



January 6, 2020

To: Regional Planning and Highways Committee
From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer *Darrell E. Johnson for*
Subject: Motorist Services Update for Fiscal Year 2018-19

Overview

The Orange County Transportation Authority Motorist Services Program includes the call box system, Freeway Service Patrol, Southern California 511 travelers' information system, and the Orange County Taxi Administration Program. Collectively, the scope of these programs focuses on assisting motorists; mitigating traffic congestion; providing information on highway conditions, transit services, and other traveler information; and managing the taxicab permitting process and enforcement activities on behalf of Orange County and its 33 participating cities. This report provides a summary on program activities for fiscal year 2018-19.

Recommendation

Receive and file as an information item.

Background

The Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) serves as the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) and manages the Orange County Taxi Administration Program (OCTAP). SAFE and OCTAP 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 also participates as a partner with the California Department of Transportation, 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 (511). OCTAP permits taxicab companies, vehicles, and drivers on behalf of local jurisdictions in Orange County.

Discussion

This report provides an update of major activities that occurred in Motorist Services during fiscal year (FY) 2018-19.

The OCTA SAFE call box network and the 511 system together received more than 5,300 motorist aid calls in FY 2018-19. An average of 2.9 daily calls were received through the call box network versus 11.8 calls received through the 511 program. SAFE will be required to upgrade call box radios in FY 2020-21 and, at that time, OCTA staff will develop a plan for call box reductions which will include strategies to increase the use of the 511 program to request motorist assistance.

For traveler information, the 511 interactive voice response system received an average of 49,000 calls per month in FY 2018-19; seven percent of the calls originated in Orange County. In addition, the Go511.com website received an average of 28,203 hits each month. In FY 2016-17, LA SAFE and OCTA jointly procured a vendor to further develop the 511 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 County and San Bernardino County into the 511 network and rebrand the system to "So Cal 511." LA SAFE staff hopes to have these agreements in place by the third quarter of FY 2019-20.

FSP tow truck operators provided 52,673 unique assists to motorists who had disabled vehicles during FY 2018-19. This is a three percent decrease over FY 2017-18. FSP implemented new expanded service on State Route 91 and on State Route 57 in December 2018 using Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 funds.

At the close of FY 2018-19, OCTAP oversaw the regulation of 15 taxicab companies, 464 taxicab vehicles, and 492 taxicab drivers. This is a decrease from FY 2017-18. Reasons for the decline likely include taxicab drivers migrating to transportation network companies and increases in commercial liability insurance costs. OCTAP staff enforced taxicab regulations by verifying eligibility prior to issuing an OCTAP permit and monitoring taxicab companies, drivers, and vehicles for continued compliance.

The current permit fees no longer provide sufficient revenue to sustain the OCTAP program. OCTA worked with participating agencies to continue to fund the program through December 31, 2020. OCTA is currently working with the

OCTAP Steering Committee to determine OCTA's potential role beyond December 31, 2020.

Additional information for each of these program areas can be found in Attachment A.


Summary

The Motorist Services Update has been prepared to highlight program activities and accomplishments in FY 2018-19.

Attachment

A. Motorist Services Update, Fiscal Year 2018-19

Prepared by:

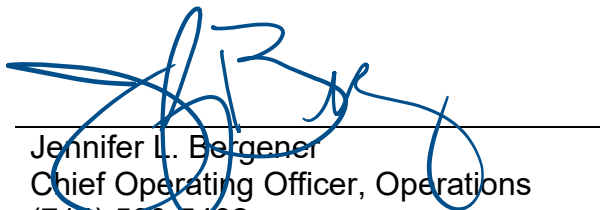


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