

Agenda: May 5, 2005

To: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission serving as the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies

From: Grace Blakeslee, Transportation Planner

Re: Revised Contract with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) for statewide SAFE Call Box Coordination

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC), serving as the regional Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE), approve the attached resolution ([Attachment 1](#)) authorizing the Executive Director to execute a new contract with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to reflect service changes.

BACKGROUND

Since 1990, through a partnership with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the CHP, and Caltrans, the SCCRTC, serving as the Santa Cruz County SAFE, has operated a highway call box motorist aid system. The system consists of 124 call boxes available to be used by motorists to obtain assistance for vehicle breakdowns, report collisions or other incidents, and obtain assistance in case of emergency situations.

Call box calls have traditionally been answered by CHP communications centers, as originally required by statute. Therefore, the SCCRTC has been contracting with the CHP to provide the call answering services. As cellular 911 calls to CHP communications skyrocketed due to the proliferation of cellular phones, CHP communications centers could not answer call box calls quickly enough in the metropolitan areas so statute was changed to allow call box programs to use private call answering centers.

At its December 2, 2004 meeting, the SCCRTC acting as the SAFE approved entering into an agreement with Connections Communication Services for private call answering service for the 124 Santa Cruz County call boxes.

DISCUSSION

Up until March 2005, the SCCRTC, serving as the regional SAFE, contracted with CHP for call answering services at an approximate cost of \$22,000 per year. This cost included call answering services costs, Santa Cruz County SAFE's proportionate share of the statewide CHP SAFE coordinator position, and translation services. Beginning March 2005 all Santa Cruz County call boxes were switched from the CHP call box answering service to Connection Communication Services private call answering service. Despite the call answering service

provider switch from CHP to a private service, the SCCRTC will need to continue to contract with CHP to pay for Santa Cruz County SAFE's proportionate share of the statewide CHP SAFE coordinator position.

California Streets and Highways Code section 2557 requires regional SAFEs to pay their proportionate share of the statewide CHP SAFE coordination position for the review and approval of plans for the implementation of call boxes on state highways. In addition to reviewing and approving plans for call boxes on state highways, the CHP SAFE coordinator is responsible for the facilitating collaboration between CHP and regional SAFEs, providing regional SAFEs with annual vehicle registration fee estimates from the State Controller's office and calculating regional SAFE's personnel years (PY) apportionments. (Santa Cruz County SAFE has no PY apportionments). Santa Cruz County SAFE's proportion of the CHP SAFE coordinator position will be approximately \$1,050 per year. \$1,000 has been allocated in the FY 05/06 budget for this item. Staff will return to the SCCRTC with any necessary budget amendments.

Staff recommends that the SCCRTC approve the attached resolution authorizing the Executive Director to execute a new three-year contract with the CHP not to exceed \$3,150 effective July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2008

SUMMARY

The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, serving as the Santa Cruz County SAFE, has operated a call box program since 1990 and contracted with the CHP for call box answering services. The Santa Cruz County SAFE shifted to a private call answering service to handle all regional call box calls on March 31, 2005. This change in service has resulted in the need to revise the agreement between the Santa Cruz County SAFE and the CHP, as they will no longer be providing the call box answering service for Santa Cruz County call boxes. However, State Law requires that the Santa Cruz County SAFE's pay their proportionate share of the statewide CHP SAFE coordinator position. Staff recommends approving the attached resolution authorizing the Executive Director to execute a new contract with the CHP not to exceed \$3,150 for a three year period.

Attachment 1: Resolution Authorizing the Executive Director to execute a new contract with CHP for the Statewide SAFE Coordinator