 31, 2009, in order to qualify for state funds for the next fiscal year, beginning July 2010–June 2011.

How does the funding work? EDCTC would receive half of its approved amount (State monies) in the first year, July 1, 2010–June 30, 2011. EDCTC would then receive its full allocated amounts in the future years.

Is there a matching funds requirement? Yes, EDCTC would also have to provide a 25 percent match to the state funds they receive. This 25 percent match would be granted to EDCTC through the Capitol Valley SAFE program.

How much would EDCTC get? It depends. There is a competitive formula that is used by Caltrans, which is based on the population, urban freeway lane miles, and congestion in each county. This data is used in conjunction with the annual allocated budget amount (\$25,479,000 statewide for FY 2008-09) to determine how much each FSP agency receives.

FSP issues Related to California Highway Patrol (CHP)

CHP provides dispatchers who help with the “motorists’ assists” and “logs” as well as supervision over the FSP drivers. The proposed additional beats may require additional CHP support staffing. A portion of the state funding for the FSP program goes to provide CHP services and the remaining amount to the FSP agency. CHP uses a formula to determine the allocation of CHP staffing resources to each FSP agency.