

Accountability

To guarantee the wise use of its multibillion-dollar investment in California's transportation infrastructure, the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 has established an Inspector General within the new Independent Office of Audits and Investigations with broad oversight of the Department of Transportation and all other agencies or organizations that receive SB-1 transportation funds.

The inspector general will be appointed by the gov-

ernor and confirmed by the California state Senate for a six-year term. The law shields the inspector general from political pressure by specifying she or he may not be removed from office "except for good cause."

The inspector general's office will decide if state and federal transportation funds are being used "efficiently, effectively, economically, and in compliance with appli-

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Road Striping Getting a Makeover: Wider, Brighter and More Durable

Beginning in July, road repairs that require restriping will replace the 4-inch-wide stripes with 6-inch stripes. This change applies to all edge lines (the ones that mark the side of the road), lane lines and center lines (the double-yellow ones that divide oncoming traffic on roads not separated by a median).

Meanwhile, in the next few years, all of the state's 13,350 lane miles that make up the freight corridors — Interstates 5, 10, 15 and 80 and portions of State Route 99 and U.S. Highway 101 as well as some smaller connector routes — will be restriped, regardless if it's part of a repair. It is expected that all 50,000-plus lane miles of the state highway system will be restriped within a decade.

The new stripes, whether they're made of paint, tape or thermal plastic, should make it easier for an aging population to see lane demarcations. Because the new generation of striping takes up more surface, it's expected to last longer and be more durable.

Stripes come in three forms: paint, tape and enhanced thermal plastic, which is melted to at least 350 degrees before being applied directly to the pavement. Tiny reflective beads are then embedded into the paint or plastic for added visibility when headlights shine on them.

Source: Caltrans Office of Traffic Engineering



A new layer of thermal plastic is laid down as part of a restriping project. Tiny glass beads are then sprayed on to increase reflectivity.

cable state and federal requirements.” It will report its findings annually to the governor, the Legislature and the Transportation Commission (CTC), and will summarize its findings for the public.

The Act, which is expected to generate \$54 billion over 10 years, also broadens CTC oversight of Caltrans’ fix-it-first spending plan (the State Highways Operations and Protection Program), and requires that the plan be examined during public hearings in northern and southern California. **MM**

Source: Senate Bill 1, Road Repair and Accountability Act, signed into law April 28, 2017

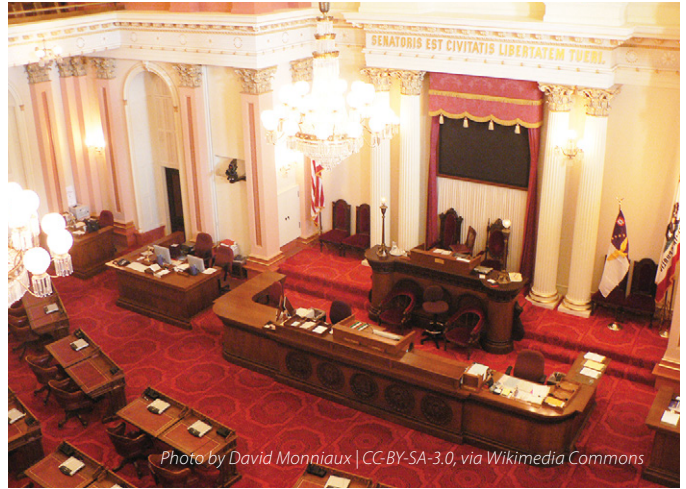


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New Law Gives Lift to Stranded Motorist Service on Urban Freeways

A program that dispatches a fleet of tow trucks during the work week to quickly remove disabled or stranded vehicles from congested urban freeways throughout California will soon receive an additional \$25 million a year in funds generated by the Road Repair and Accountability Act. Current funding is about \$40 million.

The [Freeway Service Patrol](#) (FSP) is a joint program provided by Caltrans, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and local transportation agencies.



The Freeway Service Patrol has more than 350 tow trucks — including this one operated by Henry Gomez of A&B Towing in Orange County — patrolling urban freeways around the state to remove disabled vehicles.

Over 350 tow trucks keep watch on more than 1,750 miles of freeways. The trucks’ drivers are trained, certified and supervised by the CHP. The operation directly assisted more than 680,000 stranded motorists in 2016, helping Caltrans meet its [mobility goals](#) by keeping traffic — and the California economy — moving.

Rapid removal of freeway obstructions also reduces fuel consumption and minimizes automobile emissions by reducing the time vehicles spend idling in stopped traffic.

[The FSP provides service to motorists at no cost.](#) All costs of operating the program are provided through state and local public funding allocations. State funding is apportioned to each FSP program through a funding formula based upon population, miles of freeway in the region, and a measurement of congestion. The local transportation agencies match the state funding allocation with a minimum of 25 percent of local funds.

The FSP operates in 23 urban counties: El Dorado, Fresno, Los Angeles, Monterey, Orange, Placer, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, Yolo and the nine counties of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Source: California Highway Patrol, Caltrans Division of Traffic Operations