



Highway Attachment 12 – Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor (Cupertino Area) Information

HWY18FH011

(7 pages)

Ernesto L. Ramirez
Caltrans Highway Maintenance Supervisor Cupertino Area
March 28, 2018

This timeline statement is from the moment of first notification with no prior knowledge or notification of an accident occurring on or near March 12, 2018.

- March 20, 2018 Was notified by South/West Region Manager I Ernesto A. Ramirez that a SMART SCI TL-3100GM crash cushion South 101 to the Carpool South 85 connector had been hit.
- March 20 Advised that the two workers that were patrolling that area go by there and check if it was hit as I did not recall if I had seen it previously.
- Worker advised me via pictures that it was hit however the system had been damaged beyond reset because the cable in the system had been torn so I advised them to put barricades and cones out in the mean time that a replacement system was located and scheduled.
- The following day on March 21, we did a shift change due to storm advisory and went home half day to come back in that evening and continued through the rest of the week ending on March 23rd at 0400.
- March 23rd the supervisor Carlos Uribe during the day shift informed me around 1300 that afternoon of an accident S101 near 85 connector had occurred but no further details at the time.
- On Monday March 26th I obtained a new SMART crash cushion to replace the same one damaged out at the gore point with an emergency closure and were done by 1530 that same day with the replacement install.
- On the following day March 27th I was called by Amrinder and Yetendra asking about any previous work that had been done on that location regarding the SMART Crash Cushion and I told them that I would attain info from our IMMS system as soon as I could since I was scheduled to be in training throughout the rest of the week and did not have access readily available at the time.
- While in training in Marysville on March 28th I was notified via email by Manager II Earl Sherman III that I was to get in contact with Robert Haus and inform PIO of what had occurred during the process leading up to the replacement of the crash cushion. I was later called via phone by Laura Horan and gave her the statement as stated above in these notes and also learned that there was a CHP report of a previous incident that hit the same SMART crash cushion on March 12th but I myself was never notified nor was there a BAIRS log that I saw when advised of the damage on March 20th.

#3.

On March 20th, Caltrans Maintenance Supervisor (Cupertino facility), Ernesto L. Ramirez was advised by Area Manager I, Ernesto A. Ramirez that a SMART Crash Cushion had been hit. Ernesto A. Ramirez discovered this while he was on a drive with Manager II, Earl Sherman.

Since two Cupertino Caltrans workers Joseph Villabrille and Leonev Michel were already out patrolling that area, Ernesto L. Ramirez asked them to check the crash cushion. Around 0930 they sent Ramirez a set of pictures via text of the damaged crash cushion showing that reset is no longer possible because the cable had snapped. Ramirez advised Joseph (who sent the pictures via text) to put cones and barricades up until a new unit could be located to replace the damaged one out there. Pictures are provided below.

There was no written work order created at that time.

Ramirez did not have a new crash cushion at his facility in Cupertino. He began calling around to other maintenance facilities to find one. He contacted the Caltrans yards at San Francisco, Foster City, Gilroy and the Bernal yard located in San Jose. He located two at the Bernal yard, but these were reserved for another location waiting to be installed. The decision was made that one of these crash cushions would be used for the subject accident site. This took 2 days to locate a new crash cushion and receive approval to change the installation location.

On March 20, 2018, Ramirez and his crew of 2 were repairing a center divide hit on SR 85. On March 21 and 22 they were assigned to Storm Patrol which requires working 12 hour shifts due to rain. The Cupertino Maintenance facility covers areas prone to slide during rain events. From March 20 to the morning of March 23, Ramirez was working on the center divide repair, storm patrol and attempting to locate a new crash cushion.

On March 23rd at the time of the accident, Ramirez and his crew were off work after working a 12 hour night shift on Storm Patrol. He was called because the day shift needed to unlock the gate to obtain push brooms for the subject accident. Ramirez was not informed that the crash cushion was struck a second time. Nevertheless, he continued to work toward arranging the replacement. Even though he was off duty, Ramirez made several calls over the weekend to locate crew and equipment to replace the crash cushion on Monday, March 26th. The Cupertino crew only had 2 employees at that time. A crash cushion replacement takes 10 employees and several trucks. A full lane closure, removal of the old crash cushion and installation of a new crash cushion takes 9-10 hours. Ramirez had to locate other employees and vehicles, clearing availability with each supervisor to fully staff the crew for the replacement on Monday, March 26th. All crews have planned maintenance duties every day. Arrangements must be made to prioritize and reschedule activities. All along, Ramirez worked toward a Monday, March 26th replacement and installation date.

There was no date scheduled for replacement on March 20th. This is because Ramirez had to locate a replacement crash cushion, locate employees and vehicles to perform the job which was completed on March 26th. Installation could not have taken place on March 20, 21, or 22 because it was raining. On March 23, the crew was off work because they had worked all night long on a 12 hour storm patrol shift.

The BAIRS Logs attached have been reviewed. There is no report of accident on March 12, 2018 from the CHP.

#4. 6010 Monterey Road, San Jose, CA.

#6. See attachment.

#8. Yes. There were 2 SMART Crash Cushions available at the South San Jose Maintenance Facility planned and scheduled to be installed at another location.

#9. When notified of an accident regarding any safety barrier (i.e. guardrail, center divide, sound walls, fence, attenuators) the Supervisor responds to inspect the damaged location described immediately. Each Supervisor must respond to his Superintendent for accountability. The Superintendent makes daily phone calls, reviews time sheet records and has regular meetings with each Supervisor. The Superintendent also drives the roadways himself doing inspections once per month to make sure the Supervisor is doing his job.

#10. CHP, local law enforcement and emergency response agencies are well aware of the requirement to report highway damage to Caltrans. The TMC (Traffic Management Center) is jointly operated by CHP and Caltrans. Both agencies work in the same room to make sure reports made by CHP are given to Caltrans. Caltrans dispatchers then contact the appropriate Maintenance Supervisor. There is no Memorandum of Understanding, but is common knowledge statewide.

#11. Yes.

#12. Weekly inspections are being done pursuant to policy. Sometimes these inspections are documented as part of other work orders. Sometimes they are not documented because there are no deficiencies found. Each Supervisor must respond to his Superintendent for accountability. The Superintendent makes daily phone calls, reviews time sheet records and has regular meetings with each Supervisor. The Superintendent also drives the roadways himself doing inspections once per month to make sure the Supervisor is doing his job.

#14. These signs are construction signs. The construction project was finished on the day of the subject accident. However, the signs remain in place until all post construction inspections have been completed. These were removed shortly after the subject accident.





