



# Traffic Guidelines Manual

ORIGINATOR State Traffic Engineer		6-3-6
CHAPTER 6	Work Zone Traffic Control	
SECTION 3	Elements	
SUBJECT 6	Freeway Service Team Policy and Procedure	

## General

The Freeway Service Team (FST) provides expedited relocation of disabled and crashed vehicles made possible by the presence of FST vehicles continuously patrolling designated segments of interstate and state highways during designated hours and through designated work zones. This continuous patrol will facilitate a quick response time to non-recurring traffic incidents such as breakdowns and traffic crashes, thus reducing the total time needed to clear the incident from the highway and restore normal traffic flow. Other examples of situations where FST services *may* be utilized include special events, inclement weather, and other highway emergencies. The primary goal of the service is safe, quick clearance of traffic incidents thereby improving safety and minimizing traffic delays and congestion. FST are frequently used as part of a project's work zone mitigation strategy and identified in the Transportation Management Plan (TMP). Please refer to FDM 11-50-5 Attachment 5.4: "Example TMP Type Mitigation Strategies and Elements" and FDM 11-50-30.8.

### *Goals and objectives*

The goals and objectives of FST are to:

- Maintain capacity in work zones and high volume freeway segments
- Provide assistance free of charge to disabled motorists
- Maintain consistent service
- Minimize work zone delay
- Provide scene safety
- Clear traffic incidents
- Provide traffic control
- Provide scene management (Law Enforcement FST only)
- Detect and verify incidents
- Remove debris

### *Applicability*

Law Enforcement FST operates during specified hours of the day all year round. Work zone FST contracts will be for the duration of construction projects. If FST efforts are showing that traffic is moving better when they are providing service in “peak hours” than in non-peak hours, the project team could extend the FST hours of operation. FST contracts include language for accommodating changing hours of service and mileage. Project managers must be aware of financial impacts as scope changes are developed.

The FST service will provide towing services to relocate a disabled vehicle to the designated drop-off locations of the highways or freeways. This service will enhance the safety and efficiency of subsequent operations by private towing service providers that remove vehicles from the designated drop-off locations.

All FST assistance and relocation services are provided **free of charge** to the motorist.

### **Responsibilities**

#### *Bureau of Traffic Operations (BTO)*

- Management of the FST program via FST Program Manager
- Procurement of FST services
- Notify project teams of contractor and hourly rates

#### *Regional Project Development Section*

Funding to cover FST charges must be included in budget and have a chargeable project ID.

#### *Regional Traffic Engineers*

Notify contractor of project start dates and required meetings. Some meetings that *may* be required are:

- Preconstruction
- Incident management
- First responders

#### *Other Stakeholders*

- Regional Communications Manager
- Law enforcement, fire and EMS
- Counties and local officials
- Towing contractors
  - o Patrolling contract work zones
  - o Attending required meetings listed in 42.2.3

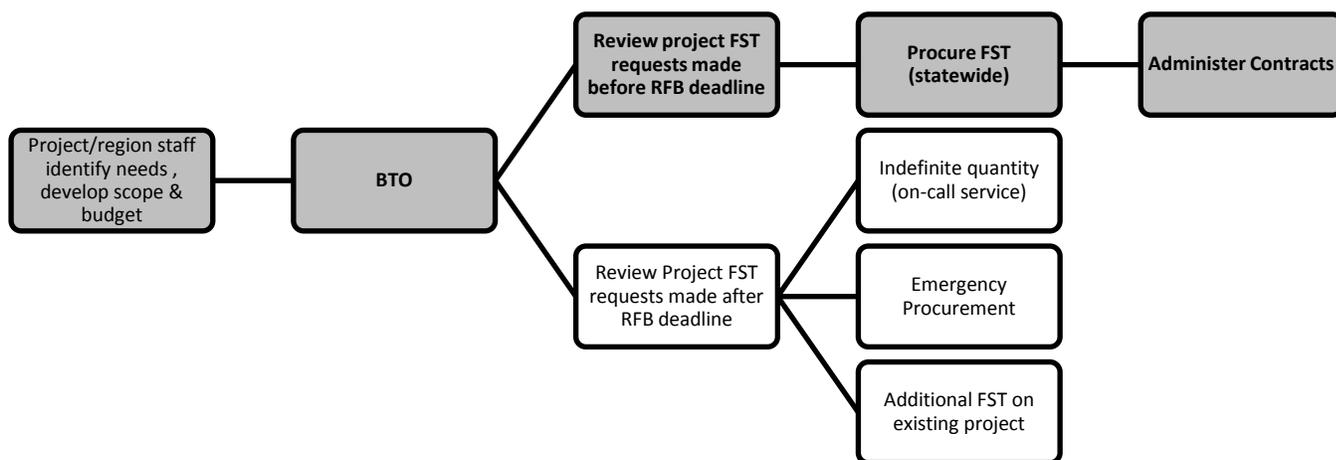
### Work Zone FST

Project design staff will work with regional traffic operations to identify and quantify the need for FST for work zone mitigation. FST expense is paid from the project mitigation budget. Requests for work zone FST are made by December 15<sup>th</sup> of the year prior to construction via email to the FST Program Manager. All FST contracts are bid together in a statewide Request for Bids (RFB).

- December 15 – FST requests due for next construction year
- February – RFB issued
- March – RFB selections made for construction season

Figure 1 shows the flowchart for implementing work zone FST.

**Figure 1. Work Zone FST Flowchart**



#### *Services to be Provided - General*

The FST assists motorists whose vehicles have mechanical failure or have been involved in traffic crashes. The FST is responsible for clearing the highway of automobiles, motorcycles, small trucks (vehicles with a gross vehicle weight of 8,000 pounds or less), and small non-hazardous debris. The FST relocates all cleared vehicles to the nearest drop-off location designated by the Contract Administrator. When responding to incident scenes, the FST provides assistance with traffic control as directed by Law Enforcement.

#### *Assistance to Law Enforcement, Including Emergency Traffic Control*

FST *may* be requested to lend assistance to Law Enforcement, specifically to assist with emergency traffic control at an incident scene. FST follows the instructions of the officer at the scene of any incident. Once temporary traffic control devices are established and it is determined that Law Enforcement does not need an immediate

tow, the FST *should* continue to patrol the route until contacted by Law Enforcement for towing services or to remove the traffic control devices.

#### *Communication with WisDOT Statewide Traffic Operations Center (STOC)*

On an on-going routine basis, FST communicates directly with the STOC to report traffic conditions, crashes, weather conditions, potential problem area, and other situations. FST also promptly responds to contacts and requests from the STOC to verify and respond to incidents.

#### *Operational Coordination and Status Meetings*

A minimum of one (1) FST Contractor's representative(s) is required to attend up to three (3) two-hour operational coordination and status meetings annually with the Contract Administrator, Regional FST Field Administrator and Law Enforcement. All costs associated with Contractor attendance at these meetings will be at Contractor's expense.

### **Law Enforcement FST**

Permanent (law enforcement provided) FST can be used on high volume freeways where there is no jurisdiction who regularly patrols the area and/or patrols by State Patrol are limited. The FST provides safe, expedited clearance of disabled and crashed vehicles made possible by the presence of FST vehicles continuously patrolling designated segments of Interstate and U.S. highways during designated hours. The FST improves safety and reduces traffic delays and congestion. The FST **shall** accomplish this goal by providing minor repairs for disabled vehicles; pushing disabled vehicles off the highway; providing fuel; clearing debris from disabled vehicles, small non-hazardous debris, and debris that is otherwise disruptive to traffic flow; directing traffic and assisting with traffic control; providing traffic and incident information to the WisDOT Statewide Traffic Operations Center (STOC); providing traffic and pavement condition reports; and providing informational literature to motorists. FST vehicles are typically equipped with push bumpers, traffic cones, electronic changeable message boards, radios, mobile phones, and other necessary equipment to provide quick clearance type services. Aid within the scope of operations of the FST is rendered free of charge to the motorist.

#### *Services to be provided*

The FST Operator **shall** continuously drive the service area locating, responding, and clearing minor traffic incidents. The FST **shall** assist motorists whose vehicles have suffered mechanical failure or have been involved in minor traffic crashes. The FST **shall** be responsible for clearing the traffic lanes of the highway of automobiles, motorcycles, small trucks (vehicles with a gross vehicle weight of 8,000 pounds or less) and small non-hazardous debris material. Vehicles **shall** be removed from the traveled way by pushing. The "traveled way" is the portion of the roadway intended for the

movement of vehicles, exclusive of shoulders. A shoulder is the portion of the roadway contiguous to the traveled way. Vehicles **shall** be removed from the left shoulder by pushing as in accordance with Wis. Stats. 346.55. Abandoned or unattended vehicles **shall** be removed in accordance with Section 5.7 of this agreement and Wis. Stats. 342.40. The FST **shall not** provide towing or wrecker services. Furthermore, the Department will not be responsible for or reimburse any costs associated with tow services.

This service **shall** be provided by the County who **shall** be reimbursed for this service by the Department. Services rendered under this program **shall** be free of charge to the motorists receiving services.

When and where conditions permit, simple repairs *may* be performed on a motorist's vehicle while on the highway shoulder. Where conditions do not allow such repairs, the FST **shall** assist the motorist in obtaining tow services to remove the vehicle from the highway.

If a vehicle is carrying hazardous materials, the Administrator **shall** be notified immediately and before any services are rendered. Detailed descriptions of services to be provided are described below.

*Enforcement duties and assistance to other law enforcement officers:*

During instances where a FST *may* be required to take enforcement actions or be requested to lend assistance to other law enforcement officers, the FST Operator **shall** follow the law enforcement jurisdiction operational procedures. During the specified hours of operation, the FST vehicles **shall** be exclusively dedicated to FST duties with the exception of special circumstances relating to public safety and/or security.

*Operation of Changeable Message Sign:*

FST Operators **shall** display messages on the vehicle-mounted Changeable Message Sign (CMS) when providing services. The Department will assist the County in developing appropriate and pre-programmed messages, in accordance with the TGM, for various incident situations. The use of the vehicle-mounted CMS **shall** provide additional warning and traveler information to drivers passing the incident scene.

*DEPARTMENT and Project Manager Input:*

During major incidents, special circumstances, or other situations that otherwise require the Department to request services from the County consistent to those services specified herein, the FST Project Manager will contact the Administrator to provide direction. The STOC *may* dispatch the FST to respond to incidents or disabled/abandoned vehicles that are determined to impede travel or are a hazard to motorists. These requests *may* be for incidents that are outside the designated service area, but within the County of operation.