



California Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Terrie Prosper, 415.703.1366, news@cpuc.ca.gov

CPUC JOINS WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT ON STRIKE TEAM TO ENFORCE SAFETY COMPLIANCE OF PASSENGER CARRIERS AT MAJOR AIRPORTS AND OTHER AREAS OF INTERESTS

SAN FRANCISCO, August 5, 2008 – The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has participated in nine multi-agency strike force operations on passenger carriers (limousine, shuttles, tour bus) during the second quarter of 2008. These operations were conducted to ensure that companies are properly licensed with CPUC. At the same time, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) inspected vehicles for Vehicle Code violations. Other agencies that participated in one or more of the joint inspections are:

1. Department of Weights and Measures (San Diego County, Sacramento County)
2. Landside/Airside Operations (San Diego Airport, Sacramento Airport, Port of Oakland, Palm Springs, San Jose Airport, San Francisco Airport)
3. MTS Taxi Enforcement Unit
4. Police Departments (San Leandro, San Jose, Alameda, San Diego Southern Division, Palm Springs, San Francisco)
5. San Diego Special Events Coordinator
6. San Diego Transit Enforcement Division
7. San Francisco Office of the District Attorney
8. San Francisco Taxi Commission
9. Sheriffs Office (San Diego County, Sacramento County, Alameda County)
10. United States Golf Association (USGA)

The operations were conducted at the following locations:

1. **San Diego International Airport (SAN) – April 29, 2008** – 45 shuttles and limousines were pulled over for the inspection. The CPUC issued four misdemeanor warnings (operating without a valid permit) and 41 observation reports. The CHP issued four citations for unsafe

vehicle violations and placed five shuttles out of service. In all, the CHP found total of 47

violations on the shuttles inspected. San Diego Landside Operations issued 12 airport citations for airport violations.

- 2. Sacramento International Airport (SMF) – May 13, 2008** – 127 vehicles (taxicabs, hotel shuttles, limousines, airport shuttles, and charter buses) were pulled over for inspection. The CPUC interviewed 41 vehicles (22 airport shuttle vans, eight charter buses, and 11 limousines) to ensure that these companies are properly licensed. The CPUC issued four misdemeanor warnings (operations without a permit from CPUC or on a suspended permit) and 11 Notices to Correct Violations (minor such as waybill documentation, vehicle not listed with CPUC). The CHP inspected 43 vehicles (29 non-bus and 14 bus), which disclosed 32 violations of the Vehicle Code. The CHP issued five citations and placed one vehicle out of service for various violations of the Vehicle Code (fire extinguisher expired, no carrier ID number displayed, bus inspection required, no plates displayed for more than 6-7 months, and no passenger vehicle endorsement on CDL). Weights and Measures (WM) has the responsibility under the California Business and Professions Code for testing taximeters for accuracy and rate posting inside the cab for the customers. WM visually inspected 80 taxicabs and issued nine Notices of Violation. WM also imposed civil administrative penalties of \$250 against six of the nine for having no Weights and Measures seals or having an expired seal on the meter. SMF wrote 12 citations and pulled 12 transponders (eight for Airport violations and four for no valid CPUC permit).
- 3. San Ysidro Border Crossings – May 21, 2008** - A sting operation was conducted in response to the numerous complaints received about illegal solicitations by numerous unlicensed and licensed passenger carriers at the San Ysidro Port of Entry. The San Diego Police Department arrested 12 individuals for illegal soliciting. Four vans/buses were impounded during the sting operation. The CPUC issued two misdemeanor warnings (operations without a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity and on a suspended permit).
- 4. Oakland International Airport (OAK) – May 22, 2008** - 228 vehicles were pulled over for the inspection (133 were shuttles, limos, and vans subject to CPUC jurisdiction, seven hotel

shuttles, and 88 taxi cabs). The CPUC issued five misdemeanor warnings (operations without a CPUC permit or on a suspended or revoked permit), and 62 Notices to Correct Violations (majority were for minor violations such as waybill failure, vehicles in operation not listed with CPUC, vehicle identification (decals, livery plate)). Ten of the 62 were for potential violation of engaging drivers without procuring workers compensation insurance. Sixty-six vehicles had no violation. The CHP inspected 24 vehicles (22 regulated and two non-regulated), which disclosed five driver violation counts (license, medical card, and registration) and 20 vehicle violation counts (brakes, lights and reflectors, steering and suspension, tires and wheels, and equipment). The CHP placed six vehicles out of service (three for drivers and three for vehicles), and issued 10 citations for violation of the Vehicle Code. Weights and Measures visually inspected 88 cabs, 63 had no apparent violations, and 25 cabs (28 percent) were removed from service that day for violation of using an unsealed device because the meter security seal had been broken. Ten of those meters the seal was apparently counterfeit.

5. **Palm Springs Airport – May 29, 2008** – The CPUC issued 11 observation notices. No violations were found.
6. **Joint Agency Limousine/Taxicab Enforcement - June 6, 2008** – This was a joint agency sting operation targeting limousine carriers who solicited passengers without prearranged fares and no waybills as well as unlicensed carriers. CPSD acted as decoy passengers needing rides to the airport and was solicited in front of major hotels and other busy areas of San Francisco. Staff later followed up the evening’s operation by submitting detailed written testimony that will be used in support of the arresting officers’ misdemeanor citations for municipal code violations as well as PU Code violations for no permit. Seven limousine operators were cited for various violations and one vehicle was towed because of being a repeat offender. In addition, one hotel employee was cited by the San Francisco Police Department for illegal solicitation.
7. **Torrie Pines Golf Course, San Diego - June 16, 2008** – 48 limousines were inspected in a joint surprise limousine inspection at the Torrie Pines Golf Course in San Diego. The CPUC issued three Misdemeanor Warnings for operating with suspended/revoked permit, and eight



Notices to Correct Violation for failure to have waybills. San Diego Police Department directed and escorted the limousines to the inspection site.

8. **San Jose Mineta International Airport (SJC) – June 18, 2008** - 86 vehicles (limos, bus, and shuttles) were pulled over for the inspection. The CPUC issued six misdemeanor warnings (operation with suspended, revoked or no CPUC permit) and 33 Notices to Correct Violations (decals, maintain current vehicles with CPUC, waybills, and possible workers' compensation insurance violations). Forty-seven had no violations noted. The CHP inspected 11 vehicles (nine regulated, two non-regulated) and noted eight driver violations (CDL, Medical Card, registration), six vehicle violations (steering suspension, tires and wheels, equipment), and six Out of Service (drivers). The CHP also issued eight citations.

9. **San Francisco International Airport (SFO) – June 24, 2008** –148 vehicles (limousines, bus, and shuttles) were pulled over for the inspection. The CPUC issued eight Misdemeanor Warnings (operation with suspended, revoked or no CPUC permit), and 56 Notices to Correct Violations (decals, maintain current vehicles with CPUC, waybills, vehicle ID, and possible workers' compensation insurance violations). Eighty-four had no violations noted. The CHP inspected 37 vehicles (36 regulated, one non-regulated) and noted one driver violation (Medical Card, registration), 25 vehicle violations (brakes, lights and reflectors, steering and suspension, tires and wheels, equipment), and six Out of Service (one driver, five vehicles). The CHP also issued eight citations. The San Francisco Police Department Ground Transportation Unit issued 12 moving citations and six parking citations.

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