List of Acronyms

CAD ..... Computer-Aided Dispatch
CMB ..... Change Management Board
CO ..... Central Office
ConOps ..... Concept of Operations
DMS ..... Dynamic Message Sign
FDLE ..... Florida Department of Law Enforcement
FDOT ..... Florida Department of Transportation
FHP ..... Florida Highway Patrol
FLATIS ..... Florida Advanced Traveler Information System
GUI ..... Graphical User Interface
ITN ..... Invitation to Negotiate
ITS ..... Intelligent Transportation Systems
MDX ..... Miami-Dade Expressway Authority
SwRI ..... Southwest Research Institute
TERL ..... Traffic Engineering Research Laboratory
TIM ..... Traffic Incident Management
TMC ..... Transportation Management Center
TSS ..... Traffic Sensor Subsystem
TvT ..... Travel Time
VAS ..... Video Aggregation System

Florida Department of Transportation
511 Working Group Meeting Notes
Wednesday, August 26, 2009
1:30 P.M. to 3:54 P.M.
Rhyne Building, ITS Conference Room
Tallahassee, Florida

Attendees:

Don Olson, FDOT D1	Carlos Bonilla, FDOT D1	Pete Vega, FDOT D2
Ryan Crist, FDOT D2	Chad Williams, FDOT D3	Alex Mirones, FDOT D4
Michael W. Smith, FDOT D5	J. Snyder, FDOT D6	Manuel Fontan, FDOT D6
Javier Rodriquez, FDOT D6	Rory Santana, FDOT D6	Bill Wilshire, FDOT D7
Terry Hensley, FDOT D7	James Bitting, FDOT D7	John Easterling, FTE
Arun Krishnamurthy, FDOT CO	Gene Glotzbach, FDOT CO	Trey Tillander, FDOT CO
Jason Summerfield, SmartRoutes	Steve Dellenback, SwRI	Mark Laird, DMJM Harris
David Chang, PBS&J	TJ Hapney, PBS&J	Dee McTague, DMJM Harris
Erik Gaarder, PBS&J	Eli Sherer, PBS&J	James Barbosa, IBI
Olga Sanchez, LogicTree		

Purpose: The purpose of this meeting was to discuss various aspects of the Florida 511 Program.

I. Introduction

Gene Glotzbach opened the meeting and went over the agenda. He mentioned that the Districts could still provide comments to the Video Aggregation System (VAS) Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) before it is finalized. Gene requested that comments be provided the end of the week.

II. District EM Extracts – FLATIS Quarterly Update (Eli Sherer)

Eli Sherer gave the quarterly update and discussed update problems. Mr. Sherer stated that once the process is complete, each District will need to use a fresh extract without changes using the exact same formula as the time before. He added that each District should have its own extracts now and added that the updates needed to be returned as soon as possible. Additionally, he added that an update would not be done due to the delays in getting the extract data. Mr. Sherer discussed how to show District changes on the spreadsheets. He mentioned that marking the spreadsheet with comments for what has changed may work for some areas, but asked the group not to use colors to indicate cells that had been changed. District 6 indicated that it had its updates ready for the following day. James Bitting from District 7 added that his District had received what they believed was in use with the Districts. Mr. Bitting added that District 7 did an extraction with the original and a manual comparison and did not have any changes.

E. Sherer stated that LogicTree takes the extract and aligns the EM location IDs with the grammars and spoken word, but that they did not produce an extract. He added that he had not done an extraction himself. James Bitting replied that District 7 just wanted to ensure Eli was using the same data as they were. Eli suggested he get together with J. Bitting sometime outside of the meeting to discuss the issue. Mr. Sherer stated that

the IBI script explains how the extract should be delivered. He added that moving columns or headers, for whatever purpose, messes up the process of doing it again. J. Bitting agreed that a conversation needed to take place about what went wrong.

P. Vega stated that the number of roads had changed from what District 2 originally had. Eli asked if Pete had sent a new version. Pete asked if Eli had received the last email he sent with mismatches. Eli theorized that the mismatch was due to sort order. Mismatch location IDs does not tell what else has been changed. Eli also mentioned that the team was trying to get away from using *County Line* as a grammar because the *County Name* and *County Line* do not work together. He also stated that it was late in the actual implementation for a September update. Eli stated that he was going to ask the Districts to use the update / change request process to make sure that changes are tracked appropriately. Gene Glotzbach interjected that this was the first update, but that the team needed to get a handle on it.

III. C2C Data Transmission (J. Barbosa)

J. Barbosa provided an update to the team regarding center-to-center (C2C) data transmission. Mr. Barbosa went over Options 1 and 2 for using travel time (TVT) links and the consequences of each. For Option 1, he stated that the Districts would be showing the TVT speed for all the links using traffic sensor subsystem (TSS) links. He added that updates would continue at the same speed. Additionally, Mr. Barbosa discussed that the larger the Districts' TVT links were, the slower it would be. Javier Rodriguez asked if data was bogging down the system. J. Barbosa responded that the issue had more to do with C2C than with the Florida Advanced Traveler Information System (FLATIS). J. Bitting asked J. Barbosa to give a brief overview of what he seeing and what was happening on the C2C. Mr. Barbosa replied that the C2C becomes so busy that data propagation becomes reduced. J. Barbosa inquired whether it was IBI's side of the system. J. Barbosa stated that overload can cause IBI system servers to disconnect from the system. With Option 2, the frequency of updates would be reduced.

Terry Hensley inquired as to why there was no Option 3 that involved IBI's receiving software / hardware to be made robust enough to handle it. J. Barbosa replied that on the software side of things there was nothing that IBI could do; however, he added that IBI could update its C2C server. Steve Dellenback interjected that he believed Option 3 was a good option.

T. Hensley asked if Option 2 was IBI requesting that the number of times and the amount of data going to FLATIS be slowed down. J. Barbosa confirmed Mr. Hensley's description of Option 2 and added that IBI would receive one out of every three updates, or a single update per minute.

S. Dellenback stated that the 20 second update frequency was configurable and that the number of times an update was sent could be different between Districts. He added that currently there was no throttling taking place in the C2C plug-in. He explained further that what J. Barbosa was asking to do was put a throttle into the plug-in. He also

added that if SwRI had to store data in SunGuide® and send it on the one minute shot, that it would be more difficult than what was currently taking place.

Pete Vega inquired as to how difficult it would be to send a rolling average. S. Dellenback replied that providing a rolling average would be a simple matter. However, he added that if the team wanted Option 2 that he would need to discuss implementation with others at SwRI.

J. Bitting stated that he thought the team should have SwRI look into implementation of the two options and report on their findings. G. Glotzbach agreed that he thought it was a good idea. Mr. Dellenback agreed with the others. J. Barbosa stated that IBI would prefer Option 2, although he stated that it did not have to be exactly as shown in the presentation slides.

Discussion took place regarding Districts with two different types of TSS across the same segment and whether those Districts were not publishing the second type of TSS or whether the map drew those as well. J. Barbosa replied that he was not sure and added that FLATIS did not know what the TSS link data source was.

Arun clarified that the license plate readers (LPR) were more of the point detectors and that SunGuide converted them to TSS links; it would not matter if it was a microwave or LPR detector. SunGuide would account for both of them. FLATIS would get both types of information if it was being provided. J. Barbosa stated that IBI now believes that some of the delays are actually a result of the C2C collector reconnection issues that have been experienced and stated that he was aware that work was being done to improve that functionality. Steve Dellenback confirmed that improvements were being made.

Gene Glotzbach stated that the FDOT would like to look at Option 2. District 2 indicated that it would prefer Option1. E. Gaarder inquired whether both could be done. J Barbosa replied the two options could not be combined and added that Option 2 would be much easier to implement. J. Rodriquez stated that with Option 1 when there was an accident it would be slow behind the accident and ahead of it would be green. J. Barbosa agreed that was why Option 1 reduced the data reliability. Dee McTague stated that since TVT links would have to be disabled during a full closure that it could be a problem. J. Barbosa replied that with Option 1 many Districts may be required to reconfigure their TVT links.

G. Glotzbach took a poll off the Districts regarding whether they would prefer Option 1 or 2.

Poll re: Option 1 versus Option 2

District 1 – Option 2
District 2 – Option 1
District 3 – Option 2
District 4 – Option 2
District 5 – Option 2
District 6 – Option 2
District 7 – Option 2
FTE – Option 2
MDX – Not present
CO – G. Glotzbach stated that this would have to be a Change Management Board (CMB) decision and suggested that a combination of Options 2 and 3 might work best.

IV. Enhancing the Weather Interface (S. Dellenback)

Note: Presentation slides can be found on the Statewide ATIS Teamsite.

Steve Dellenback presented approaches for enhancing the weather interface. When information is received county information is provided; however, weather events require EM locations just like all other events. With Approach A, all Event Manager (EM) locations provided by DTN would be displayed.

M. Fontan asked how the information would be provided to the FLATIS since an EM location would be needed to enter the information. S. Dellenback responded that there would still only be one EM location for an event. If the DTN would produce data regarding a thunderstorm front rolling across the county, the operator would select the location that they felt it was best to use. M. Fontan asked about how the IVR would present the information.

S. Dellenback stated that the IVR would use whatever EM location was used. M. Fontan responded with, "So, it'll say rain at 22nd Street?" J. Barbosa replied that it would. S. Dellenback interjected that he had never seen it, but that he had received an email from District 5 regarding generic EM locations for areas. M. Fontan added that he would like to be able to use a region. E. Gaarder pointed out that a floodgate message could be used to report on a region. Further discussion took place regarding possible EM location problems with the weather interface.

M. Fontan inquired about the expectation regarding the Districts posting weather events. G. Glotzbach replied that the criterion was that the weather has to affect traffic, but that severe weather or intense thunderstorms could be added as weather alerts. He added that the Districts might to want to post floodgates for severe weather events that would affect various EM locations, but pointed out that the FDOT only wanted to post weather information that would impact motorists' travel.

T. Hensley pointed out that with an approximate two minute cycle time that there was no practical way to get information in regarding tornado alerts and added that he was not sure the system could be updated fast enough for sudden weather problems.

E. Gaarder stated that this change was to provide more detail as requested by some of the other Districts. G. Glotzbach stated that he thought weather alerts currently only came in associated with a county. He added that to get the detail to post a weather event it would be necessary to at least see what roadways the particular weather event was affecting.

An inquiry was made regarding why that map was not overlaid with weather data from the weather service and that it might be better to let people who do weather do weather, and let people who do traffic do traffic. Erik Gaarder pointed out that SwRI was just presenting the options that were available. It was pointed out that when and alert pops up on the graphical user interface (GUI) that it takes the operators' attention from Incident Management. G. Glotzbach replied that if there was another fog event on I-4 and a bunch of people crashed that the Secretary would be come down on us about why we did not have it posted.
Terry Hensley mentioned that District 7 has two-hour rainstorms every day during this time of the year. He stated that there could be repercussions for not posting weather events, but inquired as to whether the others thought there could unforeseen repercussions for posting an event in the wrong location.

J. Rodriquez pointed out that during rain events is when TMC staff is busiest and that he did not feel they had time for the alerts. E. Gaarder brought up two points, the first being that the Districts already had weather alerts and that some Districts were dissatisfied with the information given by those alerts and wanted enhancements to provide more information. He added that if the individual Districts wanted to turn off the alert that they could. He reiterated that options were just being presented for selection by the Districts.

G. Glotzbach asked which Districts were currently using weather alerts. He asked the Districts to respond according to which of the options the District would prefer, if implemented, and whether they would make use of it.

Currently using weather / posting weather events from any data source?
District 1 – N/A. Currently, District 1 is not running a RTMC.

District 2 – District is using the weather alerts for Districts 2 and 3 to keep an eye out for problems. For severe alerts a floodgate is created for the affected county.

District 3 – Not reporting weather. See District 2

District 4 – Management has requested that weather events be reported, but it has not yet been implemented.

District 6 – District 6 does not use DTN. It Rains every day and the events are very random. If a tornado warning or catastrophe was reported it would be added to the system.

District 7 – District 7 posts National Oceanographic and Aeronautical Association (NOAA) major events. The DTN is used during hurricanes.

FTE – Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) had not used the weather alerts yet. Currently there are televisions in the TMCs for monitoring weather alerts.

Would you use one of these options? If so, which is preferred?
District 1 – Prefer C
District 2 – Prefer C also for District 3
District 3 – See District 2, prefer C
District 4 – SunGuide is not user friendly for reporting weather. Prefer Option A.
District 5 – Prefer Option C and would use.
District 6 – Could make use of data feed. Not enough information to answer which Option. Need to look into it. Just put NWS feed overlay on map.
District 7 – No. Would not use.
FTE – If it looks like it would prefer value, we might use it.

V. Adding Counties to C2C Data (Steve Dellenback)

S. Dellenback stated that there had been a request to add "county" based on lat / long. The data needs to be recorded by region. SunGuide covers a specific region or county. FLATIS is requesting information by county. He stated that if you hovered a mouse over a road that the code is available based on lat / lon to provide county data. FLATIS would need to be modified to use county data and that it would be less than three-day effort for Southwest Research Institute (SwRI) to implement it in SunGuide. He added that it would have zero operational effect. S. Dellenback stated that FLATIS could then sort information based on data with minimal effort required.

M. Fontan stated that it would be great to be able to sort data by county and inquired if the Districts would be able to sort south to north and west to east by roadway. He acknowledged that it was very useful to filter by county, but that the ability to sort by south to north and west to east at least for closed-circuit televisions (CCTV) since it was the biggest one, but added that adding DMS would be good.

J Barbosa replied that he recalled discussing it and asked if Gene wanted IBI to look into the request. G. Glotzbach agreed to have IBI look into it. An inquiry was made as to whether it was possible to sort TVT by county or possibly city. Mr. Barbosa added that it would allow the FDOT to filter travel times by county, but would have to discuss with LogicTree. Gene pointed out that it could be an issue if a link crossed a county line. J. Barbosa added out that SunGuide would not assign the information to cities.

E. Gaarder stated that this presentation was to inform the Districts about information going forward. Arun added that they were hoping to get a CMB vote and that he thought it was something that the FDOT would want to do soon. P. Vega indicated that there was the possibility of a CMB vote at the end of the meeting if time permitted.

Add County to C2C Vote: (CMB vote needed)
District 1 – Yes
District 2 - Yes
District 3 - Yes
District 4 - Yes
District 5 - Yes
District 6 - Yes. M. Fontan would like to have IBI see about directional sorting and doing it at the same time.
District 7 – Yes
FTE – Yes. J. Easterling also thanked everyone for their help getting FTE onto SunGuide. He added that he wanted to second what Manny requested regarding sorting.
CO – Yes.

Arun stated that one of the clarifications about the CMB is that the CMB votes on any SunGuide modification that would change a requirement. He added that he wanted to see if anybody had any comments on this. *(Note: The 2007 Change Management Board Charter has been posted to the Statewide ATIS Teamsite as a reference.)*

VI. Floodgate Guidelines (District 2)

G. Glotzbach stated that District 2 had produced draft Guidelines and would like to discuss them. P. Vega asked Derek Odom for the status of the Guidelines. D. Odom stated that the Guidelines were sent to everyone last week and that they were waiting on comments from the Districts. He added that no responses had been received yet and that the deadline was next Wednesday, September 2, 2009.

VII. Discuss "Update Time" Issue (Glotzbach)

G. Glotzbach reported to the Districts about Representative Glorioso calling FL511 in the Tampa Bay area indicated that the information was last updated at 4:42 pm. He stated that it was a little after 6:00 pm when Representative Glorioso called the 511 system. The system had last been updated 1 hour and 15 minutes before his call. The group discussed timestamps for updates and it was brought up that there should not be an update to the timestamp unless a modification was made. One reason for not updating the timestamp concerns personal profiles; every time an incident is updated, even if just to change timestamp a call is initiated by the system. It could cause users to receive quite a number of periodic reports. The other downside is more workload for operators to update a timestamp by republishing the event; however, the system could be programmed to do that automatically Gene added that he did see Rep. Glorioso's point of view and when you see that an incident is an hour or two old you start to

wonder if someone forgot to pull that off the system or if it is still active. The greater the length of time, the more a person might feel the incident is over. Maybe we should consider an update every 30 minutes or every hour to minimize alerts to profile users.

T. Hensley pointed out that the incident posted was a recurring congestion incident that occurs daily from 3:30 pm to 7:30 pm. He added that there was no indication that we had any complaints about it. District 7 posts recurring congestion incidents in response to feedback that people want congestion reports. The important thing is whether the information is accurate or not.

Gene stated that he and E. Gaarder had discussed it with Erik Gaarder and had thought of possibly doing away with the timestamp altogether and users could assume that if it was being reported that it was current. Pete Vega suggested a "condition has not changed since…" message as a possibility.

T. Hensley added that some of District 7's congestion was based on recurring patterns, but that they were never positive. District 7 cannot see the tail unless it is in an order that it can be seen.

G. Glotzbach added that there was timestamp information on construction and that those events might be posted for weeks or months. He added that he thought people realized that construction events were long-term events. E. Sherer interjected that it be a consideration to timestamp incidents, but not timestamp congestion or construction reports. If it is a regular occurrence, do not timestamp those because they are not worthy of a timestamp update. Gene replied that it was a possibility; however, his general complaint was that things should be updated more often. Gene added that T. Hensley was correct and that it was not that the information was wrong; it was just that the information had not been updated recently.

John Easterling pointed out that the timestamp had been pulled off of the travel time information. C. Birosak asked if it would it be possible for the system to automatically update active events at a regular time period after an operator puts in an incident. At the end of the day when the operator closed the event, it would go away Gene replied that he had considered that, but was sure it would require coding changes.

Vicky Mixson added that she received comments today from a person the system had called three times in a row and the timestamp was the previous day. She asked how often tail information was updated.

T. Hensley replied that if they could not see it that they did not update it unless they had good hard information. He added that they had received so much feedback about congestion not being posted, but that they had never had a complaint about getting through an area where congestion was reported too quickly. Dee stated that District 4 updated information pretty much real-time and that if it was recurring that they updated the timestamp every 30 minutes. Pete asked if they could have a, "We have recurring congestion at {time} on this roadway," message for recurring congestion events. T.

Hensley asked if the team could find out what would be involved in removing the timestamp from recurring congestion and construction. Gene asked what would be involved for IBI / LogicTree with regard to removing the timestamp from recurring congestion. J. Barbosa replied that IBI would have to modify Web site and timestamp, but that it would not be too much effort.

Gene asked if T. Hensley had any additional information about the Glorioso incident. T. Hensley replied that District 7 had tried to call, but that Rep. Glorioso's office had stated that he wanted their response in writing. We sent the written response. District 7 will follow up with the office and see if they need to do anything else.
Gene stated that the team needed to be able to come back with some options. Terry stated that it would have to be an unusual incident that they did not update every hour or so. M. Fontan asked how this issue had been handled in southeast Florida's previous 511 system. J. Easterling replied that the old regional system updated the timestamp automatically, but added that the old system did not send out update alerts, instead it only sent out initial alerts. With the new system, we send out an alert every time something changes. I want to make sure we are not sending any additional updates to our subscribers that are not needed.

Remove timestamps from construction and recurring congestion.
District 2 – ride it out and see what happens

Gene stated that when District 7 received some feedback from the Secretary's meeting with Rep. Glorioso that the team could figure out what to do based on that feedback. Discussion took place regarding T. Hensley's concern that one District had objected and it seemed that they were not going to do it.

District 6 brought up another issue. Jose Grullon had entered tickets regarding this, but events in the IVR are not being prioritized by severity. J. Easterling added that FTE's management has complained to them regarding the IVR's recognition of "Turnpike" getting worse in the past couple weeks. He stated that he had at least several employees and the Executive Director complain about it. He stated that casual users around the building have complained about it so they told them to say Florida's Turnpike and it seemed to be a work around. Olga Sanchez stated that she would check on the FTE pronunciations. Jose added that he was not sure if a ticket had been submitted. J. Easterling stated that he would enter an LT Ticket regarding "Turnpike" not being understood by the 511 system. Gene announced that the team was in a holding pattern on update time.

VIII. Congestion Reporting – T. Hensley

T. Hensley started out by mentioning that the congestion reporting issue mostly relates to areas where District 7 is not instrumented. He added that they had similar issues with crashes where there was no instrumentation. He added that there was also congestion from rubberneckers and that there was no way to tell how far it extended and that the District could not be accurate regarding this. Additionally, he mentioned that the Districts

had all agreed not to post events that could not be verified. P. Vega stated that he agreed and that there was nothing the Districts could do without devices. M. Fontan brought up that District 6 had an accident on an uncovered roadway the previous day and it would be nice to have an unconfirmed reports section. G. Glotzbach inquired as to how much of District 7's roadways were covered by Road Rangers. T. Hensley replied that on a good day District 7 had 60 percent during peak travel times, but only about 20 percent during non-peak times. He added that he was tired of trying to investigate feedback if they could not be sure and suggested that expectations needed to be managed.
He also suggested that Global 5 needed to give more information about negative things.

G. Glotzbach asked how traffic.com handled traffic reports. T. Hensley replied that they had used helicopters and even aircraft for a while. They also had scouts and agreements with taxi companies. He added that some of those had even been cut back, but that traffic.com did not have much more information than the District did up in Hernando County and places like it. G. Glotzbach inquired as to whether the FHP provided notification for uncovered areas.
T. Hensley replied that they did, but that they did not receive residual congestion reports.

G. Glotzbach explained that the CO was doing a pilot test with AirSage for a travel speed system. He added that a test had already been done with Inrix and added that in the near future, hopefully, the FDOT might be able to get a contract with one of those companies where devices are not available and utilize it to confirm or detect incidents based on speed profiles. He added that it may be something the group would want to accelerate and asked if it sounded beneficial to everyone. P. Vega responded that it would help. Gene added that North Florida meant I-4 north except for areas like Jacksonville where there were already instruments and suggested that it might help District 7 as well. T. Hensley replied that he was a firm believer in the eyes, but added that it would help. Gene suggested that perhaps the data could be used as a way to verify citizen reports. He also reiterated that he had funds to help the Districts out if they could come up with a proposal such as information from contractors with planes, etc. Gene reminded the team that the next 511 Working Group Meeting would take place on September 16, 2009.

The meeting ended at 3:54 pm.