Outline

- Definitions
- Benefits
- Levels of Service and Attributes
- Agency and Contracted Operations
- Qualifications and Training
- Vehicles and Equipment
- Summary and General Trends
Motorist Assist, a.k.a...

Service Patrols  
Highway Helpers
Safety Patrols  
Freeway Safety Teams
Courtesy Patrols
Numerous “brand” names
Safety Service Patrols

- Safety Service Patrols generally consist of trained personnel who use specially equipped vehicles to systematically patrol highways searching for and responding to traffic incidents and providing motorist assistance.
- Safety Service Patrols are commonly recognized as one of the most effective TIM strategies available.
Safety Service Patrols - Benefits

- Reduced incident duration (because of decreased detection, response and clearance times)
- Quicker debris removal
- Assistance to stranded motorists and crash victims
- Traffic control and management
- Often a “field extension” of TMC operators
- Benefit to Cost Ratios (Baird, 2008)
  - Range - from 4.6:1 to 42:1
  - Median - 9.45:1
  - Average - 12.4:1
Tonight I got a flat tire on 101 in Santa Rosa, with traffic whizzing by at 65 mph. Steven Parker arrived on the scene, rescued me from a dangerous situation and got me back on the road quickly. The FSP is like the police and fire departments: You don’t need them all the time but, when you do need them, you REALLY need them! (2/11/13)
The ways that Road Rangers have been helpful to me as a Trooper are literally countless. From bringing gas, hydraulic jacks, and misc. tools to stranded motorists (which Troopers are not equipped with) to the extra traffic cones and flashing lights at a crash scene, an air compressor for flat tires, etc. I’m not exaggerating when I say the Road Ranger is as helpful and useful to me doing my job as my own issued equipment. In my 15 years with the Patrol, the Road Ranger program is the best “new idea” I have seen to date. Keep them, and get more!

(FDOT FY 2013/2014 Statewide Road Ranger Survey for Incident Responders)
National Trends: Three Levels

1. Baseline
2. Mid-Level
3. Full-Function
Baseline Service Patrols

- Provide services aimed at helping motorists safely drive their vehicle from the highway
- May be referred to as Courtesy Patrols - **not recommended**
- They are often called upon to:
  - Render assistance to motorists
  - Push vehicles off the road
  - Provide gasoline
  - Change flat tires
  - Provide minor repairs
Mid-Level Service Patrols

• Provide incident response services, clearance resources and motorist assistance services

• Typical services for this level of service patrol include:
  – Assisting motorists
  – Doing minor repairs
  – Removing debris
  – Providing fuel
  – Rendering first aid
  – Relocating vehicles out of travel lanes
  – Assisting emergency service providers at vehicle crash scenes
Full-Function Service Patrols

Provide all of the services provided by baseline and mid-level Safety Service Patrols, plus:

– Clearance and recovery services
– Emergency traffic control and management
– Assistance with emergency services
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Services Provided

- Move disabled or abandoned vehicles
- Provide fuel
- Provide water
- Change flat tires
- Provide mechanical assistance
- Assist stranded motorists
- Remove obstacles and objects
- Arrange for towing
- Share information
- Assist other responders
Agency Operated Programs

- TDOT HELP Program
- GDOT Highway Emergency Response Operators (HERO) Program
- WSDOT Incident Response Team (IRT)
- INDOT Hoosier Helpers
- ODOT Incident Response (IR) Program
- MnDOT Freeway Incident Response Safety Team (FIRST)
Contracted Programs

- California Freeway Service Patrol Program
- WisDOT Freeway Service Team
  - Private Contractor
  - Public Agency Operated
- FDOT Road Rangers
- Many others
Operator Qualifications and Training Requirements

- Minimum Qualifications
  - 18 years of age
  - High school diploma or GED
  - Clean criminal background
  - Applicable CDL
  - Clean driving record

- FHWA SHRP2 National TIM Responder Training becoming a requirement
Vehicles

- Heavy-Duty Pickup Trucks
- Tow Trucks
  - Flat Bed
  - Wheel-Lift
- Trucks
- Vans
Heavy-Duty Pickups - FDOT Road Rangers
Tow Trucks - San Diego Freeway Service Patrol
Tow Trucks - IDOT Emergency Traffic Patrol
Trucks
- INDOT Hoosier Helper FSP
Special Equipment

- Communications
- Mechanical
- Tools
- Fluids
- Supplies
- Safety
- Traffic Control
TDOT HELP
WisDOT FST – Sheriff’s Service
WisDOT FST – Contracted
Summary and General Trends

- Today’s Safety Service Patrols:
  - Are a new generation of first responders
  - Training critical
  - Oversight and monitoring (contracted)
  - Relocation capable
  - Performance based
  - TMC Integration
  - Recognition
  - Funding
THANK YOU!

Steven J. Cyra, PE, PTOE
HNTB Fellow, Associate Vice President
Traffic Operations/ITS
HNTB Corporation
(414) 410-6710
scyra@hntb.com