



SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN FREEWAY SERVICE PATROL: STATUS REPORT FOR 1ST QUARTER, FY 2016

Action Requested: Receive and file

Key Staff: Norman Hom, Administrative Services Officer III

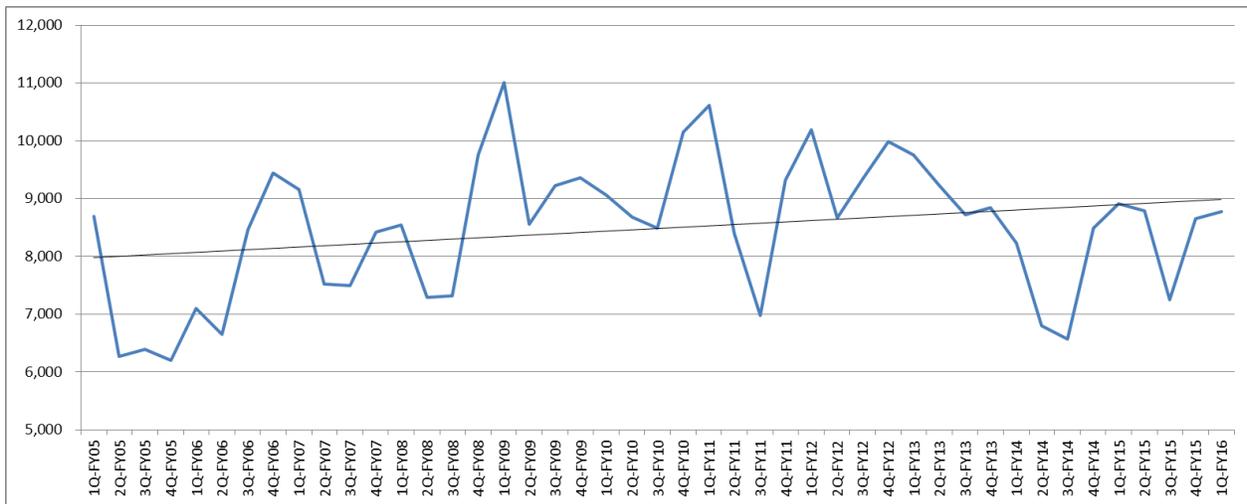
Recommendation

Receive and file the FSP status report for first quarter of FY 2015-16.

Discussion

SacMetro FSP provided 8,670 regular assists during the 1st quarter of FY 2015-16 plus 106 assists on the special beat dedicated to the construction project on Interstate 80 "Across-the-Top" for a total of 8,776 assists. As shown by the trend line in Chart 1 below, FSP assists have generally been rising over time.

Chart 1: Quarterly FSP Assists, FY2006 – Present



Notes: 1) Assist reporting was recalibrated beginning this quarter to exclude certain types of assists; totals are not directly comparable to past assist totals. 2) The spike in the number of assists during the summer of 2008 was due to the enhanced FSP coverage during Caltrans' I-5 Rehabilitation ("Boat Section") Construction Project.

Highway 99 and the segment of Business 80 south of Exposition Blvd. comprise Beat 1. This beat is 14 miles long and covered by three FSP trucks. Beat 1 had 13.1 percent of the assists in the first quarter, down significantly from previous quarters (please see last section for more information).

Beat 2 is Business 80 from Exposition Blvd. transitioning to Interstate 80 to Placer County, covering 14 miles with three trucks. Beat 2 had 12.0 percent of the first quarter assists.

Beats 3 and 4 cover the entire length of US Highway 50 through Sacramento County. Together, these two beats span 25 miles with five trucks. Beats 3 and 4 combined for 40.1 percent of the first quarter assists.

Map 1: FSP Freeway Segments

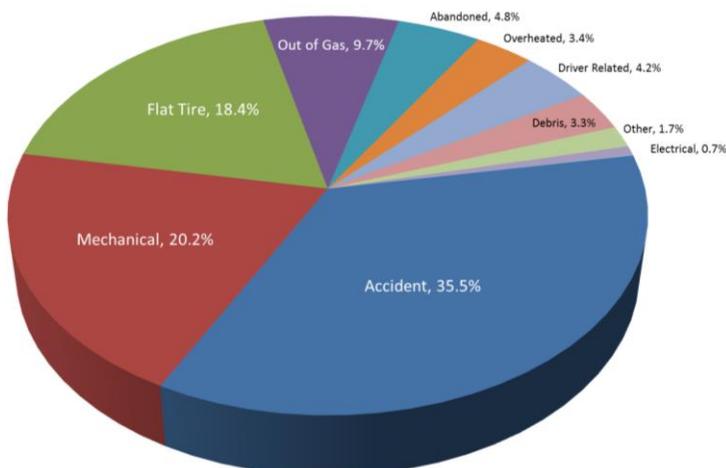


Beat 5 is Interstate 80 “Across the Top” (the segment of I-80 between the two junctions with Business 80) and is approximately 13 miles in length and covered by two trucks and a special truck dedicated to the Caltrans construction project. Beat 5 had 12.0 percent of the first quarter assists.

Beat 6 is on 22 miles of Interstate 5 through the Sacramento area and is covered by three trucks. Beat 6 had 15.5 percent of the first quarter assists.

The FSP beat in Yolo County (Beat 7) has one truck that covers the 10-mile span between Mace Boulevard in Davis and Jefferson Boulevard in West Sacramento, including the critical stretch over the Yolo Causeway. In addition to normal weekday FSP hours, the Yolo beat also runs on Sundays or Monday holidays to handle heavy traffic returning from the Lake Tahoe area to the San Francisco Bay Area. Beat 7 had 7.3 percent of the first quarter assists.

Chart 2: Types of Problems Encountered by FSP



Accidents, mechanical problems, flat tires and running out of gas comprise the majority of problems encountered by FSP in the first quarter. Accidents were up slightly but driver-related stops, such as when the driver is lost, feeling unwell, sleeping or using their cell phones, rose significantly.

Chart 3: Action Taken by FSP

Nearly 20 percent of the time, the FSP driver working an incident was able to make a quick fix or repair to quickly get the motorist on his or her way again within 10 to 15 minutes. Another 20 percent of the time, FSP towed the disabled vehicle off of the freeway, either to a designated drop zone or to another safe area. Three percent of motorists that FSP stopped for refused FSP assistance, either because they had other assistance on the way or because they were distrustful that FSP was really free of charge.

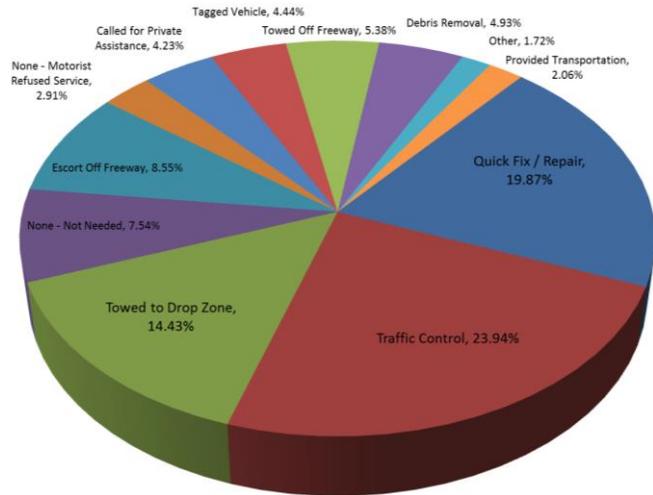
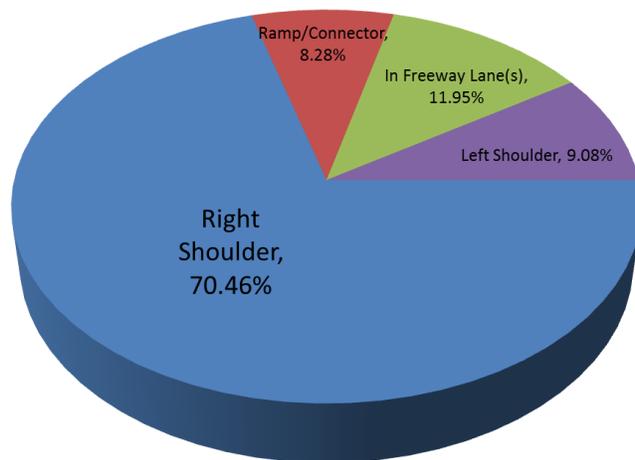


Chart 4: Where FSP Found Disabled Vehicles



Over 70 percent of disabled vehicles are found located on the right shoulder. About 12 percent are found in the freeway lanes; these have the greatest impact on traffic congestion since they partially or completely block one or more lanes of traffic. Disabled vehicles on the left shoulder or on a ramp or freeway connector also present major traffic hazards to passing motorists.

Chart 5: How FSP Came Upon Need for Assist

During FSP hours of operation, FSP drivers rove the covered freeways in search of incidents they can assist with. 59 percent of assists in the first quarter were found by FSP while roving. 23 percent of the time, CHP dispatched FSP to assist with a specific incident. Nearly 16 percent of assists were at the request of another FSP driver to help with a multiple-vehicle accident or to provide traffic control to improve safety in a dangerous situation.

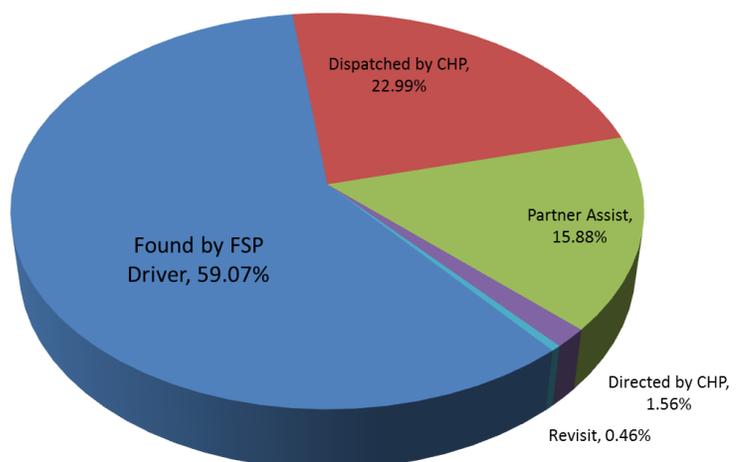


Chart 6: Types of Vehicles Assisted by FSP

As expected, most disabled vehicles encountered by FSP are passenger cars, SUVs and pickup trucks. However, FSP assisted large trucks, big rigs, RVs, motorcycles and even boats in the first quarter.

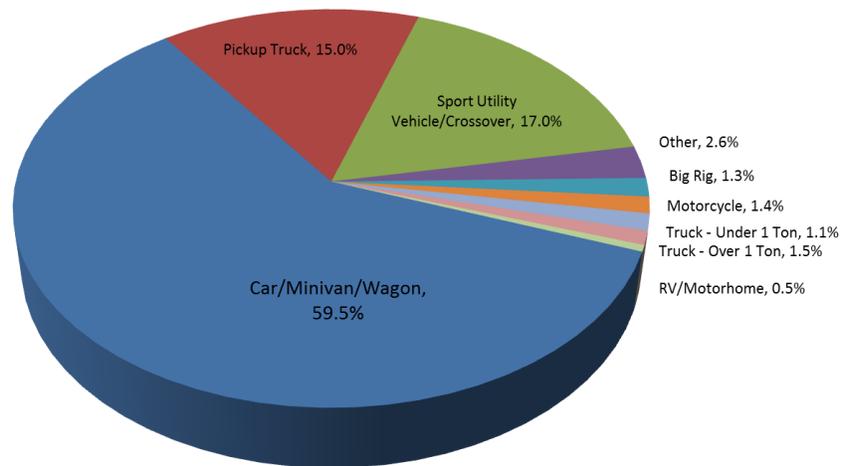
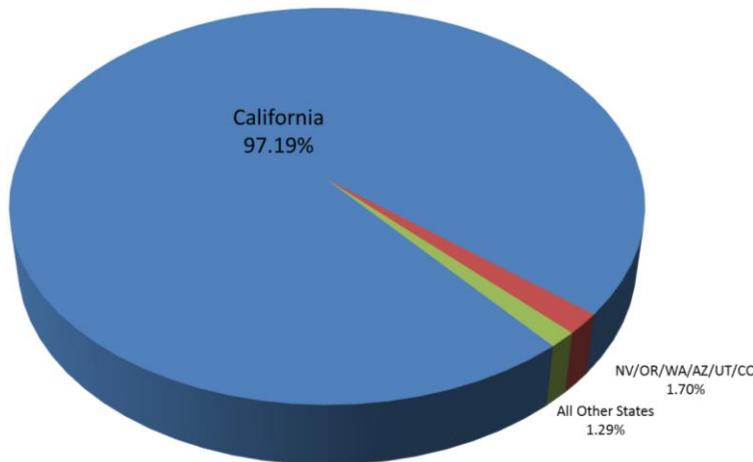


Chart 7: Origin of Vehicles Assisted by FSP



The overwhelming majority of the time, vehicles assisted by SacMetro FSP are from within California. As could be expected, the next largest group of vehicles needing FSP assistance were from the adjacent states of Nevada, Oregon and Arizona. However, FSP assisted vehicles from states as far away as Hawaii (1) and Canada (3). In the first quarter of FY2016, vehicles from 40 of the 50 U.S. states were assisted.

Response Time. Response times in the first quarter of FY 2016 were very good. 31.8 percent of assisted motorists reported that they waited less than 5 minutes before FSP appeared on the scene, while another 33.9 percent reported having to wait only between 5 and 10 minutes. 15.2 percent reported waiting 10 to 15 minutes and 8.1 percent reported waiting 15 to 20 minutes. 11 percent reported they waited longer than 20 minutes before FSP showed up.

Service Rating. For the quarter, we received 381 responses to our online survey. 98.4 percent of the motorists assisted by FSP and who responded to the survey rated the service as 'excellent' while the remaining 1.6 percent rated it 'good'. Additionally, all but two of the motorists surveyed said that the FSP driver that helped them was "very helpful" (with the other two rating the driver as "somewhat helpful"). 249 of the surveys received included written comments, most expressing thanks to the driver and/or indicating support for the program. Following are a few examples:

- Very courteous and understanding. I was shaken and they helped me feel better about the whole situation.
- Breaking down on the middle of the freeway is my worst fear. I managed to get over safely across all lanes of traffic. I started to call for help, but before anyone answered he pulled up right behind me. I felt like I had a guardian angel. Thank you so much for this service. I'm so grateful for their help. My driver and tow truck driver were with me until the end!!!

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- I was so surprised and shocked, I hope you guys can get more funding to do more of this! Rock on!
 - The driver was a life saver! I was stuck in a high traffic area and he happened along and got me to a safe place. Was very nice and accommodating, could not have received better service!
 - This driver was the most conscientious, kind, sympathetic person. We had already called AAA but it was so comforting to know that someone arrived out of the blue to help us. He was wonderful!
 - Richard was an incredible help. His arrival was very timely. It's great to see our tax dollars at work doing good things to help keep us safe. Thank you for providing such a great service.
 - Joseph was extremely professional and fast! I am a disabled Vet and was very concerned being stuck in the break down lane so near to the fast lane. He arrived quickly, got my car off the highway and took me to a safe location. I am extremely grateful and hope that Joseph is recognized for his professionalism and courtesy!
 - The driver was very personable and professional (I am sorry I didn't write down his name). He showed up behind my car as I was calling AAA for a tow. The driver explained who he was and what the service did for stranded motorists. I was amazed at the speed in which he hooked my car up for the tow. If you are able to, please thank the tow truck driver again for me as he did a great job. I also thank you SacMetro FSP for this service!
 - Johnny was so nice and helpful. My ETA for roadside was about an hour and he cut my time in half (including pulling over and calling roadside service).
 - Mike was very helpful to me and my grandson. I am disabled and your driver went out of his way to assist me and my 7 year old grandson watching out for our safety first. Then later he assisted in placing spare tire on my vehicle for me. I really don't know what I would have done if Mike hadn't showed up when he did. I even offered to give him a tip of \$20 after he told me about the program but he refused and simply asked me to fill out survey. I am totally impressed with the level of professionalism this driver extended to me today. He turned what could have been a very bad situation into a short almost pleasant conversation and had us back on the road within 20 minutes of rescuing us from the expressway. THANK YOU!!!
 - This is a great service. The FSP driver arrived on the scene in less than two minutes. He was very quick and would not accept a tip even though I tried multiple times. Great service...
 - Never knew this service existed. Driver was awesome! Helpful and informative of services. Thank you for this available service to the public, we appreciate it!!!
 - What a nice surprise to have your driver pull up and offer assistance while I was still waiting for AAA. Another driver/truck, pulled up to assist and they both were extremely polite and helpful, thank you!
 - Just when you think you cannot get something worthy for free this service shines like the beacon it is.
 - Been waiting for AAA to show up and instead this angel does and she gets AAA redirected to the place she drops me off at and afterwards they show up. This is a great service. Keep up the good work.
 - Absolutely awesome!! Ran out of gas and was back on the road in 15 minutes are you serious? Well done!!
 - This service is great! Saved me hours waiting for my own road side assistance. Driver was VERY nice and helpful. Thank you!!!!!!

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- Scott was very knowledgeable and helpful. Instead of waiting up to 45 minutes for AAA to arrive, Scott got us back on the road within 10 minutes.
 - You guys are amazing!! Really appreciated the help with a flat tire. I was in rush hour traffic and alongside a very busy I5. Miguel was so helpful and got me back on the road quickly!! Can't thank you guys enough!!
 - Scott came to help within 90 seconds. I don't know if that's just good luck or they are always that close. It was especially lucky because my 20-month-old son in the back seat and I only had so much cold A/C with no engine running. I had run out of gas (the car said I had 20 miles left, I swear) and he hooked me up with a gallon to get me to gas station at the next exit. Thanks for having this service!
 - The driver was so very helpful and considerate. I was very nervous and did not know what to do. I had my very young son with me who was also very scared. I am very grateful for the driver's helpfulness and kindness. He helped ease both my son and my own nerves. Don't know what I would have done without this service.
 - Genuinely the BEST experience ever. Eddie (I think was his name) was amazing. Whatever the cost I am willing to support you guys. Thank you for saving my day!! Superheroes do exist. Thank you again.
 - This service is a blessing! I would have had to sit on the freeway in my car for a much longer period of time waiting for a tow truck without it. What a relief when he showed up!
 - The service was fantastic and too good to be true. My road service provider called me 30 minutes after your driver had me back on the road and said we would have an additional 2 hour wait. What a godsend.
 - I had to stop at a very unsafe spot but the driver arrived and offered help. He was very courteous and helpful. He helped one more vehicle behind me after he helped me. I was very impressed by FSP service.
 - I had called my fleet roadside service and was told I would have to wait about 1 hour for them to come and this was after being on the phone with them for 1/2 hour. As soon as I hung with them, Jeff pulled up and saved the day! Thank you. I called and canceled my roadside service.
 - Flat on freeway. My tow service said 90 min wait. CHP officer pulled over, said he had called u and help arrived in a few minutes. As a woman alone in a dangerous situation, your service was greatly appreciated! Tim was excellent. Thank you!
 - Johnny was unbelievable! I was in a very dangerous place on the freeway and he got me safely to his truck and then took care of my car. All of this what looked to be a disastrous situation became a slight wrinkle in my day. My own road service wouldn't have even gotten to my car to help me in 30 minutes. FSP people are saints!!! Nothing less!!

Other. On August 21, 2015, STA staff terminated its contract with Mike's Towing Service, the FSP contractor for Beats 1 and 2 on Highway 99 and Business 80, because of issues with both contract and driver performance. In the months leading up to termination, only about half of Mike's assigned trucks actually went out on patrol due to a shortage of drivers and/or equipment-related issues. Beats 1 and 2 are currently covered by backup trucks and drivers from Sierra Hart (the incumbent contractor on FSP Beats 3 and 4 – US 50) until the new contractor, Five Star Towing, is able assume operations on these beats.