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COMMISSION
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FOR FREEWAYS
AND EXPRESSWAYS

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Memorandum

TO: Operations Committee

DATE: June 4, 2010

FR: Executive Director

W.I.: 1232

RE: Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) Tow Procurement – FY 2011-12

This informational memo summarizes proposed changes to the FSP program which will be reflected in the upcoming tow contract procurements scheduled to begin in Fall 2010.

Background

The FSP is a congestion relief and safety program that provides free assistance to stranded motorists during commute hours. The Bay Area FSP program started in 1992 with 12 tow trucks patrolling 55 miles of freeway. The program now operates 78 trucks patrolling 35 beats (or freeway segments) along over 540 miles of freeway. In 2009, the program provided over 125,000 assists to Bay Area motorists, with an average wait time of only 9 minutes.

Statewide, FSP receives \$25 million per year for 13 programs, of which the Bay Area receives approximately \$6 million via a formula allocation. The SAFE program provides local match and additional funding for the program from a \$1 vehicle registration fee. The Transportation 2035 Plan identifies additional federal funding for the FSP program which affords the FSP Partners (CHP, Caltrans and MTC SAFE) the opportunity to make strategic improvements. The FSP program is continually evaluated to ensure that services are provided where needed and in a cost-effective manner. The FSP Partners are making the following recommendations for the Bay Area FSP program based on funding levels, operational factors and program support levels.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE FSP PROGRAM FOR FY 2011-12

Procurement Process. MTC SAFE has historically undertaken a negotiated procurement for FSP towing services, where a number of factors are compared to select a tow contractor for a specific beat, after which price is negotiated. While the negotiated procurement process has benefits, it can be perceived as being relatively complex to tow contractors new to the program and it can result in additional expense. Around the state, there is a mix of negotiated and low-bid procurements in other FSP programs. If a qualifications-based, low bid process were used instead, this could result in cost savings, reduced likelihood of protests, and simplification of the evaluation process.

***Action:** For the FY 2011-12 tow procurement, staff intends to qualify interested tow contractors and solicit bids from pre-qualified contractors. The contractor submitting the lowest responsive bid for a particular beat will be awarded the contract.*

Dedicated Fleet. MTC SAFE currently allows tow contractors to use FSP program trucks for commercial purposes during non-FSP hours. Use of these trucks during non-FSP hours increases the truck mileage and the need for maintenance over the life of the four-year contract. The larger FSP programs statewide, including LA Metro, OCTA, and SANDAG, require dedicated FSP trucks and do not allow contractors to use FSP trucks for commercial purposes.

Action: Starting with the FY 2011-12 tow procurement, the Bay Area program will require dedicated FSP trucks to ensure they remain in safe working condition for the FSP program. Back-up trucks may continue to be used for non-FSP purposes.

I-280 Pilot Service. The Bay Area FSP program currently covers nearly every major freeway corridor in the nine counties with the exception of I-280 from SR 92 in San Mateo County to SR 85 in Santa Clara County. Though this section of I-280 does not have high levels of congestion, it is relatively isolated from businesses or other services, and represents a large gap in the availability of motorist aid services on the Bay Area freeway system. Coverage of this area would primarily be for motorist safety than for congestion relief.

Action: For the FY 2011-12 tow procurement, the Bay Area program will add new FSP service to I-280 (Beat 33) as a 3-year pilot project to complete coverage of the Bay Area highway system and evaluate the value of long-term service on this corridor.

I-880 Demonstration Corridor. The I-880 corridor is one of the most congested in the Bay Area, with frequent backups throughout the day due to port truck traffic and long-term construction. FSP Beat 3 covers the 8-mile stretch of I-880 from Alvarado-Niles Rd to SR 238 and a 2-mile segment of SR-92 from I-880 to the San Mateo Bridge. This beat currently consists of two standard tow trucks during peak AM and PM commute hours. Port trucks and other big rigs require assistance from tow trucks with increased functionality and higher specifications. Enhancing the specifications of tow trucks, providing midday service, and adding one back-up truck on Beat 3 will not only help address congestion on this corridor, but will allow the FSP program to evaluate whether similar upgrades should be applied to other beats along the I-880 corridor (Beat 1, 4, 14, and 18) when those contract are renewed in FY 2013-14.

Action: For the FY 2012 tow procurement, the Bay Area FSP program will implement the following upgrades on Beat 3 to address congestion and needs of the corridor- 1) increase tow truck specifications, 2) provide midday service, and 3) add one back-up truck.

A combined list of minor beat modifications is listed in Attachment 1 to this memo. The above recommendations from the FSP Partners (MTC SAFE, Caltrans, and CHP) are the result of our continuing evaluation of FSP program operations and discussions with other programs around the state. These recommendations may change or be modified as part of further evaluation or if there are changes to our funding outlook. It is expected that tow contract recommendations will be brought to this committee for approval in February 2011.

Steve Heminger

SH: NR

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ATTACHMENT 1
Summary of Renewal Beats and Modifications for FY 2011-12

Beat	Beat Location	Existing Service			Recommended Modification
		# of Trucks	Midday Service	Back-up Truck	
3	I-880 Hayward	2	No	No	As part of I-880 demo, upgrade tow truck specifications, add midday and back-up service.
5	I-680 Walnut Creek	3	No	Yes	Start PM shift later on Monday-Thursday, change from 14:00-18:30 to 15:00-18:30 (1 hr reduction); keep Friday 14:00-18:30 shift.
9	I-280 Santa Clara SR 85 Mountain View SR 87 San Jose	4	No	Yes	1) Remove beat segment SR 85 Mountain View (Junction Route 280 to El Camino Real, 3.3 mi) from Beat 9 and add to Beat 32. As of July 2011, Beat 32 will cover all of 85 from El Camino Real (101) to Cottle Road (near 101). 2) Remove pick-up truck from Beat 9; 3 tow trucks and 1 back-up remain.
10	HWY 101 San Mateo/ Mountain View	3	No	No	Add flatbed truck and remove 1 tow truck; new beat fleet mix will include 1 tow, 1 pick-up, 1 flatbed.
11	HWY 101 and I-280 San Francisco	2	Yes	No	Start Sunday shift later, change from 10:00-16:00 to 12:00-18:00.
12	I-80 Richmond	2	Yes	No	
13	HWY 101 and I-580 Marin	3	No	Yes	Remove back-up truck; add back-up truck to Beat 28 in FY 2014.
15	HWY 101 Sonoma	2	No	No	
16	SR 17 Los Gatos	1	No	No	
17	SR 12 and SR 29 Napa	1 M-F, 2 Sat/Sun	No	Yes (M-F)	1) Increase one truck during weekday. 2) Remove weekday back-up truck.
22	I-580 Livermore	3	No	No	
24	I-680 and I-780 Vallejo/Benicia	1	No	No	
27	I-580 Castro Valley/Dublin	3	No	No	
29	I-80 Vallejo	2	No	No	Add back-up truck to cover Beat 17 back-up truck removal.
30	I-280 and SR 92 Half Moon Bay	2	No	No	
33	I-280 Redwood City/ Los Altos/Mountain View	-	-	-	Add this new beat as 3-yr pilot service to address gap in Bay Area FSP service. New service will include two tow trucks during AM and PM commute.
34	I-80 Fairfield	2	No	No	
35	I-680 San Ramon	1	No	No	
36	SR 4 Martinez	1	No	No	1) Remove coverage from I-80 to Alhambra Ave. and shift service from Alhambra Ave. to Port Chicago Hwy. 2) Remove overlap with Bt. 25- as of July 2011, Bt. 25 will cover Hillcrest Ave. to Port Chicago Hwy on Rt. 4 and Rt. 242 from Rt. 4 to I-680.
37	I-80 Vacaville	2	No	No	

ATTACHMENT 2

FSP Beats Up For Bid FY 2011-12

Freeway Service Patrol Beats Up for Bid FY2011-12



