



NEWS

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MTA BOARD APPROVES FUNDS FOR MAJOR INCIDENT RESPONSE PROGRAM; WILL REDUCE FREEWAY INCIDENTS BY 18 MINUTES

The MTA Board has approved a three-year agreement with the California Highway Patrol to implement key elements of the Major Incident Response Program, which will enable major freeway incidents to clear at least 18 minutes faster.

"One half of all major incidents is caused by an excess of vehicles using the freeways," said Michael Antonovich, MTA Board chairman and Los Angeles county supervisor. "The Major Incident Response Program is designed to decrease the other half caused by hazardous materials spills, collisions resulting in injuries or fatalities, overturned cargo trailers with spilled loads, and police activities, such as pursuits."

The average duration of a major incident is approximately three hours. This coordinated program, which involves Caltrans, the CHP and the Los Angeles County Coroner, reduces motorists delays by 72 to 90 minutes, and saves each affected motorists, according to the CHP, an estimated \$9.36 to \$11.70 per incident on average.

"The program was made possible by two previous MTA funding packages with the CHP," said Franklin White, MTA chief executive officer. "The first project involved major upgrades to the CHP's computer aided dispatch (CAD) system; this resulted in reducing by 50% the time it takes a dispatcher to respond to incoming callbox calls from motorists."

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MAJOR INCIDENT RESPONSE PROGRAM

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The CHP has conservatively estimated taxpayer savings of \$22.6 million annually upon full implementation of the Major Incident Response Program.

The MTA 20-year long range transportation plan assumes ongoing funding for the Major Incident Response Program from Proposition C 25% funds, which are designated by statute for expenditures on transit-related streets/state highway improvements. Program funds will be budgeted in an amount not to exceed \$2.6 million for fiscal year 1994/95. The monies will go for Freeway Incident Status Boards - \$515,025, Portable Incident Command Packages (PIC PACs) - \$99,660, Coroner's and Allied Agency Workstations - \$202,463, Closed Circuit Television Network Interface - \$50,000, Project Management and Evaluation - \$222,418, Fog Sensors - \$23,861, and Freeway Incident Response Services Tracking - \$1,473,458.

The attached list outlines the program.

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COMPONENTS OF MAJOR INCIDENT RESPONSE PROGRAM

Freeway Incident Status Boards (\$515,025): These status boards will prioritize comprehensive incident management information for use by allied agencies and the public over an extensive communications network designed to interface with a wide variety of display systems.

Portable Incident Command Packages (PIC PACs)(\$99,660): PIC PACs consist of cellular telephones, fax capabilities, printers, and digital cameras, providing a portable communications and incident management system for the CHP officers to utilize in communicating with the CHP's Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, local fire and police departments, the Coroner, etc.

Coroner's and Allied Agency Workstations (\$202,463): Provides an electronic communication interface between the Coroner and other allied agencies and the CAD system to reduce response times to incidents by providing accurate, timely electronic information.

Interagency Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Network (\$50,000): Provides CHP with a connection to Caltrans' CCTV network, assisting in detection and validation of incident information for timely dissemination to responder agencies and the media.

Freeway Incident Response Services Tracking (FIRST) (\$1,473,458): Phase I - Requirements definition and design and initial Freeway Incident Status Display Boards, is underway. This MOU will provide a funding mechanism for Phase II - Core System Development and development of Primary Client Systems Software will be developed to implement a high performance database and data communications system to fully implement the status boards, Coroner's and Allied Agency Workstations, CCTV Network, Interagency Network, PIC PACs, Emergency Response Center, and Traffic Management Center.

Fog Sensors (\$23,861): Provides start-up funds to test visibility sensors on heavily travelled highways subject to heavy fog (e.g., the Grapevine).

Project Management and Evaluation (\$222,418): Provides adequate staff support to manage and evaluate the effectiveness of MIR projects. Dedicated staff support is crucial to effective implementation of this project.