



**OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
JUNE 17, 2004**

SUBJECT: METRO FREEWAY SERVICE PATROL

**ACTION: EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY
PATROL TO SUPPORT THE METRO FREEWAY SERVICE
PATROL PROGRAM**

RECOMMENDATION

Authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute an agreement with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to provide field officer and dispatch support to the Los Angeles County Metro Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) during FY05 in the amount of \$600,000.

RATIONALE

Each year, a portion of the state funding earmarked for FSP is taken off-the-top by Caltrans to reimburse the CHP for its direct FSP costs. The role of the CHP is: to provide dispatch support via specially trained dispatchers; to provide field enforcement activities (inspections of trucks and operators in the field, monitoring of FSP operations, annual inspections of the contractors' facilities); and to develop and provide operator training (new FSP operator training and certification, and refresher training for all current FSP operators). The amount of funding provided to the Los Angeles CHP from the state has not been sufficient to provide the necessary CHP staff support to successfully perform its responsibilities. Additionally, the state allocation to CHP has remained constant for the past three years, while CHP labor rates continue to increase. The MTA has therefore used its own funding to augment the state funding to the CHP.

The recommended funding for CHP would keep the FY05 budget at the current FY04 level. However, because of increasing salary and benefit wages negotiated by CHP's bargaining units and the MTA's directive to contain costs, the FY05 budget reduces CHP's dedicated staff support by one FSP Officer and one Information Systems Specialist. The total number of officers supporting the LA FSP program will be reduced from nine to eight officers. CHP will absorb the computer systems support previously provided by the Information Systems Specialist.

The need for CHP support has not decreased as the amount of FSP tow service has remained constant, and may in fact be increasing in FY05 as the I-710 Heavy Duty Tow demonstration project and/or other truck-traffic mitigation efforts get underway.

Furthermore, because of state reductions in force and prioritization of work efforts affecting both CHP and Caltrans, the FSP operation will be undergoing a streamlining period during which time an operational program assessment will be conducted to determine how best to operate with dwindling operational support resources in the future. An operations consultant has been contracted to conduct the FSP program assessment. The program assessment will be completed in early 2005. A recommendation on any operational changes affecting the FSP budget and/or program policies will be forwarded for Board approval.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Funding of \$600,000 for the agreement with CHP to support FSP service is included in the FY05 budget under cost center 3352, Project 300070, Freeway Service Patrol. The budget for CHP support in FY04 was also \$600,000.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The MTA may decide not to approve the resources for CHP support to the FSP program. This is not recommended as the MTA Board of Directors has advocated increases in FSP service in the past, including the I-710 Heavy-Duty Tow Demonstration, without specifically identifying outside agency funding needed to support the authorized expansion of the FSP program.

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