



NEWS

October 30, 1997

MEDIA ADVISORY—PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

MTA METRO BUSES TO BE DECORATED FOR HALLOWEEN

WHAT: In celebration of Halloween, MTA Metro Buses will be decorated in the true spirit of the Trick-or-Treat season and displayed at the Patsaouras Transit Plaza. A panel of judges will select the winning entry from among the eleven MTA bus operating divisions displaying their decorated bus. Metro Bus operators also will be in costume.

WHEN: *Friday, October 31, 1997*
11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

WHERE: MTA Headquarters Building
Patsaouras Transit Plaza—Bus Plaza
(Off of Vignes, behind Union Station)
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles

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MTA-221



Los Angeles County

Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies

October 24, 1997

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STATE-OF-THE-ART CALL BOXES TO SPELL RELIEF FOR TENS OF THOUSANDS OF SPEECH AND HEARING IMPAIRED MOTORISTS

For many people, becoming stranded on a freeway is the most isolated, frightening experience imaginable. Think then what it must feel like to be deaf, hard of hearing and/or speech impaired and unable to fully access a call box.

Help is on the way thanks to the Los Angeles County Service Authority of Freeway Emergencies (SAFE), a separate and independent entity housed within the MTA.

Last week, 35 call boxes, specifically designed to improve the accessibility of the call box for individuals who may be deaf, hard of hearing and/or speech impaired, were installed on the 5, 91, 105 and 605 freeways near Santa Fe Springs.

The call boxes are equipped with a motorized keypad and a graphic display screen with which to communicate with the California Highway Patrol.

If the 30-day field test proves successful - which involves analyzing some 1,050 "calls" - and the call boxes pass subsequent crash tests required by Caltrans, system-wide retrofitting should be complete in late 1998.

"The late Kenny Hahn, who masterminded the call box system some 35 years ago after he saw a woman and her child stranded on the side of the road was very proud of this project," said Los Angeles Supervisor and SAFE Board member Don Knabe. "Somewhere Kenny, realizing many more people will be

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able to participate in the call box program and that the wait for help will be greatly reduced as well as the mental anguish, must be smiling down on us.”

Throughout the year, SAFE has worked with an advisory task force, the California Highway Patrol, California Department of Transportation and Comarco Wireless Technologies to develop a new call box.

Motorists needing a text telephony (TTY) call box can look for the TTY accessibility notification sign installed above the current call box sign.

SAFE, which was formed in 1991 to operate the call box program, and the new call boxes, are funded by the \$1 Department of Motor Vehicles registration fee.

The Los Angeles County call box system is comprised of 4,200 call boxes which are accessed by more than 1,300 motorists each month.

MTA-218

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