

**California SAFE Committee  
Minutes of Proceedings  
January 10, 2003  
Orange, California**

Friday, January 10, 2003

Chair Iain Fairweather called the meeting to order at 8:30am. The meeting was held at Orange, California OCTA office.

**2003-00 Welcome- State of the Callbox Address**

Chairman Fairweather addressed the following goals that he would like to accomplish with the CALSAFE committee in 2003. A sub-committee will be formed for each of the following goals:

**Standardize statewide reporting and measurements for call box and freeway service patrol statistic**, such as call volume, knockdown rate etc.

(Chair: Tom Wells)

**Call box publicity** such as ad campaign, public service announcements etc.

(Chair: Philip Chu)

**Standardized encroachment permit** to Caltrans for call box installations.

(Chair: Iain Fairweather)

**Call box investment contingency.** (Chair: Byron Lee)

**Budget reduction & setup 'travel fund'** for CALSAFE (Chair: Luis Mendez)

Each Chair of the subcommittee will contact SAFE members asking for participate on their perspective committee. All Chairs to have committee member lists to Iain C. Fairweather no later than 02-24-03 and have their first committee meeting scheduled and held by 04-11-03.

**2003-01 Introduction and SAFE Summaries**

Those in attendance (and teleconference) introduced themselves.

**MTC SAFE:**

Linda Lee and Tom Wells reported the following:

1) Supplemental Motorist Aid Communications (SMAC) Feasibility Study – This feasibility study was included as a recommendation in the 5-Year Strategic and Financial Plan. An RFP was issued in August 2002, and a total of three proposals were received. Darrel Cohoon & Associates was selected as the consultant to conduct the study. The study will be conducted in three phases:

Phase I includes the identification and research of the various options available, followed by a recommendation on which option to implement in a six-month pilot program; Phase 2 includes the development of an implementation plan; and Phase III includes the implementation and evaluation of the pilot program.

2) System Reduction Plan – Staff has been working on the system reduction plan by updating the current database of latitudinal/longitudinal data for every call box in the system. MTC's Geographical Information System (GIS) staff have plotted and color-coded all call box locations and spacing. These maps will be used to help determine which call boxes will be removed. It is anticipated that a preliminary list of call boxes for removal will be submitted to Management Staff next month.

3) Speech- and Hearing-Impaired Access – Staff will be continuing its efforts to conduct public surveys on both the Yes/No and TTY call boxes. On February 14 and 15, 2003, staff will be conducting another survey at a two-day statewide conference at the Oakland Airport Hilton. The bi-annual conference is held by the Self-Help for the Hard of Hearing (SHHH), and it is expected that approximately 200 people will be in attendance. Unlike the previous surveys conducted amongst the deaf users, this will be the first survey conducted amongst the hard-of-hearing group.

4) Guidelines Revisions – The Subcommittee has been working on the draft Guidelines revisions since the last CalSAFE meeting. The Subcommittee expects to submit these draft Guidelines to the rest of CalSAFE by the end of the month or early February for their review and comments.

5) Private Call Answering Center – Staff has coordinated the effort to test and install the new call box operator screen and reporting system (known as the eCreator) on the call center computer system. Consultants from San Bernardino-Riverside SAFE were hired to perform the testing, installation and operator training, and on December 19<sup>th</sup> the cutover to live call handling was completed. Staff anticipated that technical issues would require attention and progress is being made as software debugging continues. The CAC has sustained outstanding level of service (LOS) throughout 2002. The contractor has never failed to meet any of the six LOS performance measures throughout the 12 month period and has in every month, attained the bonus level (provided under the incentive system) on at least 3 of the 6 LOS measures. In addition to the transfer of calls to the CHP, the CAC is now handling calls from the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge call boxes. Information about these calls is transferred to the Caltrans Bridge Dispatch stationed at the Traffic Management Center (TMC).

6) Call Boxes On Bridges – Eighty-six new digital call boxes were installed and operational in October on the San Mateo-Hayward Bridge. Staff has worked closely with Caltrans on the project over the last three years and the plans

currently call for installation on all seven Bay Area bridges over a five-year period. Call volume from the new boxes average about two per day and typically involve mechanical breakdowns or flat tires. All the call information is entered into a website by a CAC operator and then is routed via DSL link to monitors at the Caltrans Bridge Dispatch for their immediate response.

#### **SAN BERNARDINO SAFE:**

Michelle Kirkhoff and Kelly Lynn reported the following:

The SAFE began installing 42 call boxes on 12/13/02 on the new segments of State Route 210 in San Bernardino County. These boxes are spaced at approximately 3/4 mile and are all either modified F or D sites. Within the first 6 weeks of operation, 65 calls were generated from these call boxes along the SR 210.

The SAFE is working with Caltrans on temporary installations on a construction project on I-15, north of Baker and south of Cima road. 36 call boxes will be relocated to accommodate motorists during construction, and another 18 will be installed temporarily during the two-year construction period.

A lot of other construction is ongoing in the county, requiring call box removals and installations.

The SAFE has leased three Sprint PCS cellular phones for staff and Comarco contractor use, to test the Sprint network throughout the county. We are also looking into leasing phones from Verizon as well. We believe this is a great way to test the different digital networks, before transitioning the system from analogue to digital in FY 2004/2005.

#### **CAPITOL VALLEY SAFE:**

Dave Boyer reported the following:

About half of some 100 call boxes have been installed along Route 50 in El Dorado County, with work halted until the end of the snow season. The remaining call boxes along this route should be installed by this summer.

Caltrans also recently gave us authorization to install 8 call boxes along the elevated "Woodland Causeway" section of Interstate 5, located in Yolo County near the Sacramento International Airport.

Caltrans previously had concerns about installing call boxes along this two-mile stretch of highway due to the narrow shoulder width. We are currently waiting on Caltrans' approval of an encroachment permit for these installations.

#### **RIVERSIDE SAFE:**

Jerry Rivera reported the following:

The first "draft" of our Five Year Strategic Plan has been completed and is being reviewed. It is our intention to finalize the Plan and have it approved by our

Commission in March 2003. The Plan will address accessibility, "B" and "C" site mitigation, digital conversion, and decreasing call volume.

Riverside County has also received a letter from the California Center for Law and the Deaf. We have had discussions with our Legal Counsel and Kern County MAA (who we believe was the first agency to receive the letter) and will be preparing a response to the CCLD.

Riverside County also received a letter from the Attorney General's Office regarding Comarco, which will be addressed in Closed Executive Session.

Private Call Answering Center is doing great! They continue to surpass all performance goals and we are encountering less and less problems with CHP.

**SANTA BARBARA SAFE:**

Heather Diez reported the following:

Going to the SBCAG Board this month for a contract with COMARCO to do a site assessment of the call box system in Santa Barbara County. The Capital Replacement Plan is underway. Public hearing is planned for no later than April to determine YES/NO or TTY call box device type. Construction to begin in summer 2003.

S.B. SAFE is trying to improve the reimbursement rate for call box knockdowns.

S.B. SAFE and the call box system in Santa Barbara County have been receiving really poor service from AT&T Wireless as far as cell site service. Several call boxes are down for long periods of time and get a fast busy signal. S.B. SAFE is trying to get better service response from AT&T until the digital upgrade that will be bid out to other wireless carriers.

**SAN LUIS OBISPO SAFE:**

Philip Chu reported the following:

SLOSAFE issued RFP for both cellular and maintenance contract in December 2002, responses are due on January 24, 2003, and selected proposers will be submitted for Board review in March 2003.

SLOSAFE is planning to issue RFP for private call answering center (PCAC) in FY 2003/04.

SLOSAFE will also make TTY decision in the March 2003 Board meeting.

**MONTEREY SAFE:**

Did not attend the meeting but the following SAFE summary was submitted by Kenny Kao:

Monterey County SAFE has met again with key organizations in the Big Sur area to receive comments on the proposed design and location of the planned call boxes on highway 1 south of Carmel. The TAMC Board has approved the proposed design and locations, and will soon be submitting the encroachment permit applications to the Monterey County Planning Department and Caltrans. Final installation of the call boxes is not yet known, but the soonest time would be summer 2003.

Monterey County SAFE also received the letter from the CCLAD regarding TTY boxes. Since we are not yet fully TTY (only 1/3), we will be using the template CalSAFE made and mailing that back to them. We are waiting for the perfection of digital/TTY boxes so that all of it can be done at one time.

### **SAN DIEGO SAFE:**

Edward Steven "Eddie" Castoria reported the following:

Should the SAFE Board of Directors continue the call box program in light of dwindling call box call volume? The Board indicated a concern over the cost per call. While the San Diego SAFE Board has done a good job controlling and even reducing some administrative and operational costs, the cost per call has risen as the call volume has shrunk. The Board requested additional information on projections for further market penetration by the cellular telephone industry, as a predictor for further reductions in call box call volume. The Board looked at three scenarios for program continuation: (1) ending the program in 2 to 4 years as call volume decreases further and analog cellular availability is eliminated; (2) continuing the program for another 4 to 6 years while call volume decreases, using digital cellular where necessary; and (3) continuing the program indefinitely, using digital cellular for call box calls and implementing alternative motorist aid technologies to the call box to provide motorist aid services.

Should the San Diego SAFE provide additional retrofits to its call boxes to enhance access to call box services for disabled individuals? The Board indicated a willingness to perform transverse wall and retrofits to sites to improve access for mobility-impaired individuals, using the Behind the Dike design wherever possible. The Board deferred a decision on incorporating TTYs in call boxes until further information is obtained from the first 6 months of operation of the new Orange County TTY call boxes. That analysis will help determine if the upgraded TTY call boxes solve the technical problems experienced with the Los Angeles TTY call boxes.

Should the San Diego SAFE switch from analog cellular technology to digital cellular technology? The Board indicated a preference to switch to digital cellular on a phased program based upon, among other factors, the plans of the cellular carrier to reduce and eliminate analog service at various areas around the County.

Should the San Diego SAFE fund alternative Motorist Aid programs? The Board expressed interest in investigating alternative motorist aid technologies and programs such as enhanced Freeway Service Patrol, HAR radio broadcasts and ITS call boxes.

### **Orange County SAFE:**

Iain C. Fairweather reported the following:

Iain Fairweather reported that OC system was completely installed with TTYs as of January 9, 2004. Phase 2 of the B and C site mitigation plan is currently being conducted by CWT. CWT will visit all 332 sites and make recommendations on what mitigation should be done they expect to have this completed by March of 2003. Total site mitigation will be concluded by January of 2004 unless budgetary constraints force it in to the next fiscal year. It was also discussed that OC had looked at removing callboxes but direction from management has squelched that proposal. OCSAFE is also looking into conversion to digital boxes; preliminary conversations are being held with the OCSAFE board

### **2003-02 Digital Conversion Update**

Mr. Castoria reported there was no general interest to the cellular service provider to help individual SAFE with digital conversion. Ms. Lynn noted San Bernardino might solicit for more than one cellular service provider for better cellular coverage.

### **2003-03 Safety Study Update**

Mr. Hildebrand reported the crash test for site B and C were completed last year. Site C failed during the low speed test. The engineering team is working on a design alteration. 1. Caltrans tapered design, with Tafco crash tested handrail. 2. Mini C-site design, which is to shrink the site and decrease overall mass. All the engineers disagree with the second design option.

SAFE members noted most of the site C will be modified to a modified F site.

Four more tests could be done with the crash test study grant, SAFE discussed about crash testing call boxes with ITS equipments or wooden pole option.

### **2003-04 Callbox Expanding Functionality**

Mr. Wells stated all SAFE Managers should be thinking beyond call box functionality. He suggested with the legislative changes that is being proposed

(see item 2003-09) the SAFE have plenty of possibility for expansion including traveler information program (511), extra CHP patrol officer for certain area for accident reductions, CCTV for traffic monitoring and other motorist aid programs. Currently MTC SAFE contributes one million dollar per year to the Bay Area's 511 program.

### **2003-05 Access Board Update**

Ms. Linda Lee reported a written comment was submitted to the Access Board on behalf of MTC. MTC have also conducted an on-site testing for disability access. San Diego SAFE had also submitted written comment to the Access Board. All comments submitted are available on the Access Board's website.

Discussing was carried onto ADA and TTY issues:

Mr. Hildebrand state that all SAFE except Los Angeles, Ventura and Orange County (TTY compliance) did not received a letter from the California Center for Law and the Deaf (CCLD) regarding TTY access for call boxes. San Diego and San Bernardino also did not receive a letter from CCLD even though their call boxes are not TTY compliance.

A sub-committee was former chaired by Mr. Hildebrand, direction is taken to develop a unified response letter for CCLD. The following are some of the responses that were proposed:

Accumulation of budgetary reserves

Insufficient financial capacity (in some SAFE's)

Inclusion of ADA access issues in strategic plans

Participation in CalSAFE "Speech and Hearing Impaired Access Study

Awaiting MTC development, field-testing and evaluation of the Yes/No box.

Awaiting Federal Access Board's final rulemaking to establish specific compliance requirements.

Desire to coordinate various hardware and site upgrades (motherboard, digital, TTY or Yes/No, and the B & C mitigations (Modified F site type) into a single project in order to ensure lower overall costs.

Discussions were followed regarding the three options: Call connection light, Yes No box, and TTY options. Other issues were discussed such as comparing call boxes with payphone in terms of accessibility.

The sub committee will continue to follow up on a group response, but the letter has to be sent out by individual SAFE's.

### **2003-06 Attorney General Letter**

MTC and MTA received a letter from the attorney general office dated November 13, 2002 regarding Comarco Wireless Technologies (CWT). The attorney general's office has been contacted by a former employee of CWT stating CWT has installed used parts in new equipment and selling the equipment as 'new'. Since there is no State funding involved with the call box program, the attorney did not take any future action toward this matter but did bring this to SAFE's attention.

Mr. Gutierrez made a statement assuring all SAFE members that such incident could not and would not happen because of how the inventory system is setup in CWT. Used part is only used for SAFE that has an umbrella contract for corrective maintenance with Comarco. Mr. Gutierrez will provide CALSAFE a written response in regards to this issue.

### **2003-09 Legislative Sub-committee Update**

Byron Lee reported the sub-committee met in November 2002 and discuss on proposed changes. The proposed changes will be reviewed with legislative staff of SAFE's members in February. Proposed changes are as follow:

- DMV fee increase
- Redefine SAFE to be motorist aid program
- Expanding to service county road

It might not be feasible with current budget restraint to propose DMV fee increase for SAFE. Mr. Lee will provide update as any changes arise.

### **2003-10 Cellular Signal Strength Study**

Michael Switzer demonstrated the equipment that was used in developing the signal strength study for LA SAFE. This could help in identify where would be a suitable location to place a call box especially on rural area where signal might be an issue. Mr. Gutierrez notes that Comarco Wireless currently also has the equipment and capability to do such study.

### **2003-11 Call Answering Update**

Mr. Castoria stated the PCAC in San Diego is doing a good job with good reporting. Average call answering time ranges between 6-10 seconds.

MTC- also stated no call data is available from CHP dispatch but call data is available through PCAC.

### **2003-12 /13 CHP Update and Intro/ CHP PCAC Discussion**

The new CHP Liaison is Rick Bossemeyer and he could be reached at (916) 375-2913 e-mail: [rbossemeyer@chp.ca.gov](mailto:rbossemeyer@chp.ca.gov) Mr. Bossemeyer will be working on getting individual SAFE their call data information quarterly. The SAFE coordinator job description list will soon be complete and will be sent out the all SAFEs for review. Mr. Bossemeyer will also continue to monitor and log all work task performance as CALSAFE coordinator.

No PY reimbursement should be give to CHP with SAFE that are with PCAC. This will generate further discussions between CHP and SAFE'S.

### **2003-14 CALSAFE Next Meeting**

Next CALSAFE will be held in Sacramento on April 11 2003, more information will be given later.