

**Santa Cruz County
Traffic Operations System (TOS) Oversight Committee
Joint Meeting with Safe on 17 Task Force**

Minutes of the Meeting

**November 5, 2003 at 10:00 AM
Employment Development Department Conference Room
Ruff Drive, San Jose, CA 9512**

Attendees:	Mike Marlatt	CHP – San Jose
	Bob Ghiglieri	CHP – San Jose
	Les Bishop	CHP – San Jose
	Pat Camara	CHP – Santa Cruz
	Sam Courtney	CHP – Santa Cruz
	Nicole Stewart	CHP – Monterey Dispatch
	Alex Kennedy	Caltrans HQ
	Esther Esquivel	Caltrans HQ
	James Richardson	Caltrans 4
	John Thomas	Caltrans 4
	Nevin Sams	Caltrans 5
	Scott Eades	Caltrans 5
	Russell Ellingworth	Caltrans 5
	Thomas Barnett	Caltrans 5
	Michael Warren	Senator McPherson’s Office
	Linda Lee	MTC
	Linda Wilshusen	SCCRTC
	Luis Mendez	SCCRTC

1. Information Items: No Comments

2. Review Operations and Status of the TOS: Jim Richardson reviewed the activations report and incident information. He also reported that last year there was a high number of fatal collisions during the Thanksgiving holiday. This month is seatbelt awareness month and the TMC has been asked to activate signs during the seatbelt campaign in an effort to minimize collisions and injuries.

3. Future Improvements

a. Highway 17 TOS Enhancements Updated PSR: Scott Eades reported that some of the comments provided by members of this group are being incorporated and that the updated PSR is nearly complete. The PSR will be available to submit for funding at every opportunity; however, given the state of funding for transportation projects at this time, it will be difficult to secure funding. Linda Wilshusen added that funding could be provided through a sales tax for transportation projects ballot measure being prepared for the Santa Cruz County November 2004 ballot. A voter poll has shown that people care

about projects to improve safety on Highway 17. A project list for the ballot measure is still being developed by the SCCRTC. The group discussed making a recommendation to the SCCRTC that funding for projects to improve safety on Highway 17 be included. A motion was passed to send a letter to the SCCRTC stating that the SCCRTC seriously consider including some level of funding for safety and traveler information improvements on Highway 17 on the expenditure plan for the proposed November 2004 sales tax ballot measure and any other future expenditure plans.

- b. Loop Detectors on Highway 17:** Mark Powers was unable to attend the meeting to report on this item but provided a report to Luis Mendez. Caltrans District 4 added the necessary cellular digital packet data (CDPD) modems and completed the rewiring necessary to have these monitoring stations provide real time information to the traffic management center (TMC). The loop locations at the summit had been wired as simple census stations but the loops were there to convert them to full monitoring stations. They were converted to full monitoring stations but the technicians could not get them to communicate information to the TMC. Mark Powers said that he has requested that the TMC follow up on this problem. Caltrans District 4 will provide the training necessary to Caltrans District 5 staff to ensure that Caltrans District 5 will be able to follow through on its commitment to maintain the monitoring stations.
 - c. Dynamic Curve Warning Sign for Highway 17:** The project was delayed due to the budget crisis but construction will begin soon.
- 4. Highway 17 Truck Safety Improvements:** Captain Camara of the CHP said that because the analysis of the investigation has not been completed and the possibility of prosecution, the CHP cannot provide any more details on the fatal truck collision of July 2003. Truck collisions are up a bit on Highway 17 compared to last year but they are less than previous years. One third of the Santa Cruz area CHP enforcement is focused on Highway 17 and the commercial is getting up on Highway 17 as much as possible. There does not seem to be a pattern of truck collisions and this incident seems to have been an anomaly.

Nevin Sams reported that the suggestion of an automated sign to in advance of the Pasatiempo exit to warn of upcoming congestion was discussed among various Caltrans staff. The systems have been unreliable and a good time to investigate it further would be after the construction at the Highway 1/17 interchange. There currently are not any static signs which can be used for this application. Unfortunately, the construction project is currently stalled due to the state funding crisis. The construction project includes some TOS components including a camera at Pasatiempo which can be used to monitor the area. The idea of a brake inspection was also discussed. Caltrans does not have the right-of-way to provide the brake inspection area and providing such an area requires appropriate accommodations to exit the highway and merge back in. Due to the topography of the highway this would be very challenging even if Caltrans had the necessary right-of-way.

- 5. Freeway Service Patrol:** Luis Mendez reported that the contract for FSP towing services will end in July 2004. SCCRTC is already working with MTC to release a request for proposals for a new contract. As reported in the last meeting, due to the state funding crisis

the FSP did not get some of the funds programmed to it but SCCRTC filled the gap with SAFE reserve funds. Since the budget crisis is continuing, those funds may not be available to the FSP program for another year which could affect the hours of service. Luis Mendez also reported that in the past there have been questions about using a big rig tow truck on Highway 17 through the FSP program. MTC has also considered a big rig tow truck on its Interstate 880 corridor heading into the Oakland harbor. MTC has determined that an FSP big rig tow truck may not help much and began discussions on other ways to improve response to big rig incidents and clear the incidents much more quickly. If anything develops, it will be reported.

- 6. Communication with Local Law Enforcement Agencies:** No report
- 7. Set Next Meeting Date and Agenda Items:** The meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm and the next meeting was set for Wednesday, February 4, 2003.