

STAFF REPORT

SUBJECT: SAFE Call Box Program

MEETING DATE: May 15, 2008

AGENDA ITEM: 4E

STAFF CONTACT: Brittany Odermann

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve renewal of contract with MyTransitPlus, Inc. to provide private call answering center services for Santa Barbara County's call box program through February 26, 2009 at an approximate annual cost of \$8,000.

SUMMARY:

In February 2006 the Board authorized the Chair to execute a contract with MyTransitPlus, Inc. to provide call answering services for the call boxes in Santa Barbara County, which are located on Highways 101, 154 and 166.

On an annual basis, MyTransitPlus answers approximately 1,900 motorist calls for SBCAG. They log all calls received into a database so they can be viewed and monitored at the CHP dispatch centers in Ventura and San Luis Obispo counties. They screen the calls and direct to CHP dispatchers emergency service requests. All other calls are handled by MyTransitPlus dispatchers. Calls are recorded allowing SBCAG staff to periodically monitor the work of MyTransitPlus and their interaction with CHP dispatchers. Staff has found MyTransitPlus to be meeting expectations of efficiency and professionalism.

The contract allows for renewal on an annual basis in one-year increments through February 26, 2011. Staff is recommending a renewal of the contract from February 27, 2008 to February 26, 2009. Contract costs are calculated on a per-call basis, which annually is estimated to be \$8,000.

DISCUSSION:

SBCAG serves as the Service Authority for Freeway Emergencies (SAFE) for Santa Barbara County and is responsible for the installation, operation and administration of approximately 330 highway call boxes. This system is financed by a \$1 per year fee on all motor vehicles registered within the county.

In February 2006 SBCAG authorized the Chair to execute an agreement with a private contractor, MyTransitPlus, Inc. to provide call answering services for Santa Barbara County call boxes previously answered by CHP dispatchers. The intent of contracting with a private call answering center was to reduce the workload of CHP dispatchers and reduce the cost of

dispatching services that SBCAG was paying to the CHP to handle all call box calls. Under the agreement with MyTransitPlus, calls are first answered by their operators at the call answering center, and calls requiring relevant emergency services are then forwarded to a CHP communications center for completion. Rules and guidelines setting forth what constitutes a relevant emergency call are determined by the CHP. In general, such calls are those requiring CHP or police assistance, fire, and/or ambulance services. All other calls (e.g., repairs or towing assistance) are completed and handled by the private call answering center.

In addition, the adopted Scope of Work includes the following performance standards:

- 75% of all calls answered within 20 seconds
- 98% of all calls answered within 90 seconds
- Average monthly delay not to exceed 15 seconds per call
- No more than 2 days in a month where 10% of calls take 90 seconds or more to answer
- A consistently high level of competence and courtesy to callers. While competence and courtesy are subjective standards, SBCAG anticipates reviewing results and auditing tapes of conversations with callers and using the results of these reviews and audits to evaluate the Contractor's work.

Each month MyTransitPlus provides monthly summaries of the total number of calls received/answered and for what purpose. The attached table summarizes this information for the period March 2007 through February 2008. Over the previous twelve-month period a total of approximately 1,900 motorist calls were answered and 700 calls were answered from SBCAG's field technicians conducting routine testing of the call box phones.

Based on information in reports and digital voice files provided by the contractor, the performance standards were achieved as specified in the approved scope of work. SBCAG staff continues to monitor the call center's performance and is in regular communication with the call center manager. The call answering center will make adjustments as needed, and per direction of SBCAG staff to maximize motorist safety and call handling efficiency.

The 2007-08 SAFE budget approved last July and the proposed 2008-09 SAFE budget include sufficient resources to cover the contract budget and thus no additional budget appropriation is required.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve renewal of contract with MyTransitPlus, Inc. to provide private call answering center services for Santa Barbara County's call box program through February 26, 2009 at an approximate annual cost of \$8,000.

COMMITTEE REVIEW: None

ATTACHMENTS:

Table 1: March 2007 – February 2008 monthly summaries of call box calls

March 2007 – February 2008 monthly summaries of call box calls

Table 1

	Mar-07	Apr-07	May-07	Jun-07	Jul-07	Aug-07	Sep-07	Oct-07	Nov-07	Dec-07	Jan-08	Feb-08
AAA	20	29	33	20	21	25	26	18	28	14	11	10
ACO	3	8	5	5	8	4	5	1	5	4	4	0
COMA*	20	141	16	10	25	17	15	345	21	7	17	44
CTC	11	19	10	12	10	19	7	9	6	9	9	5
CTE	1	4	2	1	4	6	4	2	5	1	6	1
D/T	9	18	12	22	14	19	12	16	9	3	10	11
DTC	19	37	25	28	29	25	31	22	13	21	11	19
DUPE	8	15	8	9	9	4	7	10	3	6	4	8
FF	22	29	33	24	10	18	26	22	29	21	6	24
FSP	1	1	4	3	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
INFO	9	11	14	11	15	25	15	17	29	21	18	12
INQ	1	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NR	8	14	5	8	5	8	6	5	10	3	5	9
OTH	4	3	0	0	1	3	1	3	1	1	1	0
RT	18	21	16	31	18	23	16	14	14	13	17	22
UN	10	4	14	14	12	7	8	2	3	1	2	3
Monthly Totals	164	355	202	198	182	203	179	488	176	125	121	169

Total Calls = 2562 *

*** 678 of calls are maintenance test calls and are not placed by motorists. Actual number of motorist calls = 1884**

AAA	American Automobile Club
ACO	All other automobile clubs
COMA	Comarco maintenance test call
CTC	Call transferred to CHP, caller left talking to CHP
CTE	Red link emergency call - accident, medical, or police assistance
D/T	Wrong number or telemarketing call
DTC	Open line, no answer on other end, connected to CHP to do a welfare check
DUPE	Duplicate call - reporting or requesting same service as before
FF	Friends and family call for help
FSP	Freeway Service Patrol
INFO	Information request
INQ	Call back with additional questions
NR	Caller has no resources for help
OTH	Other
RT	Rotational tow dispatch to CHP
UN	Inappropriate use of call box