

Freeway Service Patrol Coordinator,

On the morning of September 17th, 2015, I was in route to the Central Division Office when I heard a broadcast call from the Fresno Communication Center of a collision blocking traffic on westbound SR-180, east of SR-99. At that very moment, I could see traffic ahead of me backing up and then stopping in all lanes at Van Ness.

I contacted FCC and told them I was 10-97 and I got out to help. I saw there was an injured driver from a small truck, and a large dump-truck towing a flatbed trailer which was carrying a large backhoe type tractor. The dump-truck was facing the wrong direction, blocking the #1 and #2 lanes. Traffic was rapidly backing up more than a mile to Blackstone Avenue.

I saw a Budget Towing (FSP) tow truck arriving at almost the same time I had. Over the next couple minutes two more Budget tow trucks arrived. I got some witness statements and provided information for FCC. During this time and without being asked, the Budget Tow drivers had formulated a plan. They believed if they moved the small truck out of the way, and then secured the trailer from rolling; the dump-truck driver could drive the dump-truck forward, and that would upright the trailer. They believed they could accomplish this with their regular tow trucks and there would be no need for a big-rig tow truck and the long wait that requires.

The plan was implemented and worked just like the Budget Towing drivers said it would. While one tow truck driver was hooking chains, the other was cleaning debris, and the other was applying absorbent. They really worked together like a team, and never doing anything without first getting approval by the officers in charge. After the trailer was up righted, it was found the front bumper of the dump-truck was bent in so bad that it restricted the steering of the truck. One of the Budget Towing drivers came up with a plan to pull the bumper out with his wench. One quick attempt, bumper straightened, and the problem was solved. The truck and trailer drove away, thus quickly clearing the roadway.

What would have been well over an hour wait to get the road cleared by a big-rig tow, and the time wasted keeping several officers out on the pavement directing traffic during that time, not to mention the backup of traffic on freeway 180 and the problems that causes, the FSP drivers got the roadway cleared in a much quicker time frame. I was very impressed by the professional and proficient work done by these three tow drivers making the job of the C.H.P. officers at the scene more expedient and safe.

Officer Perry Miller