

## **511 Case Studies Overview -- San Francisco Bay Area**

Since 1996, the San Francisco Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) has operated TravInfo® as a comprehensive system to gather, organize and disseminate timely information on San Francisco Bay Area traffic and road conditions, public transit routes and schedules, carpooling, highway construction and road closures, van and taxi services for disabled travelers, park-and-ride facilities, and bicycle programs. The project's day-to-day management team operates with policy direction from the Freeway Management Program Executive Committee (MTC, Caltrans District 4, and the Golden Gate Division of the California Highway Patrol (CHP)). The historical focus of TravInfo®'s data dissemination has been the Traveler Advisory Telephone System (TATS). Callers anywhere in the Bay Area can reach the TATS by dialing the same seven-digit number, 817-1717, without the need to dial an area code (there are presently six area codes in the area). Call volumes average 65,000 per month, with 70% of the calls routed to transit agencies. The service is free to callers, though local toll charges may apply.

### ***511 Vision***

At the earliest practical time, TravInfo® will be accessible via 511 in the present nine county area served by 817-1717 today. Further, as a means to provide information to those coming to but not yet in the Bay Area, MTC will be exploring ways callers outside the area will be able to access the same information (e.g., via a 1-800 toll-free number). Concurrently, MTC is upgrading its entire traveler information system to improve the quality, accuracy and timeliness of available information and increase the number of road miles of coverage. Thus, the 511 service will be supported by higher quality information over a greater geographic coverage area.

### ***Ongoing Activities***

Four key activities are:

- Call Routing: MTC is working with SBC/Pacific Bell, the dominant landline carrier to determine the most cost-effective and fairest method, technically and contractually, to route calls via 511. Additionally, MTC is determining the most efficient Interactive Voice Response system architecture to cost-effectively serve the nine-county, six area code region.
- Information Enhancements: Upgrades in data collection, data fusion, agency coordination and information dissemination will be occurring between now and Summer 2002.
- Marketing: Significant resources (over \$1M annually) has been allocated in the coming years to market TravInfo®, with the principal focus of the marketing being the phone service.
- Statewide Coordination: MTC is working closely with Caltrans and other regions in California to facilitate an orderly, coordinated deployment of 511 throughout the state.

### ***Lessons Learned***

- For a regional agency seeking to implement 511 access promptly, it is helpful to find a state agency to support the regional agency's intentions.
- Key steps along the critical path for 511 access are to gain a commitment of resources by local telecommunications carriers and to have them develop appropriate service offerings.
- Substantial marketing is required to create awareness and usage of the service.

As this case study is under development, the full report is not yet available.