

CHAPTER 5
PRIVATE CALL ANSWERING CENTERS
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CHAPTER 5

PRIVATE CALL ANSWERING CENTERS

1. PRIVATE CALL ANSWERING CENTERS. There is an increasing number of Private Call Answering Centers (PCAC) operated by automobile manufacturers, insurance companies, auto clubs, financial institutions, and oil companies. These private centers answer calls for roadside assistance from their subscribers. Some also receive automatic crash notification when a vehicle airbag deploys. In most cases, the private call answering center receives location information provided by a global positioning device in the vehicle. Calls requiring emergency response are transferred to a local public safety answering point based on the nature and location of the incident. California Highway Patrol (CHP) communications centers (CCs) may be advised of stranded motorists or collisions on California highways.

a. Call Routing. The routing information used by these private entities is developed from a variety of sources, including the National Emergency Number Association, database telephone directories, or through contact calls to state and local agencies. Local policy and procedures should require that these calls be handled with the same level of urgency and professionalism regardless of the source.

2. SERVICE AUTHORITY FOR FREEWAYS AND EXPRESSWAYS.

a. General. The Service Authority for Freeways and Expressways (SAFE) has the authority to contract call box answering services with a PCAC. The SAFE is the lead agency and has designated a program manager. The CHP Communications Centers Support Section (CCSS) SAFE Coordinator is the departmental contact for coordinating future privatization of call box answering services with the SAFE. The affected CC shall designate a representative to work with the CCSS SAFE Coordinator to facilitate the transfer of call box answering responsibilities to the PCAC. As privatization occurs, the PCAC will have complete responsibility for all call box calls.

b. Transfer of Responsibilities. For billing purposes, CHP and SAFE will mutually agree on a quarterly date for the transfer of service from the CC to the PCAC. The cutover date for the transfer of service from CHP to the PCAC shall occur at the end of the designated quarter period.

c. Remote Agent Message System. The Remote Agent Message System (RAMS) is a remote computer workstation established for computerized routing of nonemergency calls to CHP CCs. The RAMS consists of personal computer

workstation(s) purchased and installed in each CC by the SAFE. The number of workstations installed will be based on the number of operating positions at the affected CC and the SAFE's budget. The CC will identify the physical placement of the RAMS workstation(s). All CCs with PCAC workstations are equipped with a software operating system for RAMS which conforms to departmental guidelines.

(1) Priority Levels. There are two RAMS priority levels for nonemergency, roadside assistance and incidental type calls: level one and level two, respectively. The routed message will display a color-coded priority designator and status.

(a) Unopened priority one calls – white text on red background.

(b) Opened priority one calls – red text on white background.

(c) Unopened priority two calls – white text on blue background.

(d) Opened priority two calls – blue text on white background.

d. Call Box Call Types. The four types of call box calls are emergency, nonemergency, roadside assistance, and incidental.

(1) Emergency Calls. All calls of an emergency nature and calls requiring an immediate response or action by CHP field units shall be live transferred to the CC by the PCAC. Emergency calls transferred to the CC include highway traffic collisions; medical emergencies; intoxicated, reckless, or other erratic drivers; traffic hazards (hazardous material spills, roadway blockage, wires down, spilled loads, etc.); crimes in progress; and situations where personal safety is perceived to be in jeopardy. The procedures for live transfer of emergency calls and incidents requiring a CHP response include:

(a) The PCAC call box operator will query the caller to determine the nature and details of the emergency/incident.

(b) The PCAC operator will place the caller in the transfer queue and contact CHP.

(c) When the CHP Public Safety Dispatch/Public Safety Operator answers the line, the PCAC operator will provide them with the pertinent information regarding the emergency/incident details (incident type, location, special circumstances or details, vehicle license number, call box number, the PCAC log number, etc.) and may ask for a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) incident log number.

(d) The PCAC operator will then transfer the call and advise the caller to "go ahead." The PCAC operator will confirm the caller is connected to

CHP and disconnect from the call. They will complete their log and file the entry. Live transferred calls will not be routed to the RAMS workstation.

(2) Nonemergency Calls. Nonemergency calls may or may not be live transferred to the CHP CC by the PCAC. Nonemergency calls include disabled female motorists with assistance en route, duplicate calls of the same incident, Freeway Service Patrol (FSP) requests, and miscellaneous information. The PCAC operator should use good judgment to determine the method of notification based on the circumstances and information relayed by the caller.

(a) Calls for call boxes requiring a visual check (connected but tapping or other noises/no voice connection) may be live transferred to the CHP CC as a nonemergency call for required action or routed to the RAMS as priority level one.

(b) Duplicate and miscellaneous calls will be routed to the RAMS, except when new information would change or delay the response of CHP field units and/or create a threat to the safety of the public and/or CHP field units.

(c) The PCAC will contact the CC via telephone for all FSP requests. Call box callers requesting FSP service will be routed to the RAMS as priority level one.

(3) Roadside Assistance. Roadside assistance calls are nonemergency in nature and may or may not require CHP action. Disabled female motorist vehicles with assistance en route and disabled vehicles with no assistance en route will require CHP action.

(4) Incidental Calls. These are maintenance/test type calls, inappropriate use calls, such as inquiries for directions, ghost calls (call box calls without Automatic Number Identification), etc. These calls do not require CHP action and will be entered into the RAMS as priority level two for information only.

e. Private Call Answering Center Procedures. The PCAC operator will obtain and log pertinent information then take appropriate action. The call will be routed for information to the CHP RAMS workstation or will direct transfer the call to the CHP CC. The PCAC will complete an incident log of all calls routed to CHP CC via RAMS or direct transfer. The PCAC incident log entries will include the following:

(1) Log number.

(2) Date.

- (3) Start time (time call received by PCAC).
- (4) End time (time call completed by PCAC).
- (5) Call type.
 - (a) Emergency or nonemergency.
 - (b) Roadside assistance.
 - (c) Incidental.
- (6) Call box number.
- (7) Location (exact location description provided by CAD).

f. Teletypewriter/Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TTY/TDD) Calls. The PCAC will answer and complete all TTY/TDD calls received from a call box. The PCAC shall obtain the pertinent information, and live transfer the TTY/TDD caller to the CC.

g. California Highway Patrol Communications Center System Outages. The CHP CC shall immediately notify the PCAC of system failures which prevent them from answering live calls and/or viewing RAMS messages. The CC shall provide the PCAC an alternative method for temporarily routing live transfer calls and RAMS messages, as well as provide the estimated length of the outage.