



PRESSRELEASE

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Firefighters Challenged but Creative in Response to Motorcycle Fatality Incident

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District has released the audio tape of a September 27th, 2015 fatality motorcycle accident that occurred on South Bound Highway 101 between University Avenue and Embarcadero Expressway, at the border between San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties.

The dramatic audio tape and written incident summary sheet, that can be found on the Fire Districts web-site at www.menlofire.org. They are intended to highlight the challenges facing first responders due to regional traffic congestion, out dated roadway design, traffic control devices that slow emergency vehicles and proposals to reduce the number of lanes on roadways such as on El Camino Real and Middlefield Road.

This incident follows another traffic accident last month on the Dumbarton Bridge where new dash camera footage shows fire apparatus going through a different jurisdiction and then traveling against traffic for 6 of 16 minutes of their response because of traffic and roadway design issues.

Fire Chief Schapelhouman said, "my goal is to show and tell the public what we are up against daily in terms of traffic congestion and how it challenges and slows our ability to quickly respond to emergencies where peoples wellbeing, their property and lives hang in the balance, we can and will be paying more attention to these problems".

During the audio tape, fire crews can be heard creatively redirecting apparatus to streets that parallel the freeway in a race to get to the patient's location because the motorcyclist is reported as being down, not breathing, and at one point, with CPR in progress.

Firefighters discuss how to quickly transport the patient to nearby Stanford Hospital once they arrive. Should they completely close down traffic South Bound and bring an ambulance in going the wrong way, close down North Bound lanes to move the patient over to the East Bayshore frontage road or use the ladder truck to lift him off the freeway to the West Bayshore frontage road. Tragically, they never find out because the patient is determined to be deceased.

"I'm proud of how creative our field commanders and personnel are when it comes to trying to save a life" Chief Schapelhouman said. "Our job is often a race against time, we can't always prevent the loss of a life but we need to do everything in our power to speak up about what can be done to improve our response times, because right now, at certain times of the work day, they are ridiculous and I can't accept that."