

# CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

## GENERAL ORDER 100.73

APRIL 2026

### CALTRANS TRUCK ESCAPE RAMP REPORTING

1. GENERAL. To assist the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) with the maintenance, repair, design, and management of highway safety facilities, CHP is tasked with reporting truck escape ramp (TER)-related incidents. A TER, also known as a “runaway truck ramp,” is designed to provide a controlled means of slowing and stopping a vehicle or combination of vehicles experiencing excess speed, diminished braking conditions (e.g., brake fade or brake failure), or other mechanical or vehicle control issues. Generally, TER facilities are located on downhill grades at locations determined by Caltrans engineering studies and CHP-reported crash data. Current TER designs in California consist of a designated lane or ramp exit—usually located adjacent to the right shoulder or the center median—that directs vehicles into a lane or gravel aggregate pit and, at some locations, an ascending grade.
  
2. PURPOSE. The purpose of this General Order is to establish policy and create uniform procedures for designated CHP Areas, as listed in Annex A, to report TER-related incidents.
  
3. POLICY. Enforcement and incidents involving a TER shall be reported as follows:
  - a. Routine patrol checks (beat sweeps) should be made to ensure TER facilities are available for immediate emergency use, to discourage unauthorized use, and to limit/prevent nonemergency stops near TERs. Patrol officers shall direct drivers blocking a TER to immediately move their vehicle away from a TER and should subsequently cite them for a violation of Section 21461(a) or Section 21718(a) of the California Vehicle Code. Patrol units shall not unnecessarily block TER facilities.
  
  - b. The applicable CHP communications center (CC), as listed in Annex A, shall be immediately notified when the TER has been used and a vehicle is still present in the facility, or whenever a TER requires immediate repair. In locations where changeable message signs (CMS) are available, the CC shall immediately notify the appropriate Traffic Management Center (TMC) to activate the CMS to advise the public the TER is closed. The TMC shall be notified to clear the CMS closure message when a TER is reopened for use.

- c. To ensure the availability and effectiveness of a TER, vehicles in or blocking a TER shall be removed immediately. Rotation tows should be utilized to expedite the removal of vehicles from a facility as soon as possible.
- d. The responsible CHP CC shall notify the appropriate Caltrans TMC that Caltrans will need to respond for an assessment of damage, a temporary closure, or a repair of traffic control devices and/or regrading of a TER, as soon as practicable.
- e. Incidents involving a TER resulting in no damage to traffic control devices or injuries shall only be reported using the CHP 573, Truck Escape Ramp Report, within three business days, using the "Submit by Supervisor" tab after Area supervisor review. When a driver is cited solely for blocking, but not entering or using a TER, a CHP 573 is not required.
- f. One CHP 573 shall be used for each individual vehicle or for a combination vehicle (e.g., tractor-trailer, truck and trailer, passenger vehicle and trailer) involved in a TER incident. The dropdown menu for "Number of Vehicles" in the form is intended for vehicle combinations, not for multiple individual vehicles involved in a TER incident.
- g. A crash resulting in property damage to facility traffic control devices (e.g., signs, barriers, guardrails), injury, or death shall be reported as required in Highway Patrol Manual (HPM) 110.5, Crash Investigation Manual. A copy of the CHP 573 shall be attached to the crash report. Additionally, the CHP 573 shall be submitted electronically using the "Submit by Supervisor" tab in accordance with this policy.
- h. When an unreported TER incident is discovered (e.g., when the TER appears to have been used and the vehicle is no longer present), the appropriate CHP CC should be notified. The CHP CC should notify the responsible Caltrans TMC for repair or regrading at the discretion of Caltrans. These incidents should be reported using the CHP 573 or in the manner prescribed in paragraph 3.e. only when the TER requires temporary closure to repair or regrade the facility, or when CHP is requested for a TER report or to assist with the closure.

Retention periods for standalone electronic or paper copies of CHP 573 reports shall be one year at the designated CHP Area and Division offices, and three years at Commercial Vehicle Section (CVS). Reports for TER incidents attached to crash reports shall adhere to retention policy in HPM 110.5. A PDF copy of the electronic CHP 573 form may be used as an "electronic copy" for the purposes of this retention policy.

NOTE: Instructions for completing the CHP 573 are available using the "Instructions" tab located on the top right of the form. Using the "Submit by Supervisor" tab on the CHP 573 form will automatically encrypt the form and

populate the e-mail addresses for reporting to the following entities: the local Caltrans District Maintenance and Operations division responsible for the TER, the Caltrans Division of Traffic Operations Headquarters, and CVS. Personnel **shall not** use an unencrypted e-mail to send TER report information, nor shall they use the public-facing Caltrans Customer Service Request website to report TER use or other maintenance needs.

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

ANNEX A

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## ANNEX A

### GEOGRAPHICAL LISTING OF REPORTING LOCATIONS

#### 1. LOCATIONS.

a. The following CHP Area offices and their respective CCs are responsible for reporting TER-related incidents occurring at the listed Caltrans TER facilities:

(1) Humboldt (125)—Humboldt CC.

(a) Redwood Bypass #1: US-101 Southbound (S/B) at Post Mile R127.547

(b) Redwood Bypass #2: US-101 S/B at Post Mile R129.530

(2) Redding (135)—Redding CC.

(a) Montgomery Creek: State Route (SR) 299 Westbound (W/B) at Post Mile 58.354

(3) Yreka (145)—Yreka CC.

(a) Collier Roadside Rest: Interstate (I) 5 Northbound (N/B) at Post Mile R58.10 (Exit 786 R)

(4) Trinity River (175)—Redding CC.

(a) Oregon Mountain: SR-299 W/B at Post Mile 47.130

(5) Gold Run (221)—Chico CC.

(a) Whitmore: I-80 W/B at Post Mile 50.009

(b) Crystal Springs: I-80 W/B at Post Mile 46.000

(6) Buttonwillow (426)—Bakersfield CC.

(a) Grocer's Grade (Upper): SR-33 N/B at Post Mile 5.678

(b) Grocer's Grade (Lower): SR-33 N/B at Post Mile 9.250

## ANNEX A

### GEOGRAPHICAL LISTING OF REPORTING LOCATIONS (*continued*)

- (7) Fort Tejon (430)—Bakersfield CC.
  - (a) Grapevine East (Shoulder): I-5 N/B at Post Mile 8.230
  - (b) Grapevine West (Median): I-5 N/B at Post Mile 8.6
- (8) El Centro (625)—El Centro CC.
  - (a) Mountain Springs: I-8 Eastbound (E/B) at Post Mile R3.730
- (9) Mojave—Inyokern Resident Post (830)—Bishop CC.
  - (a) Freeman Junction: SR-178 E/B at Post Mile 87.800
- (10) Barstow—Mountain Pass Resident Post (835)—Barstow CC.
  - (a) Mountain Pass: I-15 N/B at Post Mile 175.631
- (11) San Bernardino (860)—Inland CC.
  - (a) Cajon Pass: I-15 S/B at Post Mile R23.027