



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION
SERVICE AUTHORITY
FOR FREEWAYS
AND EXPRESSWAYS

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Memorandum

TO: Operations Committee

DATE: June 3, 2016

FR: Executive Director

W.I.: 6032

RE: Freeway Service Patrol Tow Procurement – FY 2018-22

This informational memorandum provides the Committee with a summary of proposed modifications to the Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) program that will be reflected in the upcoming tow contract procurement scheduled to be released in July 2016.

Background

The FSP started in 1992 and continues to be a vital program in providing congestion relief by quickly clearing incidents during commute hours on the Bay Area's busiest freeways. Program success is due in part to staff analysis conducted every two years to make strategic adjustments to optimize program benefits within budgetary constraints.

The program has implemented modifications to service hours and service area over the last three procurements. Despite the changes, the FSP assist rate continued to fall at an average of 11% per year since FY 2013. Similar declines are occurring statewide. The Caltrans statewide FSP consultant hypothesized that a variety of factors are contributing to this trend such as advanced vehicle technologies (e.g., collision avoidance technologies, lane departure detection and increased vehicle reliability) and improved safety features on freeways.

Regardless, FSP continues to be a successful program because of the service adjustments made by staff to adapt to the current trends of the program. As of FY 2014, the program has a benefit-cost of 7:1 and continues to receive positive feedback from the motoring public. Based on this year's assessment, staff recommends minor but meaningful adjustments. FSP coverage will remain the same but proposed modifications intend to address the falling assist rate, changes in congestion pattern, and coverage of beats.

Procurement

MTC SAFE releases a four-year FSP tow procurement every two years for approximately half of its 31 beats (patrol routes). In the upcoming Request for Qualifications and Bid Invitation (RFQBI) in July, the 13 beats shown in Attachment 1 will be up for bid. The RFQBI is a three-step process that

1. Qualifies interested tow providers through experience and inspections.
2. Solicits bids from bidders meeting those requirements.
3. Recommends contract award to the bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid for a particular beat based on its operational limit. This is determined by MTC SAFE in consultation with

California Department of Transportation and the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to ensure tow contractors are not overextended beyond their capabilities.

Staff is proposing moderate adjustments to ensure that FSP continues to be an effective congestion management program. The proposed recommendations in Table 1 are based on analysis of various congestion metrics, program performance data, field observation feedback from tow drivers and CHP personnel, and availability of local and state funding. These recommendations may be further refined due to future evaluations or changes to the FSP fund programming.

Table 1
Recommended Modifications for FY 2017-18 Procurement

Strategy		Justification	Beats Affected
1	Adjust service hours	Ensure shifts mirror the start and end of congestion during peak periods	1, 4, 6, 19, 23, 26
2	Redraw beat boundaries	Reduce lengthy turnaround points for beats that cover multiple freeways and evenly distribute the truck to miles coverage ratio	2, 6, 12, 21, 23
3	Reduce by one truck	Address low assist rate	6, 28

Staff plans to release the RFQBI with the above strategies in July 2016. The four-year tow contract recommendations will be brought to this committee for approval in October 2016 for service to commence in late July 2017 (FY 2017-18).



Steve Heminger

Attachment:

- Attachment 1: FY 2018 Beats up for Bid

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FY 2018 Beats up for Bid

