



January 7, 2019

To: Regional Planning and Highways Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2017-18

Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority provides a full complement of motorist services designed to keep motorists safe and well-informed of roadway and traffic conditions acting as the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies for Orange County. Collectively, these programs focus on assisting stranded freeway motorists; mitigating traffic congestion; and providing information on highway conditions, transit services, and other traveler information through the Southern California 511 system. This report provides an update on program activities for fiscal year 2017-18.

Recommendation

Receive and file as an information item.

Background

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) serves as the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) in Orange County. All SAFE related services are managed by the Motorist Services Department in the Operations Division. The SAFE operates both the call box system and the Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) program; and participates as a partner with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), the California Highway Patrol, Los Angeles County SAFE (LA SAFE), and Ventura County Transportation Commission in the development and operation of the Southern California 511 travelers' information system.

Motorist Services activities are funded through several funding sources. SAFE provides funding for the call box program, Southern California 511, and FSP, through a one-dollar registration fee on all vehicles registered in Orange County. Caltrans provides State Highway Account (SHA) funding for

peak-hour FSP service through a formula outlined in California Streets and Highways Code 2560.5. Measure M2 provides FSP funding to ensure that peak-hour service levels are maintained, as well as enhanced midday, weekend, and construction support service. Recently additional funding for the FSP Program has been made available through the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 (SB1). SB1 provides additional FSP funding for existing service and funding to deploy new FSP service. SHA and SB1 funding require a minimum 25 percent local funding match, which is met through OCTA's use of SAFE and Measure M2 funds.

Discussion

This report provides a summary of major activities that occurred in the SAFE program during fiscal year (FY) 2017-18.

The SAFE averaged 3.4 call box calls a day through the call box network in FY 2017-18. In Orange County, motorist aid calls are also received through the 511 program. An average of 10.6 calls are received through the 511 system each day, a 5.6 percent decrease from FY 2016-17. SAFE will be required to upgrade call box radios in FY 2019-20, and at that time, OCTA staff will develop a plan for call box reductions with strategies to increase the focus on mobile call box functionality within the 511 program.

FSP tow truck operators responded to 54,136 calls for service from motorists who had disabled vehicles during FY 2017-18. This is a 13 percent decrease over FY 2016-17. FSP will implement new expanded service on State Route 91 and on State Route 57 in December 2018 using SB1 funds; this expanded service is further described in Attachment A.

The Southern California 511 (Go511) interactive voice response system received an average of 50,000 calls per month in FY 2017-18, with seven percent of the calls originating in Orange County. The Go511.com website received an average of 24,489 hits each month. In FY 2016-17, LA SAFE, with participation from OCTA, procured a vendor for the further development of the Go511 system. In addition to making 511 content more relevant to users, the project includes establishing cooperative agreements with the Riverside County Transportation Commission and the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority to bring Riverside and San Bernardino into the Go511 and rebrand the system to "So Cal 511."

In FY 2019-20, OCTA will continue each of these programs and seek ways to expand the partnerships and enhance the overall operation. Detailed information on each of these program areas is provided in Attachment A.

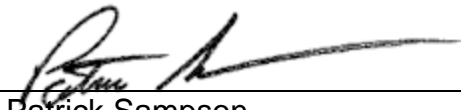
Summary

The Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies Annual Report has been prepared to highlight program activities and accomplishments in FY 2017-18.

Attachment

- A. Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies Annual Report,
Fiscal Year 2017-18

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