GOLD COUNTRY TELECARE

TRIENNIAL PERFORMANCE AUDIT

MARCH 2010

moore & associates

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CHAPTER 1 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This chapter summarizes key findings and recommendations developed during the Triennial Performance Audit (TPA) of Gold Country Telecare for the period defined as:

- Fiscal Year 2006/07,
- Fiscal Year 2007/08, and
- Fiscal Year 2008/09.

The Triennial Performance Audit was conducted in accordance with the processes established by the California Department of Transportation, as outlined in the *Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities*, as well as *Government Audit Standards* published by the U.S. Comptroller General. The Triennial Performance Audit includes four elements:

1. Compliance requirements,
2. Performance review,
3. Follow-up of prior audit report recommendations, and
4. Functional review.

Nevada County is home to approximately 97,027 residents according to 2007 Census estimates. Approximately 17.7 percent are seniors (age 65 or above), 7.6 percent are mobility-limited (age 16-64), 9.4 percent are low-income, and 2.3 percent of households do not own a private vehicle. The county's population grew at approximately 0.7 percent per annum from 2000 to 2007. State projections estimate Nevada County's population will grow to 136,113 by 2050.

Telecare is a private non-profit agency incorporated in 1977. Telecare service offerings have historically included Legal Aid, Meals-On-Wheels, Information and Assistance, as well as transportation programs. Telecare currently manages and operates several services in Nevada County on behalf of the following entities:

- Nevada County TSD,
- Area 4 Agency on Aging,
- T.H.E. VAN Program,

- Alta California Regional Center, and
- Neighbor-To-Neighbor Volunteer Program.

For the purposes of this audit, our evaluation focuses on those services provided on behalf of Nevada County TSD by contract.

Compliance

Gold Country Telecare did not meet the test of compliance with respect to the Transportation Development Act (TDA) regulations in the following area:

1. FTEs were calculated correctly on internal Telecare reports, but were not reported correctly within Transit Operator Reports submitted to the State Controller.

Prior TPA Recommendations

The prior performance audit, completed in 2007 by PMC, for the three fiscal years ending June 30, 2006, prescribed six recommendations:

1) Work with NCTC to facilitate completion of the Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Plan.
   Implementation Status: Implemented.
2) Continue to draft and implement a revised formal no-show policy.
   Implementation Status: Implemented.
3) Develop an on-time performance standard.
   Implementation Status: Implemented.
4) Accurately report employee hours/full-time equivalent employees connected as defined by the TDA for the paratransit service.
   Implementation Status: Partially implemented.
5) Submit the performance reports that are attached to the monthly invoice electronically (excel) to the County plus a hardcopy.
   Implementation Status: Recommendation deemed impractical.
6) Pursue development of a travel training program to increase mobility options for seniors and those with disabilities.
   Implementation Status: Not yet implemented.

Findings

Based on the current audit, we submit the following finding:

1. FTEs were calculated correctly on internal Telecare reports, but were not reported correctly within Transit Operator Reports submitted to the State Controller.

Recommendations

We propose no recommendations for Gold Country Telecare.

2. AUDIT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 2 – AUDIT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The Triennial Performance Audit of Gold Country Telecare covers a three-year period ending June 30, 2009. The California Public Utilities Code requires all public transit operators conduct an independent Triennial Performance Audit in order to be eligible for Transportation Development Act (TDA) funding.

The audit is designed to be an independent and objective evaluation of Gold Country Telecare as a transit operator. The audit has four primary goals:

1. Assess compliance with TDA regulations,
2. Review actions taken by operator to implement prior recommendations,
3. Evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the transit operator (based on TDA-stipulated criteria), and
4. Provide sound, constructive recommendations for improving the efficiency and functionality of the transit operator.

The audit was conducted in accordance with the processes established by the California Department of Transportation, as outlined in the *Performance Audit Guidebook for Transit Operators and Regional Transportation Planning Entities*, as well as *Government Audit Standards* published by the U.S. Comptroller General.

The TPA is intended to be a high-level review of performance evaluating the efficiency, economy, and effectiveness of the transit operator. The audit of Gold Country Telecare included five related tasks:

1. Review of compliance with the TDA requirements and regulations.
2. Assess the implementation of recommendations presented in prior performance audits.
3. Verify the methodology for calculating performance indicators specific to the following activities:
   - Assessment of internal controls,
   - Test of data collection methods,

- Calculation of performance indicators, and
- Evaluation of performance.

4. Examination of the following functions:
   - General management and organization;
   - Service planning;
   - Scheduling, dispatching, and operations;
   - Personnel management and training;
   - Administration;
   - Marketing and public information; and
   - Maintenance.
5. Recommendations to address opportunities for improvement based on analysis of the information collected and the review of the transit operator's major functions.

The methodology for this audit included a site visit on November 30, 2009. During this site visit, our audit team met with Telecare management and staff; verified data sources; examined financial and statistical reports; and reviewed relevant planning documents and reports.

The audit report is comprised of seven chapters divided among three sections:

1. Executive Summary: A summary of the key findings and recommendations developed during the Triennial Performance Audit process.
2. Audit Scope and Methodology: Discussion of audit methodology and pertinent background information.
3. Audit Results: In-depth discussion of findings surrounding each of the subsequent elements of the audit:
   - Compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements,
   - Progress in implementing prior audit recommendations,
   - Performance measures and trends,
   - Functional review, and
   - Findings and recommendations.

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3. PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

CHAPTER 3 – PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

This section examines Gold Country Telecare's compliance with the Transportation Development Act as well as relevant sections of the California Code of Regulations. An annual certified fiscal audit confirms TDA funds were apportioned in conformance with applicable laws, rules, and regulations. Although compliance verification is not a TPA function, several specific requirements concern issues relevant to the performance audit. The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) considers full use of funds under California Code of Regulations (CCR) 6754(a) to refer to operating funds but not capital funds. The TPA findings and related comments are delineated in Exhibit 3.1.

Compliance was determined through discussions with Telecare staff as well as a physical inspection of relevant documents including the fiscal audits for each year of the triennium, TDA claim forms, annual Transit Operator Reports submitted to the State Controller, California Highway Patrol terminal inspections, year-end performance reports, and other data sources deemed relevant by the audit team.

Gold Country Telecare did not meet the test of compliance with respect to the Transportation Development Act (TDA) regulations in the following area:

1. FTEs were calculated correctly on internal Telecare reports, but were not reported correctly within Transit Operator Reports submitted to the State Controller.

Exhibit 3.1 Transit Development Act Compliance Requirements

REQUIREMENT	REFERENCE	COMPLIANCE	COMMENTS
The transit operator submits annual reports to the RTPA based on the Uniform System of Accounts and records established by the State Controller.	PUC 99243	In compliance.	FY 2006/07: 2/6/2008 FY 2007/08: 10/12/2008 FY 2008/09: 10/19/2009
The operator has submitted annual fiscal and compliance audits to its RTPA and to the State Controller within 180 days following the end of the fiscal year, or has received the appropriate 90-day extension allowed by law.	PUC 99245	In compliance.	FY 2006/07: 2/11/2008 FY 2007/08: 12/31/2008 FY 2008/09: 12/30/2009
The CHP has, within the 13 months prior to each TDA claim submitted by an operator, certified the operator's compliance with Vehicle Code §1808.1 following a CHP inspection of the operator's terminal.	PUC 99251 B	In compliance.	CHP reports with a satisfactory rating dated: November 28, 2007 December 1, 2008 November 17, 2009
The operator's claim for TDA funds is submitted in compliance with rules and regulations adopted by the RTPA for such claims.	PUC 99261	In compliance.	
The operator's operating budget has not increased by more than 15% over the preceding year, nor is there a substantial increase or decrease in the scope of operations or capital budget provisions for major new fixed facilities unless the operator has reasonably supported and substantiated the change(s).	PUC 99266	In compliance.	
The operator's definitions of performance measures are consistent with the Public Utilities Code Section 99247, including	PUC 99247	Finding.	Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) data were correctly calculated according

REQUIREMENT	REFERENCE	COMPLIANCE	COMMENTS
(a) operating cost, (b) operating cost per passenger, (c) operating cost per vehicle service hour, (d) passengers per vehicle service hour, (e) passengers per vehicle service miles, (f) total passengers, (g) transit vehicle, (h) vehicle service hours, (i) vehicle service miles, and (j) vehicle service hours per employee.			to PUC guidelines within Telecare internal monthly reports, but reports submitted to the State Controller still reflect the incorrect methodology referenced in the prior audit.
If the operator serves a rural area, it has maintained a ratio of fare revenues to operating costs at least equal to one-tenth (10 percent).	PUC 99268.2, 99268.4, 99268.5	In compliance.	FY 2006/07: 11.1 percent FY 2007/08: 10.6 percent FY 2008/09: 11.1 percent
The current cost of the operator's retirement system is fully funded with respect to the officers and employees of its public transportation system, or the operator is implementing a plan approved by the RTPA, which will fully fund the retirement system for 40 years.	PUC 99271	In compliance.	
If the operator receives State Transit Assistance funds, the operator makes full use of funds available to it under the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964 before TDA claims are granted.	CCR 6754 (a) (3)	In compliance.	

4. PRIOR AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER 4 – PRIOR AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

This section reviews and evaluates the implementation of prior Triennial Performance Audit recommendations. This objective assessment provides assurance Gold Country Telecare has made quantifiable progress toward improving both the efficiency and effectiveness of its public transit program.

The prior audit, completed in 2007 by PMC for the three fiscal years ending June 30, 2006, prescribed six recommendations for the program.

1) Work with NCTC to facilitate completion of the Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Plan.

   Discussion: The prior auditor indicated Telecare should work closely with NCTC to develop the Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Plan that is being managed by Caltrans. The impetus for this recommendation was the fact Telecare's Section 5310 funding was temporarily delayed until the Plan had been developed.

   Progress: Telecare was deeply involved with the Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan. Telecare communicated regularly with NCTC staff beginning in 2006 and were continually available to Caltrans and the consultant team as needed. The Plan was ultimately completed in October 2008 and Telecare has since been eligible for FTA Section 5310 grants.

   Implementation Status: Implemented.

2) Continue to draft and implement a revised formal no-show policy.

   Discussion: The prior auditor recommended Telecare work with the Transit Services Division and the Transit Services Commission to revise, adopt and implement a no-show policy and procedures. The no-show policy will provide clear guidance and empower Telecare to enforce possible abuses on the system by riders which could affect performance.

   Progress: Telecare understood the importance of a clear no-show policy and revised the original no-show policy which had been adopted in 2005.

The new no-show policy is detailed in a published brochure and includes the rationale behind the no-show policy as well as definitions of "no-show" and "late-cancellation." The process, thresholds, as well as the potential ramifications are communicated clearly.

Implementation Status: Implemented.

3) Develop an on-time performance standard.

Discussion: The prior auditor recommended Telecare work with the TSD to develop an on-time performance goal plus an established pick up window to help with tracking trip productivity.

Progress: Telecare operates with a 30-minute on-time window, 15 minutes prior to and after the scheduled pick-up time. This policy is clearly outlined in published materials available for all Telecare customers. Telecare has established an on-time performance goal of 90 percent. Telecare staff takes program on-time performance seriously and track it on a monthly basis.

Implementation Status: Implemented.

4) Accurately report employee hours/full-time equivalent employees connected as defined by the TDA for the paratransit service.

Discussion: The prior auditor recommended Telecare accurately report its FTE data. FTEs, by definition, include all staff hours associated with the administration and operation of the service. The TDA does not distinguish between operations and administration or directly-employed and contract employee. It only requires that programs divide total hours spent toward the service divided by 2,000 to get the number of FTE's. Since Telecare provides other transit services not related to the paratransit contract, the prior auditor noted an allocation methodology may need to be developed to properly allocate hours among each of the services.

Progress: Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) data were correctly calculated according to PUC guidelines within Telecare internal monthly reports. Data from these reports were then compared to information included within Telecare's Transit Operator Reports submitted to the State Controller

on an annual basis. The reports submitted to the State Controller still reflect the incorrect calculation methodology referenced in the prior audit.

Implementation Status: Partially implemented.

5) Submit the performance reports that are attached to the monthly invoice electronically (excel) to the County plus a hardcopy.

Discussion: It was noted Telecare currently only submits hard copies of its monthly performance reports to the Transit Services Division (TSD). The auditor recommended Telecare begin submitting this data in electronic form to reduce the amount of TSD staff time required to re-enter the data.

Progress: The new TSD Transit Services Manager reviewed this recommendation as well as the hard copies being submitted by Telecare. After speaking with TSD staff regarding the burden this placed on them and evaluating the potential benefit of utilizing electronic reports from Telecare, it was determined there would be no measurable benefit. This is due to the fact the electronic Telecare documents would still require TSD staff to perform data entry functions to the same extent the hard copies currently require.

Implementation Status: Recommendation deemed impractical.

6) Pursue development of a travel training program to increase mobility options for seniors and those with disabilities.

Discussion: The prior auditor recommended Telecare and Gold Country Stage work to prepare a mobility training program for both the fixed route and paratransit services should a grant or dedicated funding source become available.

Progress: Telecare and the TSD have been working with other mobility providers in the area (such as Paratransit, Inc) on the submission of a grant to fund possible mobility training efforts. Given changes in management as well as the current funding climate and the pressures it has placed on the budget, Telecare has postponed efforts to develop a mobility training program. It still remains a priority; however, and staff plan to pursue development of a program when the funding climate improves.

Implementation Status: Not yet implemented.

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5. PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

CHAPTER 5 – PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Performance indicators are used to quantify and review the efficiency of a transit operator's activities. Such metrics provide insight into current operations, as well as trend analysis of recent performance. Through a review of indicators, relative performance and possible interrelationship among key functions can be better understood.

The Transportation Development Act (TDA) requires recipients of TDA funding to report five performance indicators:

- Operating Cost/Passenger,
- Operating Cost/Vehicle Service Hour,
- Passengers/Vehicle Service Hour,
- Passengers/Vehicle Service Mile, and
- Vehicle Service Hours/Employee.

To assess the validity and use of performance indicators, the audit team performed the following activities:

- Assessed internal controls in place for the collection of performance-related information,
- Validated collection methods of key data,
- Calculated performance indicators, and
- Evaluated performance indicators.

The procedures used to calculate TDA-required performance measures for the current triennium were verified and compared to measures stated in similar audit reports. Some variance between calculation methodologies (i.e., farebox recovery) may exist between fiscal and compliance audits.

Operating Cost

The Transportation Development Act requires operators to keep records of transit costs according to the Uniform System of Accounts and Records developed by the State Controller and the California Department of Transportation. The most common method for ensuring this occurs is through a compliance audit report prepared by an independent auditor in accordance with California Code of Regulations Section 6667. The annual independent financial audit should attest to the use of the Uniform System of Accounts and Records. Operating cost – as defined by PUC Section 99247 (a) – excludes the following items:

- Cost in the depreciation and amortization expense object class adopted by the State Controller pursuant to PUC 99243,
- Subsidies for commuter rail services operated under the jurisdiction of the Interstate Commerce Commission,
- Direct costs of providing charter service, and
- Vehicle lease costs.

Vehicle Service Hours and Miles

Vehicle Service Hour (VSH) and Mile (VSM) are defined as the time/distance during which a revenue vehicle is available to carry fare-paying passengers, and includes only the time/distance between the time or scheduled time of the first passenger pickup and the time or scheduled time of the last passenger drop-off during a period of the vehicle's continuous availability (Note: A vehicle is in revenue service despite a no-show or late cancellation if the vehicle remains available for revenue service). For example, demand-response service hours include those hours when a vehicle has dropped off a passenger and is traveling to pick up another passenger, but not those hours when the vehicle is unavailable for service due to a driver lunch or break. Both demand-response and fixed-route service hours exclude hours of "deadhead" travel to the first scheduled pick-up, and also exclude hours of "deadhead" travel from the last scheduled drop-off back to the terminal. For fixed-route service, a vehicle is in revenue service from first scheduled stop to last scheduled

stop, regardless of whether passengers board or exit at those points (deleting driver lunch and breaks yet including scheduled service layovers).

Passenger Counts

According to the Transportation Development Act, total passengers is equal to the total number of unlinked trips (i.e., those trips that are made by a passenger that involve a single boarding and departure), whether revenue-producing or not.

Employees

Employee hours is defined as the total number of hours (regular and overtime) which all employees have worked, and for which they have been paid a wage or salary. The hours must include transportation system-related hours worked by persons employed in connection with the system (whether or not the person is employed directly by the operator). Full-Time Equivalency (FTE) is calculated by dividing the number of person-hours by 2,000.

Fare Revenue

Fare revenue is defined by California Code of Regulations Section 6611.2 as revenue collected from the fare box plus ticket/pass sales.

TDA Required Indicators

To calculate the TDA indicators for Gold Country Telecare, the following sources were used:

- Operating Cost was not independently calculated as part of this audit. Operating Cost from the Transit Operator Reports submitted to the State Controller for each fiscal year covered by this audit was examined. Operating Cost from the audited reports is consistent with TDA guidelines and accurately reflects the costs for Telecare's transit services. In accordance with PUC 99247(a), the reported costs excluded depreciation and charter-related expenses. A fiscal audit for FY 2008/09 was not available for review.

- Fare Revenue was not independently calculated as part of this audit. Fare revenue from the Transit Operator Reports submitted to the State Controller for each fiscal year covered by this audit was examined. Fare revenue from the audited reports is consistent with TDA guidelines. A fiscal audit for FY 2008/09 was not available for review.
- Vehicle Service Hours (VSH) data were obtained via Transit Operator Reports (TORs) submitted to the State Controller for each fiscal year covered by this audit. Data from these reports was then compared to information included within Gold Country Telecare monthly performance data summary reports. Telecare calculates VSH using schedule hours reconciled with driver trip sheets, which is consistent with PUC guidelines.
- Vehicle Service Miles (VSM) data were obtained via Transit Operator Reports submitted to the State Controller for each fiscal year covered by this audit. Data from these reports were then compared to information included within Telecare monthly performance data summary reports. Telecare calculates VSM using schedule hours reconciled with driver trip sheets. This calculation methodology is consistent with PUC guidelines.
- Unlinked trip data were obtained via Transit Operator Reports submitted to the State Controller for each fiscal year covered by this audit. Data from these reports was then compared to information included within Telecare monthly performance data summary reports. The operator's calculation methodology is consistent with PUC guidelines.
- Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) data were obtained via internal monthly reports provided by Telecare staff. Data from these reports were then compared to information included within Telecare's Transit Operator Reports submitted to the State Controller on an annual basis. It appears the reports submitted to the State Controller still reflect the incorrect calculation methodology referenced in the prior audit. The monthly performance data reports do correctly calculate FTEs according to PUC guidelines.

Performance Trends

Performance trends were analyzed for Gold Country Telecare for the three years covered by this Triennial Performance Audit. Indicators were calculated using the methodologies described in the previous section.

Telecare's Operating cost remained relatively steady across the audit period, though it did decrease nearly 10 percent in FY 2008/09, largely due to reductions in its contract with Nevada County. All told, the program cut Vehicle Service Hours, Miles, and FTEs in FY 2008/09, which resulted in diminished ridership and fare revenue.

The cuts in FY 2008/09 had a positive impact on program cost-effectiveness, with reduced Operating Cost/VSH and Operating Cost/Passenger (decreases of 5.4 percent and 3.7 percent, respectively). Farebox recovery also improved in FY 2008/09, rising from 10.6 percent to return to the program's FY 2006/07 level of 11.1 percent.

Exhibit 5.1 Performance Indicators

Performance Measure	Fixed-Route		
	FY 2006/07	FY 2007/08	FY 2008/09
Operating Cost (Actual $)	$982,506	$1,035,550	$934,117
Annual Change		*5.4%*	*-9.8%*
Fare Revenue (Actual $)	$109,346	$110,192	$103,951
Annual Change		*0.8%*	*-5.7%*
Vehicle Service Hours (VSH)	25,280	25,253	24,092
Annual Change		*-0.1%*	*-4.6%*
Vehicle Service Miles (VSM)	315,849	331,851	289,104
Annual Change		*5.1%*	*-12.9%*
Passengers	52,432	48,275	45,243
Annual Change		*-7.9%*	*-6.3%*
Employees	20.33	21.15	20.56
Annual Change		*4.0%*	*-2.8%*
Performance Indicators			
Operating Cost/VSH (Actual $)	$38.86	$41.01	$38.77
Annual Change		*5.5%*	*-5.4%*
Operating Cost/Passenger (Actual $)	$18.74	$21.45	$20.65
Annual Change		*14.5%*	*-3.7%*
Passengers/VSH	2.07	1.91	1.88
Annual Change		*-7.8%*	*-1.8%*
Passengers/VSM	0.17	0.15	0.16
Annual Change		*-12.4%*	*7.6%*
Farebox Recovery	11.1%	10.6%	11.1%
Annual Change		*-4.4%*	*4.6%*
Hours/Employee	1243.5	1,194.0	1,171.8
Annual Change		*-4.0%*	*-1.9%*
TDA Non-Required Indicators			
Operating Cost/VSM	$3.11	$3.12	$3.23
Annual Change		*0.3%*	*3.5%*
VSM/VSH	12.49	13.14	12.00
Annual Change		*5.2%*	*-8.7%*
Fare/Passenger	$2.09	$2.28	$2.30
Annual Change		*9.5%*	*0.7%*

Exhibit 5.2 Ridership

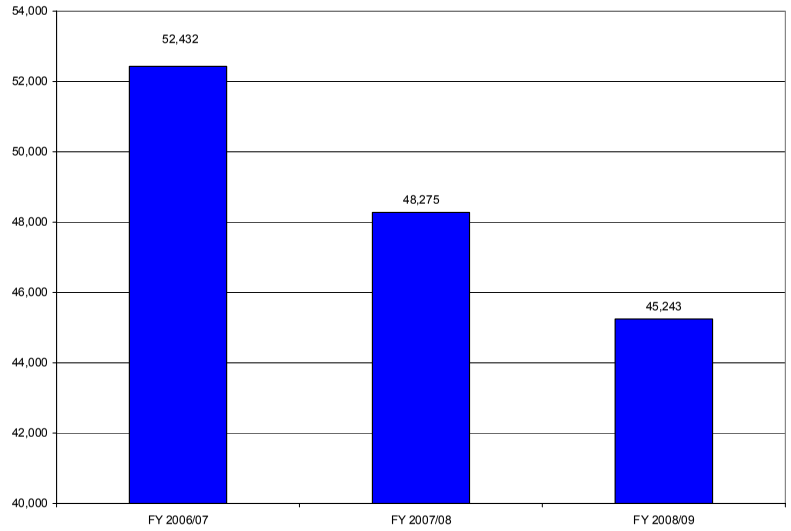


Exhibit 5.3 Operating Cost/VSH

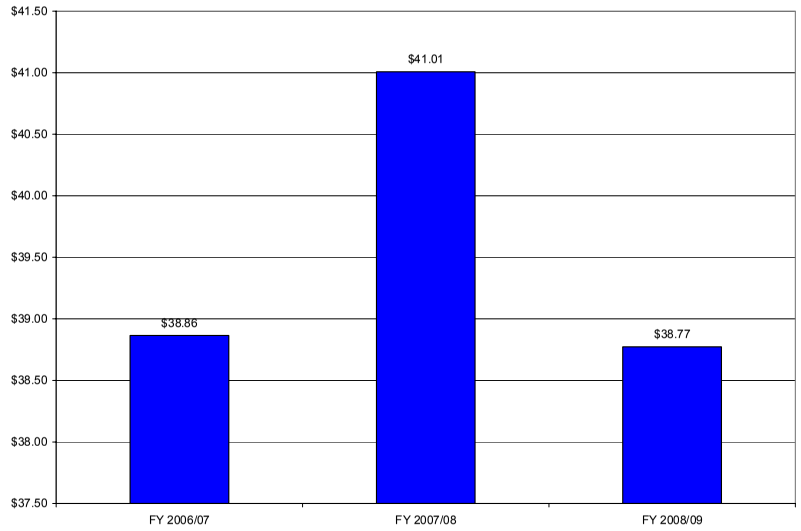


Exhibit 5.4 Operating Cost/VSM

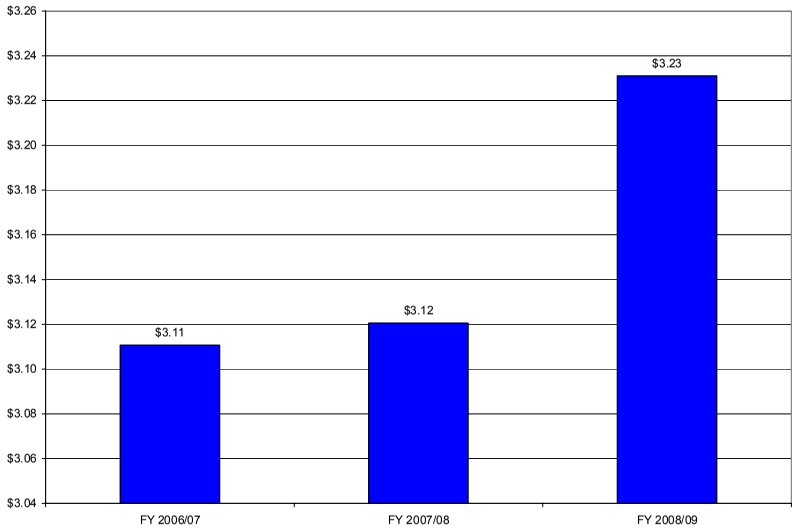


Exhibit 5.5 VSM/VSH

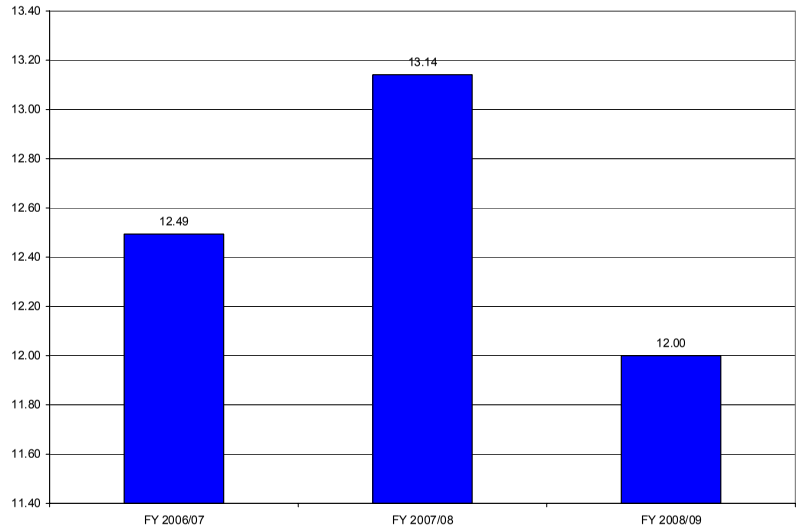


Exhibit 5.6 Operating Cost/Passenger

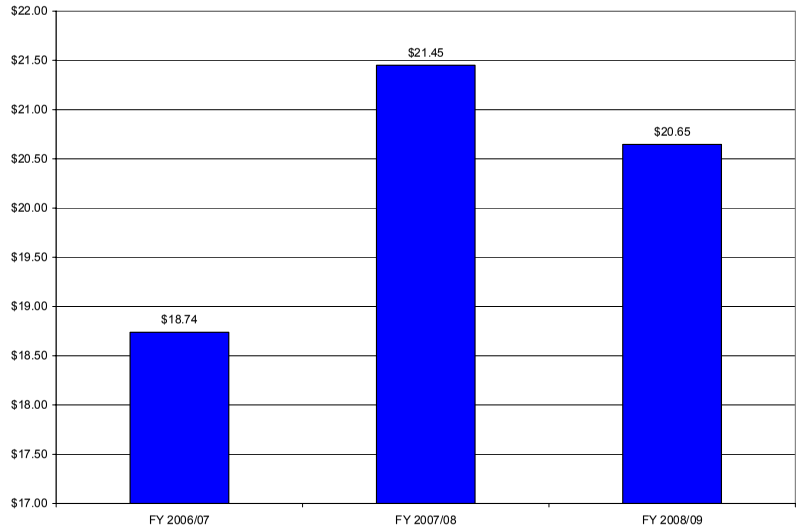


Exhibit 5.7 Passengers/VSH

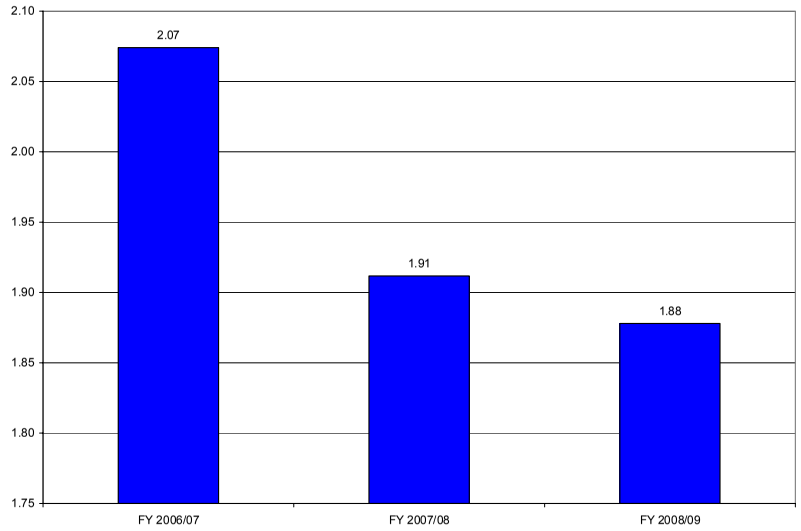


Exhibit 5.8 Passengers/VSM

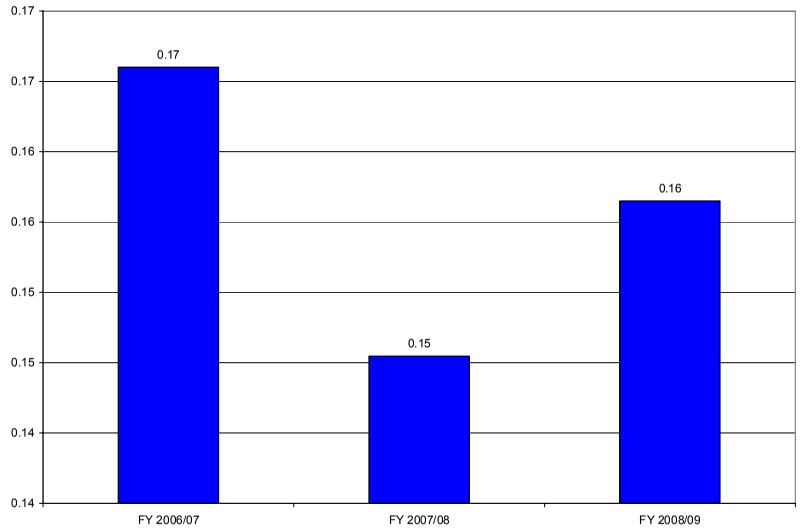


Exhibit 5.9 VSH/FTE

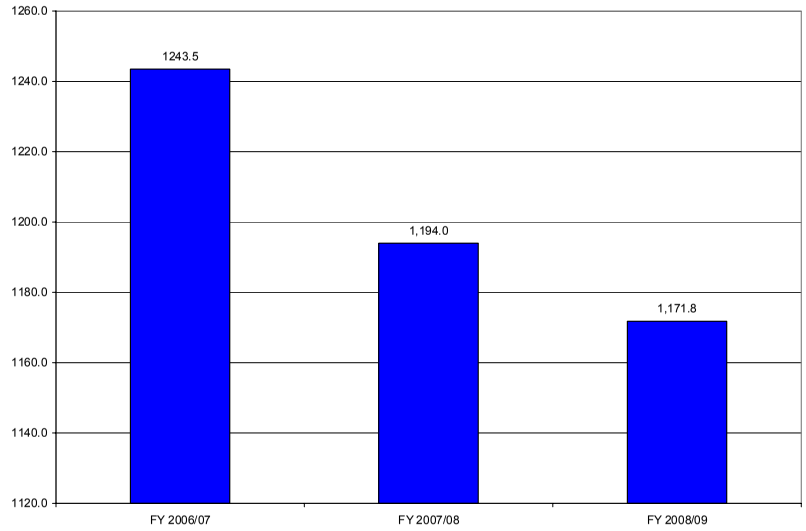


Exhibit 5.10 Farebox Recovery

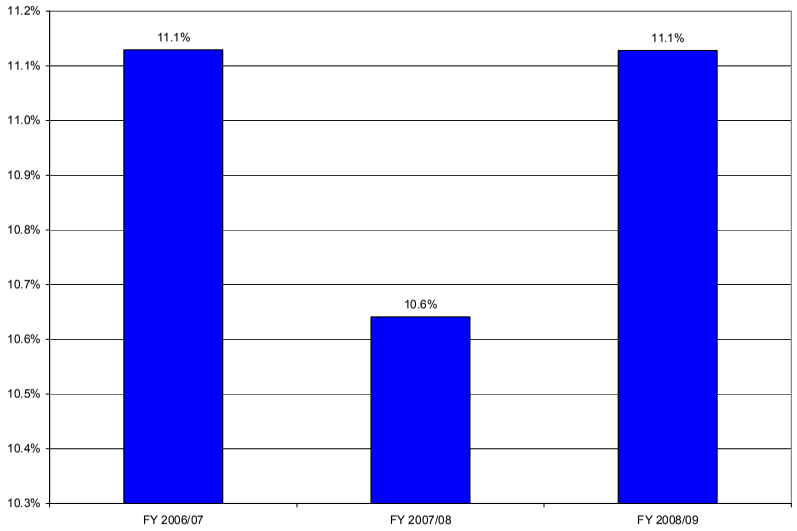
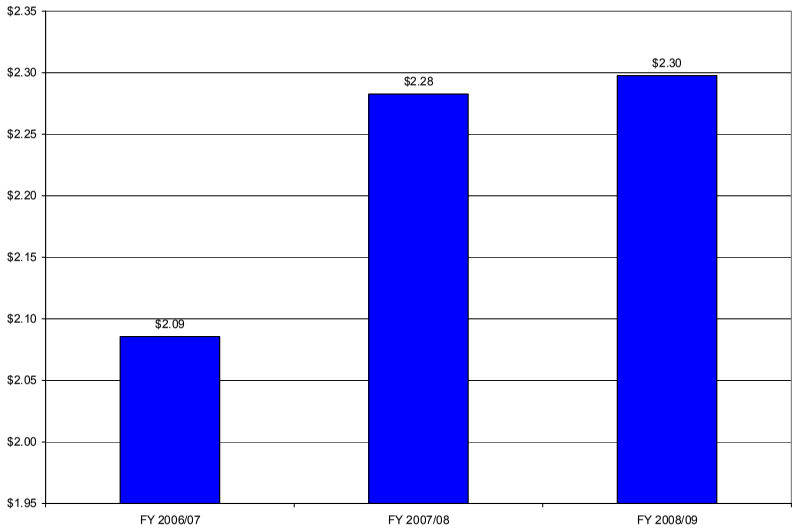


Exhibit 5.11 Fare/Passenger



6. FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

CHAPTER 6 – FUNCTIONAL REVIEW

A functional review of Gold Country Telecare seeks to assess the extent and efficiency of the following functional activities:

- General Management and Organization;
- Service Planning;
- Scheduling, Dispatch, and Operations;
- Administration;
- Marketing and Public Information; and
- Maintenance.

Although the TPA covers the period from July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2009, some aspects of the functional review take into consideration events occurring subsequent to June 30, 2009 given the perceived impact on Gold Country Telecare and its service offerings.

General Management and Organization

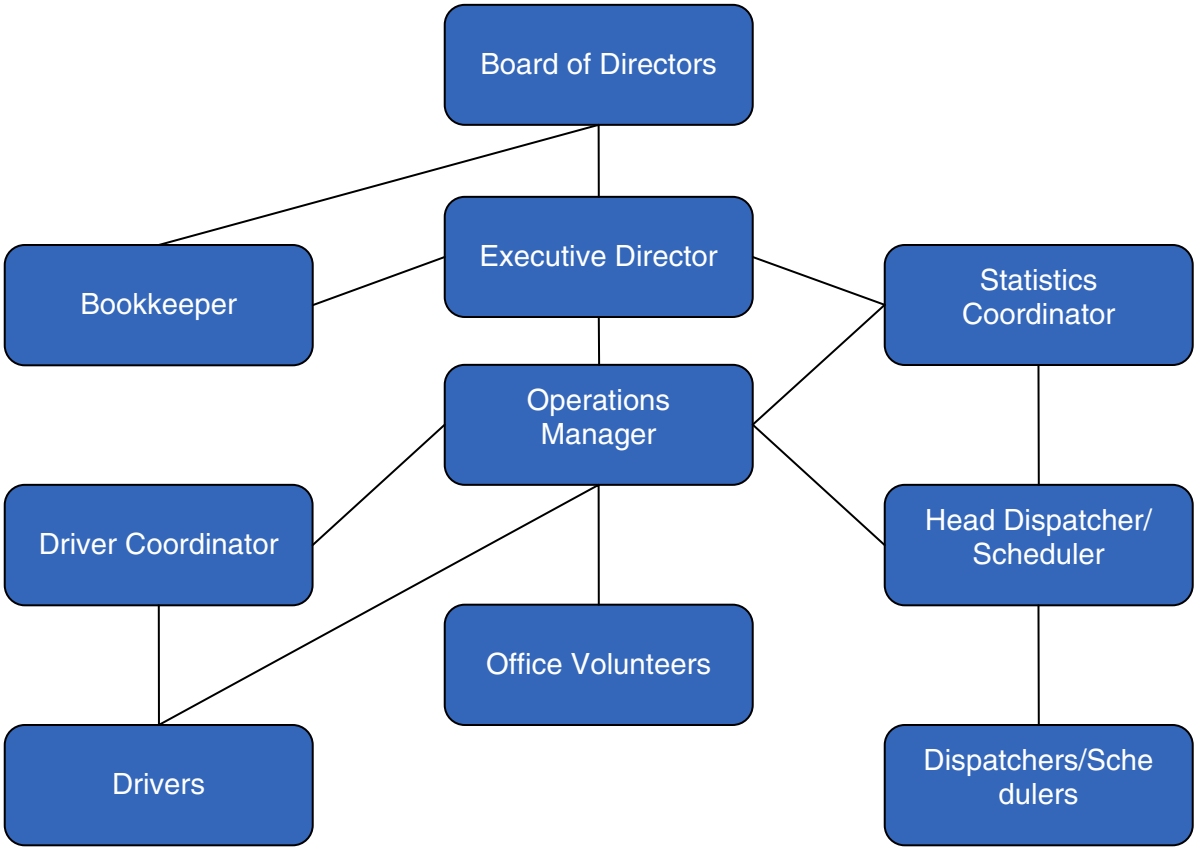
The audit period was marked by significant flux at the Executive Director position for Gold Country Telecare. The Executive Director from the prior audit was hired by Nevada County Transit Services Division to operate the Gold Country Stage fixed-route service (covered under a separate audit report). Since that time, two Executive Directors have come and gone, leaving Telecare with a contract interim Executive Director. The interim Executive Director is focusing on improving the institutional organization and bringing operating practices at the program up to industry standards, while keeping the program operating until a full-time Executive Director can be hired.

The tumult Telecare experienced at the Executive Director level does not appear to have impacted the program's ability to provide complementary paratransit service. The Executive Director is currently working with the Board of Directors to develop a vision – coupled with goals and objectives – for the program. The Executive Director position will be hired based on how his/her vision reflects Telecare's, as

well as his/her ability to operate the program efficiently and effectively and carry out the adopted vision. The Executive Director has direct oversight of the following positions:

- One Operations Manager
- One Head Dispatcher/Scheduler
- Three Dispatchers/Schedulers (one full-time, one part-time, one on-call)
- One Driver Coordinator (oversees maintenance and training)
- One Statistics Coordinator
- One Office Assistant
- One Outside Bookkeeper
- Eight full-time Drivers.
- 10 part-time Drivers, seven of whom are on-call.

Exhibit 6.1 Organizational Chart



Source: Gold Country Telecare

The interim Executive Director believes Telecare is staffed appropriately given the reduced level of service associated with contract reductions made by County TSD.

Telecare has a collaborative relationship with Nevada County Transportation Commission staff, working together to hire consultants and prepare grant applications [most recently a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) grant for two vehicles].

Service Planning

Telecare's contract with the County was reduced on May 4, 2009 from 2,100 hours of service monthly to 1,700 hours due to budget shortfall. This posed significant challenges for Telecare staff, but the program has been able to successfully provide the new, reduced level of service. Some areas within the service area do not receive service given the new, reduced contract, and some residents in outlying areas have trips "bumped" by higher-priority ADA trips as well. Telecare has managed to avoid layoffs during these difficult economic times, and has actually slightly increased staffing levels across the audit period while recently instituting a three-percent, across-the-board raise for staff (to increase loyalty and job satisfaction).

The Nevada County Transportation Commission retained LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc. to prepare a five-Year Transit Development Plan (TDP) to improve and enhance transit service in western Nevada County (i.e., Gold Country Stage and Telecare services) through 2013. The Plan was completed in October 2008 and includes descriptions of the study area, analysis of demographic trends and land-use characteristics, assessment of program performance, and presentation of service recommendations to guide program development across the stipulated horizon. While the Plan is focused largely on fixed-route service, it also includes discussion about Telecare.

The Plan presents recommendations within four distinct categories:

- Service Recommendations,

- Capital Recommendations,
- Institutional and Management Recommendations, and
- Financial Recommendations.

Examples of the recommendations pertaining to Telecare include:

- Develop Telecare no-show and late-cancellation policy.
- Implement a customer education program to ensure clients understand the no-show and late-cancellation policy.
- Reduce the advanced reservation window to limit the number of no-shows and late cancellations.

Telecare staff work closely with consultants chosen by NCTC to develop the Western Nevada Transit Development Plan and have significant input into the process regarding the recommendations included within the Plan. Telecare makes use of market research and community outreach conducted as part of the TDP process. Telecare also conducts a combination customer survey and fundraiser twice each year. The survey is mailed to all registered Telecare passengers. The results are used to identify areas in need of improvement and gauge customer satisfaction. Telecare is currently working on a plan to more effectively promote the program and its services to the community so as to enhance awareness of the program and its benefits and support future fundraising efforts.

Scheduling, Dispatch, and Operations

In October 2006, Telecare purchased and installed Mobilitat dispatch and scheduling software. The new software package has proved instrumental in allowing Telecare to adapt to the new contract's reduced service levels, while improving efficiency to the point where layoffs can be avoided. The dispatch software has aided in balancing demand and improving productivity through more efficient scheduling and dispatch efforts. Through the use of the program, Telecare has been able to set, and achieve, a goal of zero ADA denials. Mobilitat works well for a program of Telecare's size, yet still the interim Executive Director

would like to improve staff training to take advantage of some of the features of the software program not currently being used.

Drivers are assigned specific shifts and do not bid for assignments.

Administration

The Executive Director makes revisions to the current-year budget in February and uses that budget to move into the next fiscal year. Budget revisions are also made as a result of changes to Telecare's contract with the County to provide complementary ADA paratransit service.

Telecare is a private non-profit agency incorporated in 1977. Telecare offerings have historically included Legal Aid, Meals-On-Wheels, Information and Assistance, as well as transportation programs. Telecare currently manages and operates several services in Nevada County on behalf of the following entities:

- Nevada County TSD: Telecare's contract services to the County TSD for complementary ADA paratransit service comprise the majority of its budget, though with recent reductions in the County TSD budget, that percentage is falling. Service is available only to ADA-eligible persons who would otherwise be unable to use the Gold Country Stage fixed-route service without special assistance.
- Area 4 Agency on Aging: Telecare provides Sunday transportation services to western Nevada County Seniors (60 years of age and older) through a contract with the Area 4 Agency on Aging (A4AA). The service is available each Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and serves a variety of locations in western Nevada County. There is a suggested donation of two dollars for each one-way trip. The A4AA also funds a Senior Voucher Program to help with the cost of the fare. Each voucher is worth one dollar.
- T.H.E. VAN Program: T.H.E. VAN Program (Transportation for Health and Enrichment) provides low cost transportation for seniors (age 60 years and older) and persons with disabilities to specific pre-scheduled healthcare

services in western Nevada County. T.H.E. VAN Program is funded through United Way of Nevada County and Telecare's fundraising efforts.

- Alta California Regional Center: Telecare provides subscription service for Alta California Regional Center patrons outside of its regular service area. Transportation is provided to locations such as PRIDE Industries and the Neighborhood Center of the Arts (NCA). The Alta California Regional Center accounts for the majority of Telecare's subscriptions trips.
- Neighbor-To-Neighbor Volunteer Program: Telecare manages the Neighbor-To-Neighbor Volunteer Program. This program is funded in-house and provides limited transportation for ambulatory seniors and person with disabilities for health-related trips outside the Telecare service area via volunteer drivers using their own vehicles. Cost recovery for volunteer drivers is at the appropriate AAA mileage rate.

Marketing and Public Information

Since the prior Executive Director moved to Gold Country Stage, marketing and public outreach efforts have not been among the program's chief priorities, which is understandable given tumult at the Executive Director position and cuts in Telecare's contract with the County. Telecare maintains its own website, though the design and content are out-of-date. The personnel page should be updated upon hiring a new Executive Director and the entire site should be re-designed and modernized should funding become available.

Staff Telecare's primary outreach is through its clients by way of presentations and reports before local commissions and city councils, and using press releases, but the primary way information about Telecare is spread throughout the community is via word of mouth. Telecare also distributes information packets to area senior centers and hospitals, and other community outlets.

Maintenance

Telecare has developed a preventative maintenance (PM) program for its vehicle fleet based on the California Highway Patrol ABC program. The PM program is tailored to meet the individual manufacturer requirements of each vehicle-type in

the fleet. Vehicles are inspected daily by the drivers and defects are logged onto a Daily Vehicle Inspection and Operations Report. Each vehicle has a maintenance file in which service calls are tracked and filed. If safety related defects are discovered, the vehicle is taken out of service until the necessary repairs are made.

Telecare has used Nevada City Auto Services as the primary vendor for comprehensive vehicle maintenance based upon Caltrans' specifications for ten years based on Board of Directors preference given good relationship in the past. The vendor has dedicated staff to the paratransit vehicles. Advantage Auto, which is located adjacent to the Telecare facility, is also utilized for maintenance as a backup to Nevada City Auto and generally maintains two of the program's vehicles on a regular basis. Paratransit, Inc. of Sacramento contracts for wheelchair lift maintenance.

Exhibit 6.2 Gold Country Telecare Fleet

Vehicle Number	Date Received	Make/Year	Funding	Owner	Ambulatory Capacity	Wheelchair Capacity
Bus 2	2001	2001 Ford	CTSA	NCTC	8	2
Bus 3	2001	2001 Ford	CTSA	NCTC	8	2
Bus 14	2003	2003 Ford	Telecare	Telecare	16	2
Bus 15	2002	2002 Ford	Telecare/Caltrans	Telecare/Caltrans	11	2
Bus 16	2003	2003 Ford	Telecare/Caltrans	Telecare/Caltrans	12	2
Bus 17	2003	2003 Ford	Telecare/Caltrans	Telecare/Caltrans	12	2
Van 18	2003	2003 Ford	Telecare/Caltrans	Telecare/Caltrans	3	2
Van 19	2003	2003 Ford	Telecare/Caltrans	Telecare/Caltrans	3	2
Van 20	2003	2003 Ford	Telecare/Caltrans	Telecare/Caltrans	3	2
Van 22	2005	2005 Ford	Telecare/Caltrans	Telecare/Caltrans	4	2
Van 23	2005	2006 Ford	Telecare/Caltrans	Telecare/Caltrans	4	2
Van 24	2006	2006 Ford	Telecare/Caltrans	Telecare/Caltrans	6	4
Van 25	2006	2006 Ford	Telecare/Caltrans	Telecare/Caltrans	6	4
Van 26	2007	2007 Ford	Telecare/Caltrans	Telecare/Caltrans	8	4
Van 27	2007	2007 Ford	Telecare/Caltrans	Telecare/Caltrans	8	2
Van 28	2008	2008 Chevy Uplander	Telecare/Caltrans	Telecare/Caltrans	1	1

7. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER 7 – FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following discussions with Telecare staff, analysis of program performance, and a review of program compliance and function, Moore & Associates has identified the following finding:

1. FTEs were calculated correctly on internal Telecare reports, but were not reported correctly within Transit Operator Reports submitted to the State Controller.

We propose no recommendations for Gold Country Telecare.