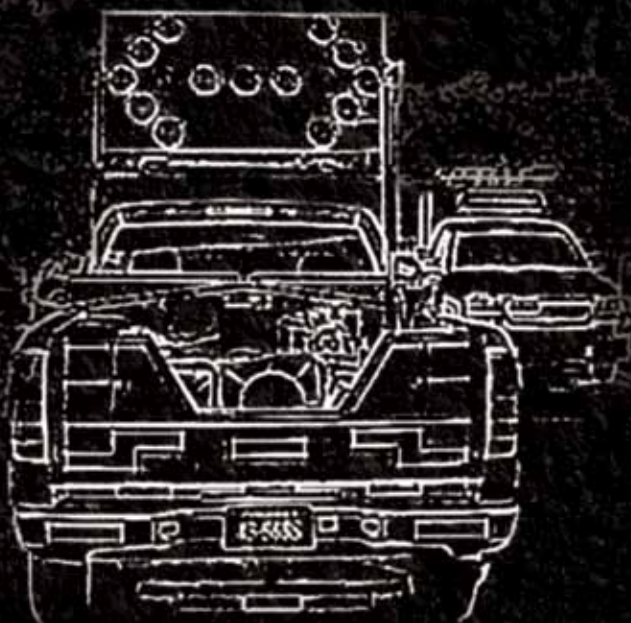




Field Operations Guide for Safety/Service Patrols



Technical Report Documentation Page

1. Report No. FHWA-HOP-10-014	2. Government Accession No.	3. Recipient's Catalog No.	
4. Title and Subtitle Field Operations Guide and Visor Cards for Safety/ Service Patrols		5. Report Date December 31, 2009	
		6. Performing Organization Code HOTO-1	
7. Author(s) John Sparks, Jessica Schuh, Arland T. Smith		8. Performing Organization Report No.	
9. Performing Organization Name and Address Delcan Corporation 4411 Suwanee Dam Rd. Suite 560 Suwanee, Georgia 30024 SAIC 8301 Greensboro Drive MS E-12-3 McLean, VA 22102		10. Work Unit No. (TRAIS)	
		11. Contract or Grant No.	
12. Sponsoring Agency Name and Address Federal Highway Administration, Office of Operations U.S. Department of Transportation 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE Washington, DC 20590		13. Type of Report and Period Covered Field Operations Guide	
		14. Sponsoring Agency Code ETO, HOTO-1, FHWA	
15. Supplementary Notes Kimberly C. Vásconez, FHWA Office of Operations, Office of Transportation Operations, Emergency Transportation Operations Team Leader and Contracting Officer's Technical Monitor (COTM)			
16. Abstract FHWA produced this guide for use by Safety/Service Patrol operators and supervisors. It is expected that Safety/Service Patrol personnel will carry the guide in their vehicle to use as a quick reference while performing patrol tasks. They should refer to this guide on a regular basis as a refresher on steps and tasks associated with managing incidents—particularly for those situations not encountered every day. This guide is not designed to stand alone, but in conjunction with training and exercises that will indoctrinate the Safety/Service patrol operators into these good practices as well as Agency formal Standard Operating Guidelines or Procedures.			
17. Key Words Emergency Transportation Operations, Traffic Incident Management (TIM), Full-Function Safety/Service Patrols (FFSPs), Safety/Service Patrols, Freeway Operations, Traffic Control		18. Distribution Statement No restrictions	
19. Security Classif. (of this report) Unclassified	20. Security Classif. (of this page) Unclassified	21. No. of Pages 94	22. Price

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The Basics

Introduction

Traffic Incident Management (TIM) is the detection, response, and clearance of traffic incidents to restore the capacity of the roadway quickly and safely.¹ The National Traffic Incident Management Coalition (NTIMC) has defined a three-part National Unified Goal (NUG) for TIM:

- Responder safety.
- Safe, quick clearance.
- Prompt, reliable, interoperable communications.²

TIM programs require coordination among various stakeholders, including, but not limited to, departments of transportation, law enforcement, fire- rescue, emergency management services, towing and recovery, and safety/ service patrols. Each of these disciplines has provided guidance to the NTIMC on the elements of a successful TIM program through their respective organizations. The NTIMC has consolidated these principles and is putting them to action through various programs throughout the country.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recognizes Safety/Service Patrol (S/SP) programs as one of the most effective TIM strategies available. Successful S/SP programs help meet the NUG and improve TIM in cities across America.

1 United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Traffic Incident Management Program. <http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/incidentmgmt/about/about.htm> (Accessed December 10, 2008)

2 National Traffic Incident Management Coalition, National Unified Goal for Traffic Incident Management: Working Together for Improved Safety, Clearance, and Communications. <http://www.transportation.org/sites/ntimc/docs/NUG%20Unified%20Goal-Nov07.pdf>



Many states have fully accepted the concept of S/SP and realize that these programs are far more than just a convenience for motorists who run out of gas or have a flat tire. Some agencies believe the program is so important that they have obtained private sponsorship to help fund their S/SP operations.

As part of the effort to encourage major metropolitan safety/service patrols to transition to Full Function Safety/Service Patrols (FFS/SP) and to establish consistency among these programs, the FHWA has published the *Full Function Safety/Service Patrol Handbook*, developed training standards, and prepared this *Field Operations Guide for Safety/Service Patrols*.

This Field Operations Guide (FOG) is designed to help S/SP operators and supervisors perform the many functions and activities of an S/SP program.

The FOG is designed to augment, not replace, the necessary initial training required for S/SP operators. The intent of the FOG is to reinforce procedures and provide reminders for various incident scenarios.

Working as incident management and incident prevention responders, S/SP operators encounter a wide variety of situations that require diverse response activities and guidelines. This guide can help operators and supervisors perform efficiently and effectively by providing tools and guidance for successful S/SP operations.



Basic FFS/SP Program Functions

Traditionally, Safety/Service Patrol programs have offered only motorist assistance, which is in itself an important service to the public that frees police and other emergency response personnel to perform the activities associated with their primary missions.

Over time, safety/service patrol programs have matured from basic motorist assistance into more fully functional programs, taking on a new and equally important role in incident management. As a result, Full Function Service Patrols (FFS/SPs) have become a new generation of first responders, providing valuable public safety and protection services. In this new role, safety/service patrol programs help keep incident scenes safe, clear incidents more quickly, and assist other emergency responders at incident scenes.

Each responder to an incident scene has unique duties. The FFS/SP's primary contributions to the incident response team are scene safety and traffic control. The FFS/SP operator also clears minor incidents without assistance where possible, eliminating the hazard and reducing the need for response by other agencies.

An FFS/SP's mission is an extension of the transportation agency's mission to maintain the safe and efficient flow of traffic on the roadways. Agencies devote large budgets and resources, including the operation of FFS/SP programs, to accomplish this mission. FFS/SPs maintain traffic flow and safety by promptly detecting incidents or disruptions to traffic, minimizing incident duration, clearing obstructions, improving scene safety, and preventing secondary incidents.



The basic functions of an FFS/SP include a multitude of responsibilities. It is recognized that while each program is unique, a true FFS/SP includes the functions covered in this guide. The following is a list of the essential objectives of an FFS/SP program, defined in priority order:

1. Scene Safety
2. Traffic incident clearance
3. Traffic control and scene management
4. Incident detection and verification
5. Motorist assistance and debris removal
6. Traveler information

The Safety/Service Patrol Handbook further describes the FFS/SP basic functions:

- Provide typical services, including:
 - Minor repairs and motorist assistance.
 - Debris removal.
 - Fuel.
 - First aid.
 - Vehicle relocation out of travel lanes.
- Reduce traffic congestion, improve travel time reliability, and improve safety on freeway and arterial systems.
- Provide emergency temporary traffic control (TTC) at incident scenes.



- Provide incident response services, clearance resources, and free motorist assistance services 24-hours-per-day, 7-days-per-week.
- Provide operators that are highly skilled and specially trained in the following:
 - NIMS/ICS.
 - Traffic control.
 - First aid and CPR.
 - Hazardous materials awareness and recognition.
 - Light duty towing and recovery.
- Utilize FFS/SP vehicles designed and equipped to fully relocate a stalled or abandoned automobile or light truck from a highway to a safe location.
- Provide situation status updates to Traffic Management Centers (TMC) / Traffic Operations Centers (TOC) or dispatch and traffic news personnel.
- Participate in incident debriefs or after-action reviews.

FFS/SP Operator Overview and Functions

FFS/SP supervisors and operators are the traffic control specialist members of the response team at a traffic incident. Emergency responders who work closely with FFS/SP personnel recognize them as a vital resource to be relied upon during incidents of every type and scale.



As incident responders—often the first on the scene—FFS/SP operators play an important role not only as responders but also as representatives of their agencies to the public and other responders. FFS/SP personnel must always show professionalism, using their skills and training to best serve those they are assisting. Motorists using the roadway system want to know they have an advocate who is focused on their safety and on reducing their frustration with congestion caused by incidents. FFS/SP professionals must serve as that advocate. It is vital that FFS/SP personnel be courteous and maintain the highest standards of integrity—even when working with uncooperative motorists or other responders who may not fully realize the expertise and resources that FFS/SP provides—while representing the agency.

Some other responders may not yet understand the FFS/SP role; they may assume that the FFS/SP operator is trying to override their authority or is only concerned with quick clearance rather than *safe* quick clearance. While maintaining professionalism, FFS/SP personnel should explain their role to such responders, but never undermine the authority of the scene commander.

Because safety of the motorist and the responder is paramount, FFS/SP professionals should always serve as safety officers and consider safety first in all decisions made while assisting motorists or responding to an incident. In any instance in which the FFS/SP operator believes a motorist or other responder is taking an unsafe course of action and is unable to resolve the problem, the operator should advise the on-site incident supervisor or incident commander. If the problem persists, the onsite FFS/SP official should report the concern to their supervisor of record and dispatcher.

The true performance measure of an individual FFS/SP operator is how effective and efficient they are in locating and safely clearing disruptions to restore traffic flow. An effective FFS/SP operator:

- Detects incidents by continuously scanning both directions of travel while patrolling.
- Assists motorists with relocating their vehicles out of hazardous locations.
- Sets up temporary traffic controls and improves scene safety.
- Communicates incident details and traffic conditions to dispatch, the TMC, or the TOC.
- Establishes and maintains a close working relationship with the onsite incident commander or safety officer, law enforcement, fire and rescue personnel, and other TIM responders in a multi-agency response.
- Establishes and maintains close communication with dispatch and/or the TMC or TOC staff.
- Works with fire-rescue and other responders to maintain as many open lanes as practicable.
- Clears and reopens travel lanes as the situation permits.
- Shortens the duration of incidents and prevents secondary crashes.



How to Use this Guide

Intended Audience and Use

Although the Federal Highway Administration encourages all Safety/Service Patrols to attain Full-Function status, as described in the Full-Function Safety/Service Patrol Handbook, we expect that S/SPs at all level of development should be able to use this Field Operations guide.

This guide was developed for use by S/SP operators and supervisors. S/SP personnel should carry the guide in their safety/service patrol vehicle to use as a quick reference while performing patrol tasks.

They should refer to this guide on a regular basis as a refresher on steps and tasks associated with managing incidents—particularly for those situations not encountered every day.

This guide is not designed to stand alone; programs should use it in conjunction with training to help condense the learning process. The Field Operations Guide should accompany agency formal Standard Operating Guidelines or Procedures incorporated with a solid training program.



Using the FOG in the Field

This guide is organized into five logical sections:

- Section 1 – The Basics
- Section 2 – Operator Information
- Section 3 – Emergency Temporary Traffic Control
- Section 4 – Incident Actions
- Section 5 – Reference

Users should review the guide thoroughly to become familiar with the contents and layout. Also, individual program information such as department-specific procedures, contact lists, and policies may be added to these basic guidelines and best practices. It may also be useful to tag or mark information used frequently in the field.

This guide will help S/SP professionals take the necessary steps and follow safety guidelines to manage an incident. Knowledge of the contents may increase confidence during high-stress situations. By having this guide available, S/SP professionals may be better prepared to take the appropriate action to quickly and safely manage any incident encountered.

As an example of how this guide may be used, a first-on-the-scene S/SP operator at a truck crash may use the step-by-step bulleted guidance in the Incident Actions section to bring order to the scene and to make sure all important factors are considered. Additional guidance may assist the S/SP operator in determining the next steps to take in clearing the travel lanes and maintaining safety for victims, responders, and approaching motorists. As the reader becomes more familiar with the guidance in this document, they may perform in a more consistent and effective manner.



Operator Information

Why use the FOG

The primary benefit of the Field Operations Guide is that it provides easily accessible on-the-job guidance to S/SP operators. However, it has other benefits as well.

The guide can be help both to improve safety for responders and motorists and to reduce liability for operators and agencies. Having the guide readily at hand gives operators a quick reference to annotated safety protocols and procedures. This, in turn, increases safety for operators, other responders, and roadway users, while avoiding unnecessary equipment damage.

In addition to aiding operators in the field, this guide helps promote professionalism for the S/SP program. Personnel maintain a consistent level of service through standardized guidelines and procedures. The guide may help S/SP professionals avoid undesired performance by helping eliminate vital mistakes or ineffective actions. The step-by-step procedures outlined in the guide lend themselves easily to employee performance management and peer review of the program.

Finally, this guide helps operators and program administrators gauge their policies and procedures against benchmarks that are consistent with state-of-the-industry best practices. Providing consistent and practical service based on national best practices ultimately raises the bar for S/SP programs around the country.

Pretrip Inspection

Inspect your vehicle and complete the Pretrip Vehicle Inspection Form before beginning your shift. This form includes a checklist of all vehicle safety items and devices, including, but not limited to, brakes, horn, headlights, taillights, turn signals, backup warning device, emergency lights, arrow panel, and traffic cones.

- Check that all safety items are operational. Do not drive a vehicle that is in an unsafe condition.
- Verify that all tools and equipment are secure. Notify the supervisor of any missing items before beginning your shift.
- Check all expendable supplies and materials that may have been used during the previous shift. Restock as needed.
- Inventory the first-aid kit. Make sure the kit includes appropriate disposable exam gloves.
- Recheck the vehicle at the end of your shift to ensure that all tools and equipment are in place. Refill or restock supplies or materials used. Report any heavily worn or broken equipment to the supervisor for repair or replacement.
- You are responsible for the proper care of the vehicle and its tools and equipment. Your responsibilities include, for example, checking oil and hydraulic fluid levels, bleeding air tanks, and scheduling maintenance.



Personal Safety

Your job environment exposes you to many potential hazards. For your safety, you must be familiar with your vehicle and S/SP safety policies.

Working on a highway or near moving traffic is hazardous. As an operator, you must be extremely alert and use sound judgment to protect yourself, other responders, and motorists.

High-Visibility Apparel / Safety Vest

Wear approved high-visibility apparel at all times when working outside of the vehicle.

- Keep your high-visibility apparel clean to maintain reflectivity and visibility.
- Replace your high-visibility apparel when it is worn, heavily soiled, or faded.
- Wear your high-visibility apparel on top of all other clothing, including jackets.

Personal Safety Items

- Use your seat belt.
- Wear gloves when changing tires or removing debris.
- Wear disposable exam gloves if there is a possibility of contact with bloodborne pathogens. Do not use leather work gloves as a substitute.
- Wear safety shoes—such as steel toe boots—to protect your feet from falling objects or crushing injuries.
- Avoid loose or hanging clothing or personal items that may become snagged when working on disabled vehicles.



Figure 1. Current Truck and Equipment Used by Chicago's Minutemen.



General Operator Safety

Safety is paramount and should always be a part of your daily routine. Following are some specific safety guidelines:

- Position your vehicle considering the safety of those at the scene.
- Park your vehicle to provide maximum protection while you are out of your vehicle, creating a buffer zone away from the disabled vehicle. Turn your front wheels away from traffic.
- Call dispatch with your “Windshield Size-up” BEFORE LEAVING YOUR VEHICLE.
 - Provide your exact location if possible using as many of the following as possible:
 - Route #
 - Landmark
 - Direction
 - Before/After Exit #
 - Mile Marker
 - Town
 - Lane(s) blocked
 - Describe the nature of the incident— “What do you see?”
 - Number and type of vehicles
 - Extent of damage to vehicles
 - Possible injuries?

- Evaluate each situation, determine what needs to be done to manage the situation, and take appropriate action.
- Maintain situational awareness. Being aware of what is happening around you helps you understand how your actions may impact your safety and the safety of other responders and motorists. Balance the risks and benefits of the action you are about to take.
- Consider weather conditions when positioning your vehicle and setting up traffic controls.
- Always think about your safety and the safety of others.



Figure 2. Tennessee Department of Transportation HELP Incident Response Truck.



Priorities at an Incident

It is important to prioritize your actions when you arrive at an incident scene, especially if you are the first to arrive. The scene may seem chaotic and it may appear that several tasks and responsibilities need to be completed at the same time. Using the priorities listed below can help you determine which tasks should be done first.

1. Save lives:
 - a. Make safety your first priority.
 - b. Preserve the lives of responders, injured persons, and passing motorists.
2. Stabilize the incident
 - a. Set up emergency temporary traffic controls.
 - b. Prevent secondary crashes by warning approaching traffic.
 - c. Practice safe, quick clearance; move crash vehicles as soon as permitted.
 - d. Follow agency policy for scene preservation to protect evidence when necessary.
3. Protect property and the environment:
 - a. Contain spilled vehicle fluids to limit environmental damage.
 - b. Upgrade traffic controls and advance warning.

Operating in the Interest of Safety

Taking action “in the interest of safety” should be the motivation behind all your incident management activities. Apply your experience and common sense to taking that extra step and making the right decision in the interest of safety. Instead of doing nothing, look for that something extra you could be doing to improve scene safety:

- Set out traffic cones even if you only expect to be there a short time.
- Encourage a motorist who has already called for a tow to move from a hazardous location while waiting.
- Report abandoned vehicles to prevent a more serious incident.
- Relocate vehicles to a safer location before performing repairs.
- Do not take safety shortcuts.
- **Do something!**



Traffic Laws

S/SP operators may have some special driving privileges and exemptions that are not extended to the general public. S/SP operators must be fully aware of laws and agency policy regarding these exemptions. S/SP vehicles are generally considered Official Vehicles and may be permitted to utilize median crossovers and paved shoulders or grassy areas to respond to an emergency or lane blocking incident when safe to do so. Local regulations and policies may vary.

However, S/SPs, in general, do not have the same exemptions to traffic laws given to police, fire, or EMS response units. You should always follow the guidance outlined below to ensure you are in compliance with all traffic laws in your jurisdiction.

- Adhere to all traffic and motor vehicle laws and policies. Even when responding to an emergency, do not exceed the posted speed or disobey other traffic regulations.
- Follow safe driving principles and practices.
- Make sure all vehicle occupants wear seat belts in compliance with State and Federal laws. Infants and small children must be in properly installed safety seats.

Proper Patrol Procedures

- Maintain a safe, steady speed consistent with traffic around you when on patrol. Do not exceed the posted speed limit, even when responding to an emergency.
- Use extreme caution and travel at a slow, safe speed when driving on shoulders or grassy areas. Watch for other vehicles entering the shoulder from the travel lane. You may use the S/SP vehicle's emergency warning lights. Do not use shoulders to respond to non-emergency incidents, such as a disabled vehicle out of traffic or an unconfirmed incident.
- Reduce speed during wet weather or poor visibility.
- Maintain a proper interval; avoid following a truck or high-cube vehicle that restricts your view.
- Check mirrors frequently and watch for vehicles in the blind spots.
- Drive in the right travel lane whenever possible; most stops will be on the right.
- Use emergency lighting and arrow panels in accordance with operating policies.
- Set the parking brake before exiting the vehicle.
- Use caution when exiting the vehicle. When stopped adjacent to a travel lane, look before opening the door into traffic.
- Check your surroundings to ensure clearance before backing up. Use a spotter to guide you when one is available. **LOOK BEFORE YOU BACK UP.**



Leaving and Entering the Travel Lanes

- Signal your intentions and give plenty of notice before pulling onto or off of a shoulder.
- Activate emergency lights as needed. Do not use the arrow panel as a turn signal.
- Use the shoulder to gain speed to safely re-enter the traffic stream.
- Do not risk creating a hazardous situation by making an erratic maneuver if you see a stalled vehicle at the last minute. Stop in front of the vehicle if necessary or proceed to the next exit and circle around to get into a safe position.
- Use caution when reentering the flow of traffic.

Operator Safety Guidelines for Motorist Assists

When working alone on or along active roadways:

- Be aware of oncoming traffic.
- Minimize the time spent standing or walking between your vehicle and other vehicles.
- Plan an escape path.
- Check traffic before exiting the vehicle.
- Approach the vehicle you are assisting on the side away from traffic. In most cases, this is the passenger's side of the vehicle. If the vehicle is on the left shoulder or median, approach the vehicle on the driver's side.
- Turn your head and use your peripheral vision to monitor oncoming traffic for potential errant vehicles.
- Scan the interior of the vehicle as you approach it.
- Avoid confrontations by practicing diplomacy.
- Render assistance only when it is accepted.
- Report unusual behavior to dispatch.
- Park well off the travel lane where possible.
- Practice space safety, parking close enough to read the license plate, but no closer than two to four car lengths. Exceptions, such as for jump starts, should be limited.
- Avoid stopping in the glide path on the outside of a curve. Vehicles operated by inattentive drivers or at an unsafe speed may drift onto the shoulder.



- Use traffic cones and flares for your safety as well as for traffic control.
- Use flares only when necessary, making sure that there is no fuel spill. Do not use flares for illumination. Never kick a flare.
- Use extreme caution when jump starting. Follow proper cable placement.
- Do not remove a radiator cap from a hot or overheated engine.
- Remove all flares and other materials when the incident is clear.
 - Always communicate with dispatch for your safety.



Figure 3. Caltrans Freeway Patrol Unit.

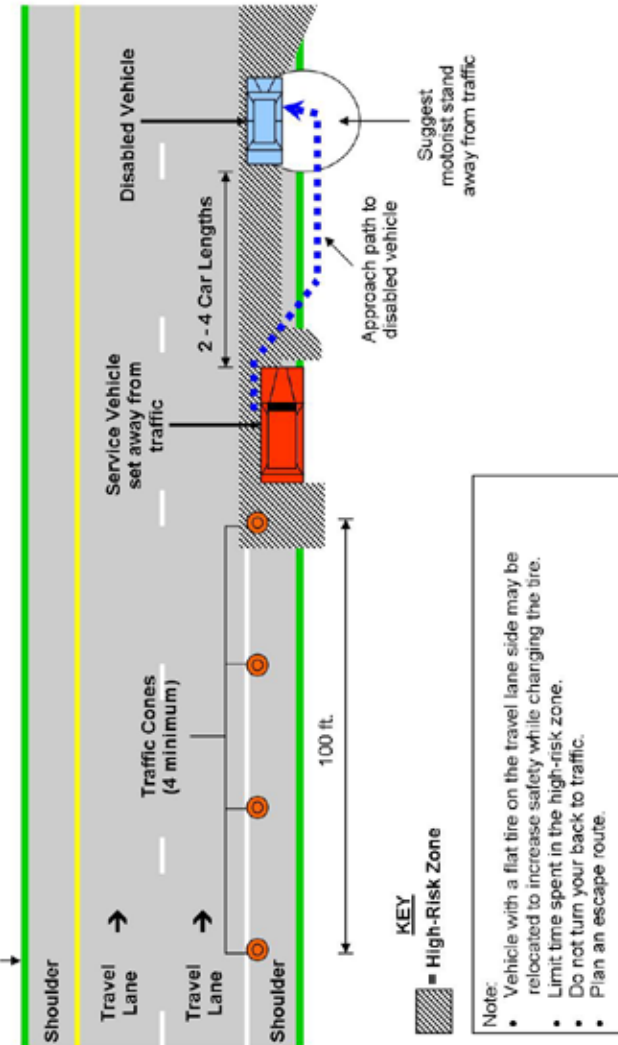


Figure 4. Motorist Assist.



Transporting Stranded Motorists

Motorists on access controlled highways are at extreme risk, especially when they leave their vehicle to try to seek assistance. As an S/SP operator, it is your responsibility to assist these motorists and minimize this risk. When you encounter a stranded motorist on the highway, adhere to the following guidelines:

- Stop and ask if you can be of assistance.
- Use extreme caution when you encounter or transport individuals at night or if the individual appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If you feel uncomfortable or in danger, contact dispatch to request law enforcement assistance.
- Follow the special guidance in the following section, Transporting/Assisting Pedestrians, if there is no vehicle in sight.
- Offer the motorist the use of your cell phone to call for help if you are unable to repair a vehicle that will not start or can not be driven. If towing service or other help is not available within a reasonable time, offer to transport the motorist to a designated location within your patrol sector.
- Caution motorists who refuse transport to remain in their vehicle or away from the travel lanes. Notify dispatch of their refusal and tell the motorist that you will check on them on your next pass on patrol. If you believe that the individuals are at risk or in danger—for instance, because they are elderly, have young children, or are in poor health—ask dispatch to contact law enforcement for assistance.



- Contact dispatch when transporting a motorist to report the destination, number of people, gender, and current odometer reading. Immediately upon arrival at the drop-off point, contact dispatch and report your ending mileage.
- Contact dispatch for assistance if there are more passengers than seat belts in the S/SP vehicle.
- Do not:
 - Take motorists to have flat tires repaired.
 - Drive motorists to repair shops or parts stores.
 - Transport motorists to non-designated locations.
 - Drive motorists back to the disabled vehicle after you transport them to a designated location.

Transporting/Assisting Pedestrians (No Vehicle Present)

Pedestrians on access-controlled highways are at extreme risk. People walking along the highway not only put themselves in danger but may cause danger for passing motorists who may swerve to avoid hitting them. Most States have laws that make it illegal for pedestrians to walk along limited access highways.

- Follow guidelines for your S/SP program. In some jurisdictions, law enforcement must be called to manage pedestrians on the highway.
- Use extreme caution when approaching a pedestrian. If you feel uncomfortable or in danger when you encounter a pedestrian, contact dispatch to request law enforcement assistance.



- Use the guidelines in the section above to assist the pedestrian but DO NOT provide transportation to a destination of their choice.



Figure 5. Florida Road Ranger Truck in Tampa Bay.



Motorist-Aid Provider Protocol

Your job as an S/SP Operator is to help keep the roadway operating as efficiently and as safely as possible.

Be courteous and professional to tow companies, auto clubs, and other motorist-aid service providers; offer them your assistance and follow the operating guidelines for scene safety.

If you suspect or witness any improper activity or conduct, notify dispatch and your supervisor.



Figure 6. Safety/Service Patrol Truck Operated by the Dane County Sheriff on the Beltway in Madison, Wisconsin.



Push Bumper

Using the S/SP vehicle push bumper to relocate a disabled vehicle can be done safely and without damage by following some basic guidelines. Consider the location, weather, and traffic conditions. Contact dispatch to request assistance if you are concerned about highway traffic speeds, your safety, or the competence of the motorist. Do not relocate a vehicle if you suspect the driver is substance impaired.

A push bumper is designed to push a vehicle only for limited distances to reduce a safety hazard. Be prepared to explain to the motorist that you cannot push them down the highway to an exit or into a service station. Motorists may even ask you to push them to their home. Be polite but stay in control, and remember that your role is to reduce the potential of a secondary incident. Usually, a suitable relocation site is nearby—just make sure you and the motorist agree on the location to which you will push the vehicle.

- Do not push a vehicle that has bumper misalignment, previous damage, or an obstruction such as a trailer hitch, tire carrier or a ladder. If possible, photograph the vehicle's bumper before and after pushing it.
- Do not push a vehicle if you cannot see ahead of it.
- Before you start to push:
 - Tell the driver what you want them to do.
 - Confirm that the driver understands you.
 - Advise exactly where you want the driver to go.
 - Remind the driver that steering and braking will be hard but will work.

- Advise the driver not to hit the brakes hard or abruptly.
- Make sure the driver can hear your instructions. The driver side window should be open.
- Make sure the vehicle's:
 - Ignition key is in the "on" position.
 - Transmission is in "neutral."
 - Parking brake is "off."
- Approach the disabled vehicle to be pushed slowly. Make gentle contact.
- Check traffic.
- Advise the driver that you will start pushing.
- Push slowly, maintaining a shallow angle.
- Back off before the driver brakes.
- Advise the driver when to stop.
- Instruct the driver to set the parking brake and secure the vehicle.



Emergency Temporary Traffic Control

Temporary Traffic Control at a Traffic Incident Management Area

Utilizing Temporary Traffic Controls (TTC) at a Traffic Incident Management Area (TIMA) helps move road users safely and expeditiously past or around an incident, reduces the likelihood of secondary traffic crashes, and keeps motorists off the surrounding road system.

TTCs include devices such as traffic cones, arrow panels, and warning signs as well as the use of manual traffic control (flagging).

You should always:

- Use safe practices for accomplishing your tasks in and near traffic.
- Be aware of your visibility to oncoming traffic.
- Take measures either to move the traffic incident as far off the traveled roadway as possible or to provide appropriate warning of blocked lanes.
- Set up appropriate temporary traffic controls. Request additional traffic controls if the incident will not be cleared rapidly.
- Update dispatch within 15 minutes of arrival at an incident, of:
 - Your upgraded assessment of the magnitude of the traffic incident, including the number and types of vehicles, injuries, and lane closures.
 - The expected duration of the traffic incident.



- The expected vehicle queue length.
- Reassess TTC devices regularly—every 15 minutes is recommended. Take some step, however small, to improve traffic at the incident scene, such as straightening or extending cone lines, relocating a responder vehicle, or reducing emergency lighting.



Figure 7. Maryland State Highway Administration Coordinated Highways Action Response Team (CHART) Emergency Response Unit.



Safe Vehicle Placement

Vehicle placement at the time of initial response is important to establish safe and effective traffic control.

At a lane-blocking incident:

- Place your vehicle in a visible location between the incident and approaching traffic. Activate your arrow panel to warn motorists and direct traffic around the scene as you set up your lane closure taper with traffic cones.
- Relocate your vehicle as needed to best utilize the arrow panel once the traffic cones are in place.
- Consider repositioning your vehicle to allow more room for emergency vehicles as additional resources arrive.
- Confer with other on-scene agencies, when appropriate, through the incident command structure to ensure that emergency vehicle placement is optimized for scene safety, on-scene operations, and traffic flow past the scene. Consider staging additional response vehicles off-site until needed.
- Continue to look for opportunities to improve traffic flow and scene safety.

Emergency Light Use

The appropriate use of emergency lights—high-intensity rotating, flashing, or strobe lights—is essential.

Emergency lighting is most effective when a traffic incident blocks travel lanes and traffic control devices are not yet deployed. Once responders deploy emergency temporary traffic control, the emergency lighting should be reduced. Emergency lighting does not provide traffic control and is not considered a traffic control device.

Excessive or misdirected lighting can create confusion for approaching road users and increase the chances for secondary crashes. Motorists approaching a traffic incident from the opposite direction on a divided facility are often distracted by emergency vehicle lighting and slow down, sometimes abruptly, to look at the traffic incident as they pass, posing a hazard to themselves and other travelers. The lingering effect of this distraction contributes to increased congestion and resulting delay.

- Minimize the use of emergency lights by multiple response vehicles as channelization and advance warning are established.
- Monitor and adjust emergency lighting during the incident to improve the visibility of traffic control devices and reduce onlooker delay.
- Use arrow panels instead of flashing lights to provide traffic control.
- Use emergency lights—in accordance with applicable laws and operating procedures—when:



- En route to a confirmed incident with injuries or blocking a travel lane.
- Using facilities, such as emergency crossovers or the shoulder—if authorized to do so—on which the general public is not authorized to drive.
- Assisting stranded motorists, law enforcement, or other responders in a hazardous location.
- Occupying a travel lane or any portion of a lane for an incident when the arrow panel is not effective.
- Reentering the travel lanes from a parked position on the shoulder. Use rear-facing emergency lights until you reach travel speed.
- Do NOT use emergency lights when:
 - En route to a non-emergency incident, such as a stalled vehicle on the shoulder.
 - En route to an unconfirmed incident.



Arrow Panel Use

An S/SP vehicle with an arrow panel is probably the most effective temporary traffic control device available. Proper use of the vehicle-mounted arrow panel or dynamic message sign (DMS), if so equipped, is essential for emergency temporary traffic control at an incident scene.

The arrow panel, used in conjunction with traffic cones and other traffic control devices, provides positive guidance to direct approaching traffic away from a blocked travel lane at an incident scene.

- Use the arrow panel in Arrow mode only to indicate a blocked travel lane.



Figure 8. Arrow Panel Indicating a Blocked Lane.

- Use the arrow panel in Caution mode when on or near the shoulder of the roadway.

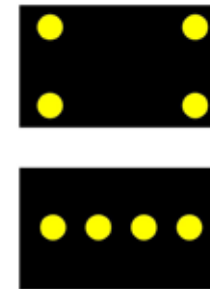


Figure 9. Arrow Panel Indicating Caution.



- Do not exceed the manufacturer's suggested speed, which is typically 40 mi/h, with the arrow panel in the upright position. Wind damage to the panel, mounts and/or vehicle may result.
- Be aware of your vehicle's overall height with the arrow panel in both the lowered and upright position.



Traffic Cone Placement

S/SP operators must be experts in setting up short-term traffic control to make incident scenes safer. Traffic cones serve as safety devices as well as effective traffic control devices.

Traffic Cone Placement for Lane-Blocking Incidents

- Carry at least 16 cones on your vehicle.
- Set out traffic cones in a taper to guide approaching traffic into available lanes to safely pass the incident.
- Start deploying cones at the rear of your vehicle and work your way upstream.
- Reinforce and straighten traffic cone lines and tapers after their initial placement to increase effectiveness and maximize visibility of the cones.
- Remember to always face traffic while placing or removing cones.
- Space cones equally at least 20 feet apart.
- Use 12 cones for the lane closure taper, which should be approximately 250 feet, and four cones along the activity area to quickly make the scene safer.
- Place cones around response vehicles and place at least one cone downstream past the incident to allow a parking spot for the ambulance or EMS vehicle.



- Use striping marks as a distance reference to help with cone placement. Roadway striping on freeways typically has a 10 foot painted stripe and a 30 foot gap.
- Increase the number of cones and the distance between cones as the speed of approaching traffic increases. This gives motorists more time to react, slow down, and merge.
- Delineate traffic tapers with clean, reflectorized cones.
- Use only reflectorized cones when working at night.
- Borrow additional cones from other responding units or request some from another S/SP unit through dispatch if needed.
- Improve traffic flow by moving the transition taper further upstream from the activity area as additional traffic controls are put in place.

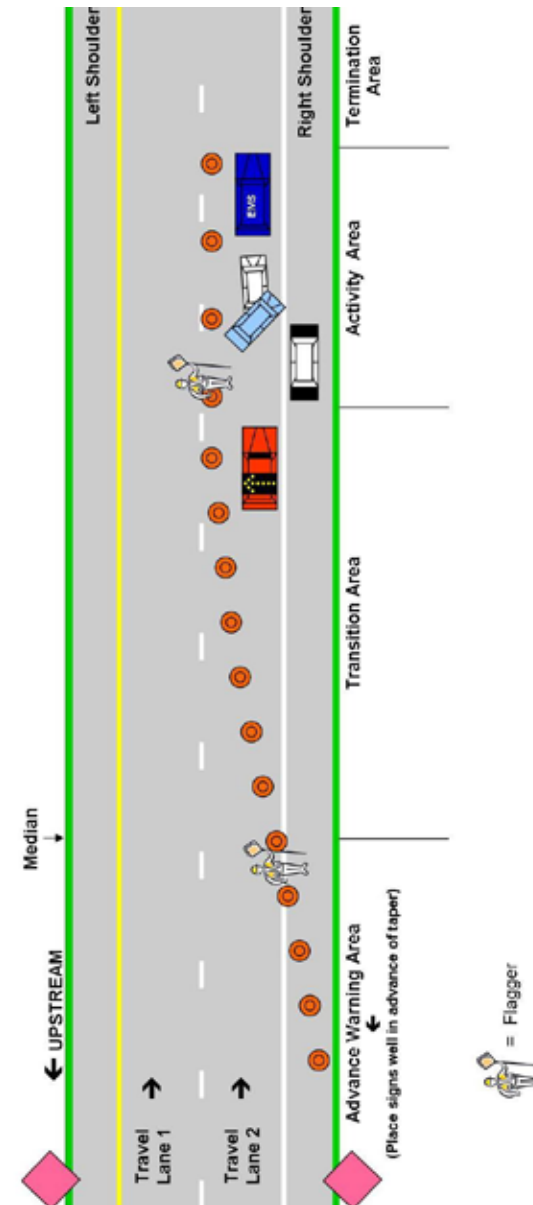


Figure 10. Emergency Temporary Traffic Control Example.



Positive Traffic Control

Providing manual positive traffic control, also called flagging, at an incident scene reduces rubbernecking and helps keep traffic moving smoothly past the scene.

- Have qualified flaggers provide manual traffic control if possible, but any response personnel can provide it if necessary.
- Do not use bystanders, good Samaritans or other untrained personnel for traffic control duties.
- Give commands or directions to traffic in a clear, courteous but firm tone.
- Accompany verbal commands to “stop,” “slow down,” and “proceed” with appropriate hand movements or the use of a “Stop/Slow” paddle or flag.
- Note that whistles can also be an effective tool.
- Position yourself at a safe location adjacent to the wrecked vehicles when providing positive traffic control in the activity area.
- Position yourself at a safe location near the beginning of the taper when providing positive traffic control in the transition taper area.
- Make eye contact with the drivers of approaching vehicles to encourage them to pay attention to their driving and not the incident. This will increase the flow of traffic past the incident scene, reducing delay.
- Avoid providing individualized directions to motorists as this can create more congestion by slowing traffic. Remember, your job is to keep traffic moving.



Figure 11. Flagger Commands for Emergency Positive Traffic Control.



Advance Warning and Queue Protection

When an incident occurs, there is a significant probability of a secondary incident, which is often more serious than the initial event. S/SP operators play an important role in reducing these secondary incidents.

Vehicles approaching at high speeds will often encounter the stopped queue of traffic long before the arrow panels and scene emergency lighting are visible. This high-speed traffic does not expect stopped traffic and needs appropriate warning.

Special incident management advance warning signs placed by you or other responders provide the warning to approaching motorists. These signs may be a special fluorescent pink color with legends such as “INCIDENT AHEAD” and “BE PREPARED TO STOP.”

Coordinate with responding units who are either already on the scene or are arriving on the scene to place the advance warning signs.

- Double back and place the advance warning signs once the immediate scene is secure if you are the initial responding unit and additional units are not available to assist.
- Place the signs well in advance of the queue. Relocate them if needed.
- Act as the “eyes and the ears” of the TMC if one is operating in the area. Maintain continual communication with the TMC while on an incident scene so that traffic



warning devices such as DMS can be updated with accurate information for approaching motorists.

- Obtain additional signs, if needed, from other response units and place them on both sides of the roadway well in advance of the scene.



Figure 12. Incident Advance Warning Signs.

Dismantling the Incident Scene

At the conclusion of an incident, help facilitate the safe removal of all components of the incident scene. Work with other responders to develop a plan for breaking down the scene to safely remove all remaining responders, responder vehicles, and TTC devices.

- Remove all debris from the travel lanes and shoulder.
- Remove traffic control devices in the upstream direction. Start at the termination area and work your way up to the advance warning area.
- Make notification to dispatch when the lanes are reopened.
- Be alert for impatient motorists. With the incident victims and vehicles removed, delayed drivers will not be as cautious and may not see you.



Incident Actions

Abandoned Vehicles

Abandoned vehicles on high-speed, access-controlled roadways are a safety hazard and can restrict the response of emergency vehicles.

- Check for the following scenarios without entering the vehicle:
 - Injured, sick, or incapacitated individuals
 - Anything suspicious in nature, such as a punched ignition, damaged door lock, or a broken window with glass debris still in the vehicle.
- Notify dispatch if you find anything unusual.
- Advise dispatch if the vehicle is in a hazardous location. Dispatch can contact law enforcement (where this is the procedure) for expedited removal of the vehicle.
- Tag or mark the rear window to notify other units and law enforcement that the vehicle has been checked. Tagging may also expedite the removal of the abandoned vehicle. Tag the vehicle only if it is not an immediate hazard.
- Follow procedures for logging or notifying dispatch when you tag a vehicle.
- Do not stop for an abandoned vehicle that has recently been tagged by law enforcement or another S/SP operator.
- Notify dispatch of previously tagged vehicles that have not been moved after the time limit has expired.



Disabled Vehicles

Occupants of a motor vehicle that breaks down on a high-speed roadway face substantial risks. Make every attempt to respond promptly to this type of incident. Quick response will help safeguard vehicle occupants who may be tempted to accept a ride from a stranger or walk alongside the roadway to seek assistance.

Once you observe or are aware of a motorist who needs assistance, you have a special obligation to help that motorist. Within reason, you must adjust your direction of travel and respond to the incident with due caution but without delay.

- Stop to offer assistance when a motorist with a disabled vehicle is encountered unless en route to a higher priority call.
- Call dispatch and indicate your intention to turn around and offer assistance if the disabled vehicle is in the opposite direction of travel.
- Notify dispatch of the location and basic description of the vehicle for follow up if you must bypass a motorist for a higher priority incident.

If you are dispatched to a disabled vehicle and encounter another along the way, you may stop for a short time and check the problem. Advise dispatch and request guidance for prioritizing response for the two disabled vehicles or request assistance from another S/SP operator or law enforcement. If you cannot make immediate repairs, advise the motorist that you will return after the other call is cleared.

NOTE: This is an agency policy decision that is usually determined by the impact on traffic flow, nature of the location, and occupants of the vehicle.



Relocating Vehicles from Hazardous Locations

Safety is your primary responsibility. If a vehicle is located in a hazardous location or is blocking a travel lane, make every effort to relocate the vehicle prior to making the assist.

- Determine if the vehicle should be relocated to a safer location prior to rendering assistance in locations such as:
 - Curves—motorists tend to hug the inside of a curve or drift off the road on the outside. Make sure there is sufficient sight distance for traffic to see you.
 - Narrow left shoulders.
 - Locations where barrier walls or guard rails limit shoulder width and restrict your escape path.
- Take special care when changing tires alongside high speed roadways. Consider relocating a vehicle if you must change a tire on the traffic side of the vehicle unless it is more than 6 feet off of the travel lane.

Basic Assistance

Basic assistance includes changing tires, giving jump starts, providing a small quantity of fuel to reach the next fuel station, and providing some minor emergency repairs.

- Follow the Operator Safety Guidelines in the Operator Information section for vehicle placement and motorist assists.
- Contact dispatch prior to leaving the vehicle and provide the following information:
 - Exact location, including direction and milepost or cross street.
 - Color of the vehicle.
 - Make of the vehicle.
 - License plate number.
 - Description of problem, such as disabled or abandoned.
- Walk past the passenger door, and turn to face traffic. Clearly identify yourself and ask, “Are you okay?” and, “How may I help you?” Do not open the door; ask the driver to lower the window.
- Inform the motorist that you will provide services free of charge. Explain that assistance is limited to 15 minutes if immediate repairs are not possible.
- Return to the vehicle if you plan to attempt repairs and place a minimum of four traffic cones behind the vehicle along the edge line approximately 35 feet apart.



- Move vehicles blocking a travel lane or in a hazardous location such as on a narrow shoulder or at the end of a gore area before providing assistance or repairs.
- Relocate the vehicle under its own power or by pushing it to a safe location when possible. Follow the guidelines in the Operator Information section for proper use of push bumpers.
- Contact dispatch and request assistance if the safe relocation of a vehicle on a narrow shoulder is not possible. Use the arrow panel and appropriate traffic controls.
- Get as much information as you can from the driver when attempting to determine what is wrong mechanically with a stalled vehicle by asking questions including the following:
 - Has this ever happened before?
 - How did the vehicle act prior to stalling?
 - Do you know of any specific problems with the vehicle?
- Avoid any disassembly or removal of parts. Instead, confine repairs to readily apparent problems that can get the motorist underway.
- Direct the driver to have permanent repairs made promptly. Do not refer motorists to specific tow companies or repair shops.
- Offer the motorist the opportunity to make local cell phone calls if attempted repairs are unsuccessful. If the motorist requests a tow truck or motor club, notify dispatch in accordance with agency practices.



Traffic Crashes

You will frequently be the first to arrive at a vehicle incident. Your ability to quickly analyze the situation and take appropriate action to get the incident cleared is an important part of your job.

- Park your vehicle in the blocked lane, or on the shoulder if no lanes are blocked. Notify dispatch of:
 - Your exact location.
 - Which lanes are blocked.
 - The number of vehicles and general vehicle description.
 - The license tag number(s) of at least one of the involved vehicles.
- Approach each driver to determine if they can drive the vehicle to the shoulder.
- Call dispatch to request law enforcement and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) if you see any apparent injuries or if a driver or passenger indicates that they are injured. Provide dispatch with as much information as possible on the number and types of injuries.
- Ask each driver, “Do you want me to call EMS to transport you for treatment?” if the incident appears to be minor. If no ambulance is needed, advise the driver that you will safely help move their vehicle out of the road.
- Offer to drive the car off the road if the motorist is cooperative but doesn’t feel comfortable driving the car.
- Relocate the vehicle with your vehicle if the vehicle is not drivable.



- Start setting up emergency TTC and facilitate the flow of traffic past the crash scene if the vehicles cannot be relocated.
- Do not leave a lane-blocking incident unprotected.
- Clean up all debris and mitigate fluid spills before opening a lane. Do not move any debris until directed to do so by the investigating officer.



Figure 13. Crew Cab Tow-Type Patrol Truck in Miami, FL.

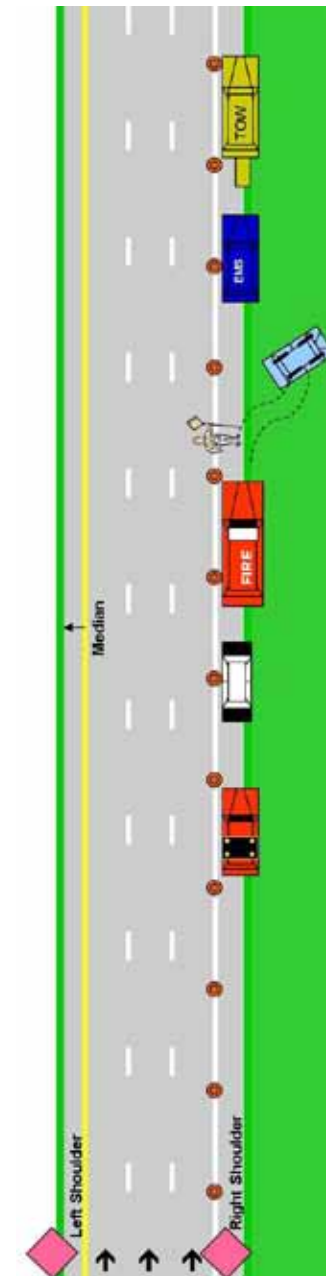


Figure 14. Single Car Rollover off Road.



Working with Other Responders

Responders at a traffic incident make up a team and depend on each other for assistance. You are the professional with skills in scene traffic control. Your purpose is to assist in scene safety, clear the crash, and provide manual traffic control.

Because you will be working with other responders assigned to your patrol area, you will have the opportunity to form a close professional partnership. This partnership will assure the effective and safe management of traffic incidents on your roadway.

- Check in with the Incident Commander and begin to set up your TTC. Position your vehicle to help move traffic safely past the scene.
- Ask other responders to position their vehicles within the coned off activity area.
- Adjust the cones to protect all of the emergency vehicles. Fire and EMS may want to keep one additional lane closed as a buffer between moving traffic and their personnel.
- Discuss with the Incident Commander the possibility of moving or repositioning some of the response vehicles to improve traffic flow once the injured are treated. Be persuasive but not confrontational. In some cases, after a few minutes you may again suggest that response vehicles be repositioned to facilitate traffic flow.
- Be sensitive to law enforcement's job to investigate serious crashes, especially if there is potential for a

fatality. Protect and preserve the scene as best you can to allow them to do a complete investigation. Pay close attention to who the drivers are and any other details if you are first on scene. Try not to park on skid marks or other potential evidence.

- Give law enforcement time to document the scene and begin the crash report. Offer your assistance and begin to sweep up debris and absorb spilled vehicle fluids as permitted.
- Ask for authorization to reduce the number of blocked lanes and begin clearing the vehicles off the travel lanes. (Vehicles from serious crashes with multiple injured or incidents with possible fatalities will need to remain in place until the crash investigation is sufficiently complete.)
- Tow operators are part of the response team. Work with them to expedite the clearance of the vehicles, fluids, and crash debris. If a wrecker is not yet on scene, suggest to law enforcement that you will move the wreckage off of the travel lanes.
- Always look for opportunities to expedite the clearance of the wrecked vehicles from the travel lanes.
- Resume patrol once the scene is stabilized with full TTC. Confirm your intentions with the incident commander and notify dispatch that you are resuming patrol. Turn around at your first safe opportunity and look for any stalled vehicles or secondary crashes upstream of the crash site.



Relocating Crash Vehicles

In many cases, the towing company may not arrive on-scene immediately. You can assist by relocating the vehicle(s) out of the travel lanes for towing later.

Be aggressive in relocating wrecked vehicles from travel lanes to the extent permitted by your agency guidelines. Confer with the Incident Commander and begin to move the wrecked vehicles once injured persons are extricated.

- Relocate wrecked vehicles well off the travel lanes—to the right side in most cases. Place the vehicle in a position that will allow the wrecker easy access.
- Consider relocating the vehicle to an exit ramp or a safe area out of sight of traffic.
- Drive the wrecked car off the road if it can be started.
- Relocate crash vehicles with your push bumper. Get assistance with traffic and push the wreckage out of the road unless it is not safe to do so.
- Consider using a tow strap as an alternate method to relocate wrecked cars from travel lanes. This method works well if there is front end damage where locked wheels may prevent pushing.
- Look for and document any prior damage before relocating the vehicle.

Vehicle Fires

Smoke from vehicle fires can cause visibility issues that affect responders and passing motorists. It is generally better to maintain some traffic flow at the scene to facilitate the arrival of fire apparatus. In some cases, smoke may require closing both directions of traffic for a short period of time.

- Notify dispatch upon arrival at a vehicle fire.
- Assist the vehicle occupants and escort them to a safe area away from the fire.
- Secure the scene and provide traffic control to expedite the arrival and parking of fire crews.
- Attempt to extinguish a small fire if safe to do so.
- Do not approach a completely involved vehicle. There is risk of a tire or the fuel tank exploding.
- Set up TTCs.

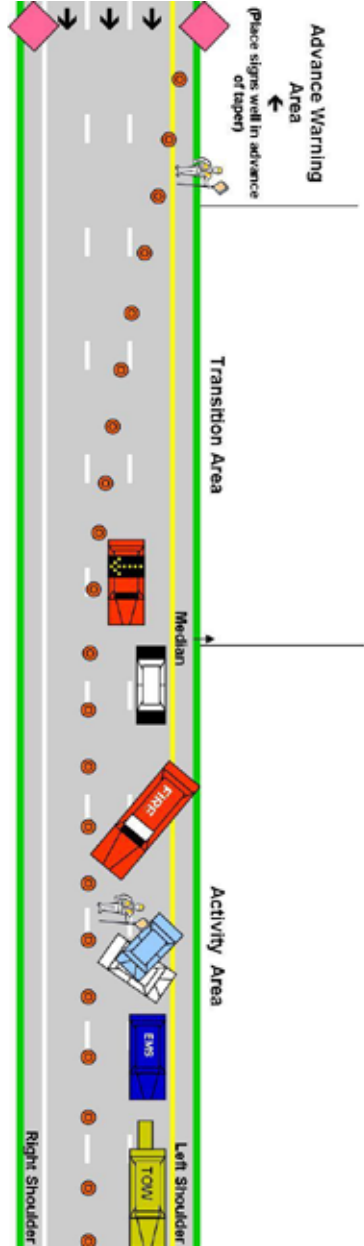


Figure 15. Two Car Crash in Two Lanes.

Truck Crashes

Major truck crashes can have serious impacts on highway traffic. You can assist in many ways to manage the scene and remove the wreckage and spilled loads from the roadway.

Your initial role is to set up emergency TTCs just as in other incidents. Your devices are short term and will need to be upgraded to full TTC configuration if the incident is prolonged.

Your goal during a truck crash should be to safely reduce the size of the scene and the number of lanes closed on a continuing basis:

- Take quick action to contain or absorb spilled vehicle fluids.
- Relocate spilled non-hazardous cargo to open an additional lane.
- Assist other responders to expedite reopening travel lanes. This assistance may include working with heavy-duty tow operators.
- Modify and upgrade the TTC devices.
- Remain productive and maintain a sense of urgency at the scene:
 - Communicate frequently with dispatch with status reports from the scene.
 - Do not sit in your vehicle. Sweep debris, manually direct traffic, or assist with lane clearance.



- Discuss and coordinate the transfer of the traffic controls—once the TTCs are updated—with the Incident Commander, other responding personnel, and dispatch.
- Resume patrol when the incident scene is stabilized and if your services are no longer needed. Concentrate on the upstream traffic.



Figure 16. Incident Response Truck Operated by Washington State Department of Transportation.

Vehicle Fluid Spill Mitigation

Incidents occur in which vehicle fluids such as engine oil, radiator fluid, hydraulic fluid, brake fluid, and diesel or gas from a ruptured fuel tank spill into the roadway.

- Identify the spill as a vehicle fluid, not cargo.
- Begin containing the vehicle fluid spill to keep it from spreading.
- Request assistance for large diesel fuel spills like saddle tank ruptures.
- Contain and limit the spill from spreading. Build a dike. Apply any available absorbents—even dirt from the roadside.
- Use available materials to try to reduce leaking vehicle fluids at the source.
- Advise fire officials or cleanup personnel upon their arrival of the extent and location of spills and any dikes that have been built.
- Continue to assist with containment as needed.
- Advise dispatch of the estimated number of gallons spilled. Dispatch will make proper notifications.



Incidents Involving Hazardous Materials

Commercial vehicle incidents are one of the most challenging and dangerous tasks responders must manage. An incident involving hazardous material cargo is even more perilous.

While you should mitigate spills of vehicle fluids such as diesel fuel, you must address actual hazardous material cargo spills differently and with extreme caution.

Familiarize yourself with the material identification placards in the US DOT *Emergency Response Guidebook*.

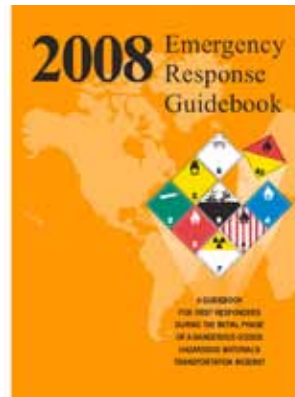


Figure 17. 2008 Emergency Response Guidebook.

At the scene of a truck crash where there is a spill or leak of an unidentified cargo, especially a placarded load, use the following guidance:

- Notify dispatch immediately.
- Remain upwind until the potential HazMat is identified.
- Stay clear of hazardous cargo and the spill, as well as any vapors, fumes, or smoke.
- Identify the cargo indicated on the placards from a safe distance and update dispatch with the placard information so that dispatch can assist with materials identification and notification of the appropriate agencies.

- Check the driver's condition but only approach and assist if it is safe.

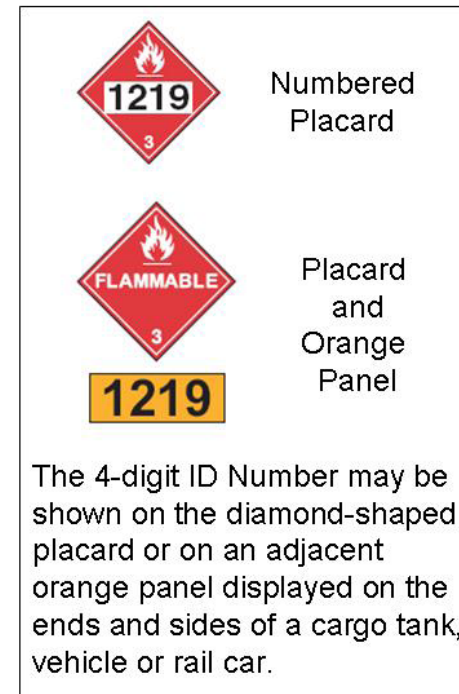


Figure 18. Example of Placard and Panel with ID Number.



Removing Debris

Debris of any kind on a highway is a major concern and presents a real threat to motorists. Accidents frequently occur when drivers either stop suddenly or make abrupt lane changes to avoid striking debris in the travel lanes. Debris is often kicked up by other vehicles, mowers, or wind and can become a deadly projectile.

Removing debris from the travel lanes is a potentially dangerous activity, and you should take appropriate caution. While there is no single safe way to remove debris from the travel lanes, consider traffic volume and time of day when determining how to remove the debris.

Debris on the shoulder has the potential to become a safety concern for a driver who pulls off the roadway. Such debris can damage their vehicle and may be thrown back into moving traffic.

- Notify dispatch of any objects/debris you encounter. Provide the exact location, which lane(s) are affected, general description, and whether you can remove the debris unassisted or if backup will be required.
- Pull well off the roadway and correctly position your vehicle for optimum protection and safety.
- Use appropriate emergency lighting.
- Keep personal safety a top priority—safety apparel and gloves are a must.
- Park upstream from the debris. This position will keep debris that is struck by passing vehicles from being propelled into you or your vehicle.
- Point at the debris to help drivers avoid striking it if you are waiting on the shoulder for traffic to clear.



- Contact dispatch and request assistance if it is not possible to remove the debris safely. You may need to coordinate with police to create a rolling road block to approach the debris in some cases.
- Remove debris completely from the roadway system if possible. If it cannot be removed, place it well off the travel lanes and shoulder to be picked up at a later time. Notify dispatch for follow-up.
- Do not report the debris and continue patrolling without taking action to remove it.
- Turn in any valuable items you find to your supervisor. Disposition of the items will be handled through established agency procedures.
- Use your PA system to notify the driver of a truck with the load spilling on the travel lanes. If the driver does not stop, contact dispatch and give the location, type of material being spilled, direction of travel, license number, and, if possible, the company name and any other pertinent information. You have no authority to make the truck pull over. Do not become involved in a pursuit.
- Stop and begin clean up procedures if a spilled load is a hazard to traffic. Request assistance through dispatch if the location is unsafe or the amount of debris too great.



Figure 19. Debris Removal.



Road Closures and Detours

Major incidents with all travel lanes blocked for an extended period will likely require the implementation of an emergency alternate route detour around the incident scene.

Emergency alternate route detours are generally pre-planned along the best available route. Large trucks are a concern on detours because of both their size and weight.

If there is no pre-established detour, work with the incident commander and other responders to close the roadway at an exit near the incident that provides a viable alternate route.

Implementing emergency alternate routes requires substantial additional resources, including local law enforcement and public works personnel to direct traffic and / or optimize traffic signals on the detour route. Agencies may use temporary detour signing and portable DMS to help motorists navigate back.

You may be directed to leave regular patrol to provide motorist guidance or to monitor the alternate route.

Communication

Communication with dispatch is critical to motorist safety. Dispatchers need information regarding travel lanes blocked by disabled or crash-involved vehicles. Dispatch uses this information to disseminate advance warning messages through the media, on DMSs, and to other ITS devices. Advance warning provides additional scene protection for incident responders and helps reduce secondary incidents.

Radio Communication

- State your call sign, status, incident description, and location. This communication provides dispatch with the information needed to contact appropriate response agencies and helps dispatch look after your safety.
- Keep radio communication clear and concise. Unnecessary conversation can saturate the radio system and increase the communication queue for other operators and dispatchers. Limit dialogue to incident-related information.
- Use plain language to communicate your message. The use of 10-Codes is not required.
- Speak clearly using a moderate voice volume.
- Use the phonetic alphabet to transmit information such as license tags.



Table 1. Phonetic Alphabet.

Letter	Phonetic	Letter	Phonetic
A	Alpha	N	November
B	Bravo	O	Oscar
C	Charlie	P	Papa
D	Delta	Q	Quebec
E	Echo	R	Romeo
F	Foxtrot	S	Sierra
G	Golf	T	Tango
H	Hotel	U	Uniform
I	India	V	Victor
J	Juliet	W	Whiskey
K	Kilo	X	X-ray
L	Lima	Y	Yankee
M	Mike	Z	Zulu

Incident Documentation

Document all significant incident scene information at the time of your arrival, during the clearance period, and at your departure from incident scene.

You must prioritize; your responsibility during the incident is to help clear the travel lanes quickly and safely. Initial activity documentation can be done once the scene is secured. Any additional information can be documented once the incident has been cleared.

Reference

Incident Management Structure

Responders use the National Incident Management System (NIMS), a common framework for effective resolution of incidents large and small, including traffic incidents.

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

NIMS was created by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) under Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 5. NIMS provides the framework for organizations to work together to prepare for, protect against, respond to, and recover from the entire spectrum of all-hazard events.

NIMS incorporates best practices currently in use by incident managers at all levels. It is the national standard for incident management across the various jurisdictions nationwide. Responders using the same standardized operational structures share a common focus and are able to place full emphasis on incident management.

In addition, national preparedness and readiness in responding to and recovering from an incident is enhanced because all of the Nation's emergency teams and authorities are using a common language and set of processes.



Incident Command System (ICS)

The ICS is one component of the larger NIMS framework.

ICS is the systematic tool for the command, control, and coordination of an emergency response. ICS allows agencies to work together using common terminology and operating procedures for controlling personnel, facilities, equipment, and communications at an incident scene.³

NIMS establishes ICS as a standard incident management organization with five functional areas: command, operations, planning, logistics, and finance/administration.

The principle of unified command has been universally incorporated into NIMS to ensure further coordination, especially during incidents involving multiple jurisdictions or agencies.

This unified command not only coordinates the efforts of many jurisdictions, but also provides for and assures joint decisions on objectives, strategies, plans, priorities, and public communications.

In major incidents, S/SP operators will be assigned to the Operations Section Chief, who often times is also the Incident Commander. The Operations Section Chief is responsible for implementing the Incident Action Plan (IAP) and manages all tactical activities. These activities include S/SP functions such as recovery, traffic control, vehicle spill cleanup, and other related operational functions.

³ Federal Highway Administration, *Simplified Guide to the Incident Command System for Transportation Professionals*, FHWA-HOP-06-004 (Washington DC: February 2006).

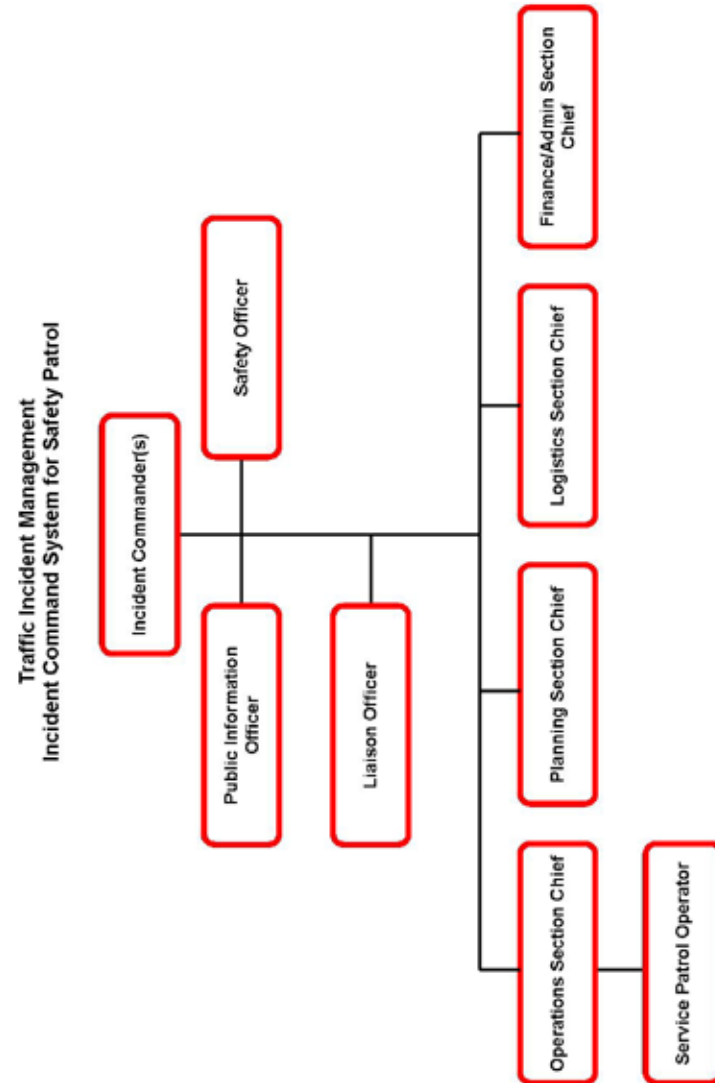


Figure 20. ICS Organizational Chart.



Traffic Incident Classification

Traffic incidents are classified in one of the following three categories as defined in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD):

- **Major** – expected duration greater than 2 hours.
- **Intermediate** – expected duration between 30 minutes and 2 hours.
- **Minor** – expected duration of less than 30 minutes.

Major traffic incidents are typically traffic incidents involving hazardous materials, fatal traffic crashes involving numerous vehicles, and other natural or man-made disasters. These traffic incidents typically involve closing all or part of a roadway facility for a period exceeding 2 hours.

Examples of major incidents include:

- Chain reaction crashes.
- Crashes that require a significant medical response, a coroner response, and/or a crash reconstruction response (e.g., fatality crashes).
- Incidents that involve advanced, prolonged environmental clean-up, such as hazardous materials incidents.
- Overturned tractor trailers.
- Complex commercial vehicle incidents with large debris fields or cargo fires.
- Structural damage.
- Wild fires near the roadway.
- Malevolent acts.

Intermediate traffic incidents typically affect travel lanes for 30 minutes to 2 hours and usually require traffic control at the scene to divert road users past the blockage. Full roadway closures may be necessary for short periods during traffic incident clearance to allow incident responders to accomplish their tasks.

Examples of intermediate traffic incidents include:

- Major roadway debris.
- Overturned cars, RVs, or small trailers.
- Multi-vehicle crashes.
- Commercial carrier crashes.

Minor traffic incidents are typically disabled vehicles and minor crashes that result in no lane closure or lane closures of less than 30 minutes. On-scene responders may include a combination of S/SP, law enforcement, fire, EMS, and towing companies.

Examples of minor traffic incidents include:

- Disabled vehicles in a travel lane or on the shoulder.
- Minor crashes that can be moved or relocated to the shoulder.
- Minor roadway debris.



Vehicle Identification Guide

Accurate communications between on-scene responders, dispatch, and towing and recovery operators describing an incident and the vehicles involved helps with the quick and efficient clearing of the incident scene.

Use the guide below to describe to dispatch the type of vehicle that is disabled and the nature of the problem to enable the wrecker company to determine what type of tow/recovery vehicle that should respond.⁴

LAW ENFORCEMENT VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION GUIDE

CLASS 1 - LIGHT-DUTY
(6,000 lbs. or less GVWR - 4 tires)*



CLASS 2 - LIGHT-DUTY
(6,001 - 10,000 lbs. GVWR - 4 tires)*




Class 1 through 2 include passenger cars, light trucks and mini vans, full size pickups, sport utility vehicles, full size vans

CLASS 1 AND 2 - LIGHT-DUTY TOW
Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (6,000 to 10,000 lbs.)
Passenger cars, small SUVs and pickup trucks


<input type="checkbox"/> Year, make and model?	<input type="checkbox"/> 4x4 or AWD?
<input type="checkbox"/> Number of occupants?	<input type="checkbox"/> Keys?
<input type="checkbox"/> Full-size pickup or van?	<input type="checkbox"/> Trailer?
<input type="checkbox"/> Is it loaded?	<input type="checkbox"/> What is the load?

VEHICLES IN THESE CLASSES USUALLY HAVE FOUR TIRES.


CLASS 3 - MEDIUM-DUTY
(10,001 - 14,000 lbs. GVWR - 6 tires or more)*




CLASS 4 - MEDIUM-DUTY
(14,001 - 16,000 lbs. GVWR - 6 tires or more)*



CLASS 5 - MEDIUM-DUTY
(16,001 - 19,500 lbs. GVWR - 6 tires or more)*



CLASS 6 - MEDIUM-DUTY
(19,501 - 26,000 lbs. GVWR - 6 tires or more)*



Class 3 through 6 include a range of mid-sized to larger vehicles including delivery trucks, utility vehicles, motor homes, package parcel trucks, ambulances, small dump trucks, landscape vehicles, small flatbed and stake-type trucks, refrigerated and box trucks, small and medium-duty buses (school and local transit buses.)

CLASS 3, 4, 5 & 6 - LIGHT- OR MEDIUM-DUTY TOW
Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (10,001 up to 26,000 lbs.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Year, make and model?	<input type="checkbox"/> Body type – pickup truck, box truck, flatbed, step van
<input type="checkbox"/> What is the load and is it damaged?	<input type="checkbox"/> Pickup, van, shuttle bus or motor home?
<input type="checkbox"/> Number of occupants?	<input type="checkbox"/> Keys?
<input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle description is critical to determine the proper tow vehicle	

VEHICLES IN THESE CLASSES USUALLY HAVE SIX TIRES.

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Reference

Reference



CLASS 7 - HEAVY-DUTY
(26,001 - 33,000 lbs. GVWR - 6 tires or more)*



CLASS 8 - HEAVY-DUTY
(33,001 lbs. and over GVWR - 10 tires or more)*




Class 7 and 8 includes a range of heavier vehicles including large delivery trucks, motor coaches, all tractor-trailer combinations, refuse trucks, construction vehicles, etc.

CLASS 7 AND 8 - HEAVY-DUTY TOW
Gross Vehicle Weight Rating
(Class 7 - 26,001 to 33,000 lbs.)
(Class 8 - 33,001 and up to state limit)

Year, make and model? Two or three axle truck or tractor-trailer?
 Bus or motor home? What is the load and is it damaged?
 Number of occupants? Keys?


STRAIGHT TRUCKS, BUSES OR MOTOR HOMES IN THESE CLASSES WILL USUALLY HAVE SIX TO TEN TIRES. TRACTOR AND TRAILER COMBINATIONS WILL HAVE FOURTEEN OR MORE TIRES.

MOTORCYCLES - LIGHT-DUTY TOW
Sports motorcycle – off road/basic street type
Performance motorcycle – “racing” model type
Touring motorcycle – large, heavy road touring type
Custom or 3-wheel motorcycle



TRAILERS - LIGHT-, MEDIUM- OR HEAVY-DUTY TOW

Is it a truck and trailer to tow or just a trailer to tow?
 Number of axles and what is it hauling or is it designed to haul?
 Type of load or weight of load?
 If a tow, does the trailer have a ball, pintle or a fifth wheel hitch?



MOTOR HOMES - LIGHT-, MEDIUM- OR HEAVY-DUTY TOW
Class C – usually built on a van or pickup type truck chassis
Class A – usually built on a medium to large truck or bus chassis



Figure 21. Law Enforcement Vehicle Identification Guide.

Multilingual Assistance

Should you encounter a situation in which the person needing assistance speaks another language, you can use the following pages to help communicate with the motorist.

Each sheet's questions and answers match those on the English sheet.

- Determine which language the motorist speaks.
- Show the motorist the correct language page and ask them to indicate the problem being experienced.
- Compare their response to the list in English.



FREE SERVICE



ENGLISH

Dear Fellow Driver:

It appears that you are having difficulty with your automobile and although I do not speak (Spanish) (Italian) (French) (German) (Portuguese) or (Creole) I would like to offer my assistance. Please check the appropriate sentence below, so I will know how I may assist you.

- 1) I am out of gas
- 2) I have a flat tire and I do not have a spare
- 3) My engine stopped and I do not know the cause
- 4) I need a tow truck
- 5) I need police assistance
- 6) I need an ambulance
- 7) I am not having any difficulty

SERVICIO GRATIS



SPANISH (Español)

Estimado(a) conductor(a):

Me parece que tiene problema con su carro, pero yo no hablo español. Por favor señale lo que necesite para poder ayudarle.

- 1) Se me acabo el combustible
- 2) Se me poncho la llanta, y no tengo repuesto
- 3) Se paro el motor de mi carro y no se que tiene
- 4) Necesito un camion del remolque
- 5) Necesito ayuda de la policia
- 6) Necesito una ambulancia
- 7) No tengo ninguna dificultad



SERVICE LIBRE



FRENCH (Français)

Cher camarade de route,

Vous semblez avoir des difficultés avec votre voiture. Bien que je ne parle pas français, j'aurais bien voulu vous aider. Veuillez-vous attirer l'attention sur la liste ci-dessous et identifier l'article que vous convient.

- _____ 1) Je n'ai plus d'essence.
- _____ 2) J'ai un pneu plat et je n'ai pas des pièces de rechange.
- _____ 3) Mon moteur est arrêté et j'ignore pourquoi.
- _____ 4) J'ai besoin d'un camion de remorquage
- _____ 5) J'ai besoin de l'aide de police
- _____ 6) J'ai besoin d'une ambulance
- _____ 7) Je n'ai pas des difficultés



FREIER SERVICE



GERMAN (Deutsch)

Hallo Autofahrer

Es erscheint, dass Sie Schwierigkeit mit Ihrem Automobil haben, und, obwohl ich Deutsch nicht spreche, dass ich meiner Hilfe anbieten möchte. Prüfen Sie bitte den passenden Satz unten, deshalb werde ich wissen, wie ich Ihnen helfen kann.

- _____ 1) Ich bin aus Gas
- _____ 2) Ich habe einen flachen Reifen und ich habe keinen Ersatzteil
- _____ 3) Meine Maschine hat aufgehört und ich weiß die Ursache nicht
- _____ 4) Ich brauche einen Abschleppen Lastwagen
- _____ 5) Ich muss Hilfe reglementieren
- _____ 6) Ich brauche einen Krankenwagen
- _____ 7) Ich bin ohne irgendeine Schwierigkeit



SERVIZIO LIBERO



ITALIAN (Italiano)

Caro Autista:

Sembra che stiate avendo difficoltà con la vostra automobile. Non parlo italiano ma vorrei offrire la mia assistenza. Controlli prego la frase adatta qui sotto, in modo da saprò posso aiutarlo.

- _____ 1) Sono da benzina
- _____ 2) Ho una gomma piana e non ho parti di ricambio
- _____ 3) Il mio motore bloccato ed io non conosco la causa
- _____ 4) Ho bisogno di un camion di rimorchio
- _____ 5) Ho bisogno dell'assistenza della polizia
- _____ 6) Ho bisogno di un'ambulanza
- _____ 7) Sono senza alcuna difficoltà



SERVICE LIBRE



Créole/Kreyol

Chè Chofè

Ou gen problem avek machine-la? Malgré mwen pa palé kréyol, mwen ta renmen édé-ou. Sou plé, gadé lis amba-a é chwazi ki problem ou genyen.

- _____ 1) Mwen pa gen gaz
- _____ 2) Karochou machin-n la plat é mwen pa gen déréchanj
- _____ 3) Motè machin-n la kampé é mwen pa konnen pou ki sa
- _____ 4) Mwen bezwen yon gwo kamyon pou alé-m
- _____ 5) Mwen bezwen èd polis
- _____ 6) Mwen bezwen yon anbilans
- _____ 7) Mwen pa gen anken-n problem



SERVIÇO LIVRE



PORTUGUESE (Portuguese)

Caro Motorista:

Parece que você está tendo a dificuldade com seu automóvel. Eu não falo o português mas gostaria de ajudá-lo. Por favor, leia as sentenças abaixo e indique qual é a mais propria para o seu caso, para que eu possa saber como ajudá-lo.

- _____ 1) Eu estou sem gasolina
- _____ 2) Meu pneu está furado e eu não tenho sobressalentes
- _____ 3) Meu motor parou e eu não sei porque
- _____ 4) Eu preciso de um caminhão do reboque
- _____ 5) Eu preciso de ajuda da policia
- _____ 6) Eu preciso de uma ambulância
- _____ 7) Eu não preciso de ajuda

Coverage Map



Figure 22. Sample Coverage Map

Reference

Reference



Important Contacts

Table 2. Important Contacts

Contact Type	Name / Title	Phone /Email/ Cell
Safety Patrol Supervisor		
Safety Patrol Manager		
Dispatch TMC / TOC		
Fire Rescue		
State Police		
Local Police / Sheriff		
Maintenance Public Works / DOT		
Traffic Public Works / DOT		
Towing and Recovery		
HazMat Notification		
Animal Control		
Emergency Management		
Public Safety Answering Point	Emergency call center	

Terms and Acronyms

AED – Automated External Defibrillator
 AIS – Accident Investigation Site
 AVL – Automated Vehicle Location
 CCTV – Closed Circuit Television
 CMS – Changeable Message Sign
 CPR – Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
 DHS – Department of Homeland Security
 DMS – Dynamic Message Sign
 DOT – Department of Transportation
 EMS – Emergency Medical Services
 ERG – Emergency Response Guidebook
 FFS/SP – Full Function Safety/Service Patrol
 FHWA – Federal Highway Administration
 FOG – Field Operations Guide
 HSPD – Homeland Security Presidential Directive
 ICS – Incident Command System
 ITS – Intelligent Transportation Systems
 LZ – Helicopter Landing Zone
 MP – Mile post
 MSDS – Material Safety Data Sheet
 MUTCD – Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices
 NIMS – National Incident Management System
 PA – Public Address loudspeaker
 PSAP – Public Safety Answering Point
 S/SP – Safety/Service Patrol
 TIM – Traffic Incident Management
 TMC – Traffic (or Transportation) Management Center
 TIMA – Traffic Incident Management Area
 TOC – Traffic (or Transportation) Operations Center
 TRAA – Towing and Recovery Association of America
 TTC – Temporary Traffic Control
 UC – Unified Command



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**U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Office of Operations**

**1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590
www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov
FHWA-HOP-10-014
December 2009**

