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Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
ITS Office
605 Suwannee Street, MS 90
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450
(850) 410-5600
www11.myflorida.com

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FDOT's ITS Office Interviews Secretary Abreu

Representatives from FDOT's ITS Office recently sat down with newly-appointed Secretary of Transportation, Jose Abreu, to find out his opinion on several critical ITS issues. Secretary Abreu's responses on such issues as ITS benefits, rural ITS applications, and I-95 Corridor Coalition membership, follow:

Question: How is your transition from District 6 to the Central Office going?

Answer: *I am pleasantly surprised at how smooth the transition has been. I feel very welcomed here and have received a lot of support. Even though the "across the street" process will take some getting used to, I think it will be okay.*

Question: As Secretary of District 6, you were a strong supporter of ITS. For example, the District's limited-access facilities have significant ITS capability, southeast

Florida is covered with advanced traveler information services, and the SunGuideSM Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) is well on its way to be the showcase RTMC for the entire state. Now, as Secretary of Transportation, how do you see the ITS Program contributing to FDOT's overall mission?

Answer: *I have had the advantage of seeing the rapid growth of southeast Florida. As a result roadway construction has been unable to keep up with demand. In order for many urban areas to maintain economic viability and an acceptable quality of life, the efficient operation of a multimodal transportation system is of the utmost importance.*

This is where the ITS Program can help FDOT's overall mission. With very little infrastructure, ITS provides the ability to improve the mobility of people and commerce. This mobility is vital not only in urban areas such as Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Tampa, Orlando, and Jacksonville, but also in other emerging areas of the state where it is important to make ITS a fundamental component of transportation plans. This may better meet current and future needs.

Question: This year's ITS America 13th Annual Meeting and Exposition is being held this month in Minneapolis, MN; and the meeting theme is "Real World - Real Results." FDOT will again be an exhibitor in Minneapolis and will be showcasing many of Florida's successful ITS deployments. In all your travels, what ITS project or initiative has impressed you the most and why?

Answer: *I've been fortunate to visit various areas with ITS applications in the United States, including Atlanta and Phoenix, as well as abroad in Spain. Frankly, I've been impressed with all these ITS applications. They each have their strong points and if I had to pick one particular initiative, it would be real-time traveler information. I realize that with relatively little capital, these areas have been able to provide benefits to the public by just telling them what current travel conditions are.*

However, I've also been impressed with our own ITS applications within Florida. When traveling around Miami and Orlando, using the 511 services has already become a habit for me. Last time I was in Orlando, travel time information was provided on our dynamic message signs, which kept me from making a bad decision while rushing to the airport and finding myself stuck in traffic. I was ready to panic and leave the freeway, but the sign let me know the delay was going to clear up soon and I wisely waited.

Question: ITS America's mantra is "ITS Saves Lives, Time, and Money." What do you believe are the primary objectives of deployed ITS?

Answer: *ITS America's mantra "ITS Saves Lives, Time, and Money," says it all. Not just for ITS America, but for all of FDOT.*

Of course a safe transportation system is an important objective of FDOT. At the same time, saving time and money equates with FDOT's objectives of economic feasibility and improved quality of lives for residents and visitors. Therefore, "ITS Saves Lives, Time, and Money" mirrors FDOT's responsibility in providing a safe, efficient transportation system.

Question: FDOT approved its multi-million-dollar Ten-Year ITS Cost Feasible Plan last fall and, as a result, over 100 distinct ITS projects are moving ahead to deliver

RTMCs, ITS field devices, and telecommunications infrastructure. How will the citizens of Florida directly benefit from this investment in advanced technology?

Answer: *We are already benefiting from our investment in advanced technology. We are being provided with better traveler information than ever before. As you know, we have a very strong 511 program that is expanding rapidly.*

Our Road RangersSM, in conjunction with ITS infrastructure such as cameras and expanded communications capability, directly help thousands of motorists each month. They further help hundreds of thousands of motorists each month by keeping roadways moving through minimizing and reducing the magnitude of incidents.

Incidents which cannot be handled solely by Road RangersSM are now better handled in areas where we have deployed our ITS infrastructure — thus, better detection and resource handling.

And of course, not to be forgotten, are the many investments throughout Florida in improved signal systems.

I must add here, that unlike a new road construction where we have to wait until completion to reap the benefits, ITS deployment benefits start almost immediately and just improve with each additional element or expansion.

Question: Thus far, the ITS Office has concentrated its efforts mainly on the interstates and the Turnpike mainline. ITS is also important to the urban arterials and the local collector distributor roads. What ITS services do you believe are appropriate for these non-limited-access facilities?

Answer: *I don't necessarily see ITS as an application based on road hierarchy. Other than some important considerations on major facilities for hurricane and other emergency evacuation, ITS deployment should address needs along the line of "best bang for the buck," regardless of whether it is a freeway or major arterial. Furthermore, as an ITS partner, we must not forget the need to work with other transportation agencies. This may, at times, mean supporting funding for "their" project versus "ours" for the good of the team. It was this type of philosophy that I feel helped the southeast Florida and Orlando programs grow so fast. Our staffs in these areas work with other partners including, expressway authorities, counties, and other local agencies. And of course, let's not forget — transit! We must remember we are a transportation agency not just a road entity.*

Question: ITS Florida, the state chapter associated with ITS America, will host the National Rural ITS Conference in August in Palm Harbor, Florida. How should Florida promote rural ITS services?

Answer: *We should promote rural ITS as we promote any FDOT program or project — factually. Determine the "why" and "how" with our customers and implement as we agree it fits into our overall current needs and future goals.*

Question: What role do you see ITS playing in the Homeland Security arena and what impact will this have on FDOT's ITS Program?

Answer:

This is a role, I think, which is still developing. I see ITS becoming a significant component in Homeland Security. Obviously the ability to monitor our system is a large plus; however, just as important is that we are building an information network to relay significant information. In support of Homeland Security, it is important that through ITS we continue working toward operating our transportation system versus just reacting. For example, during the September 11 terrorist attacks, in Miami-Dade, we were able to advise travelers that Miami International Airport was closed, thus reducing congestion in what may have become a critical area. Also, on occasions since the attacks, the Port of Miami has been evacuated due to security concerns. When this occurred we were able to inform the public and monitor conditions.

Question: As you know, FDOT recently became the 14th state to join the I-95 Corridor Coalition. What benefits do you envision by FDOT's participation with the I-95 Corridor Coalition?

Answer: *This is a big step in the right direction towards helping us move freight more efficiently. One common theme in all successful ITS deployment seems to be teamwork and information sharing. We will learn from the members of the Coalition and, hopefully, they may learn from us.*

Question: How have you personally benefited from ITS in Florida?

Answer: *On a personal level, I have benefited from ITS by saving time and frustration. I don't want to wait in traffic if I don't have to.*

For more information, please contact Chester Chandler at the FDOT ITS Office in Tallahassee, (850) 410-5600 or email Chester.Chandler@dot.state.fl.us.

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"We Have Bird!"

FHWA Reports on Chung Tran in Operation Iraqi Freedom

Chung Tran, ITS Engineer for FHWA - Florida Division Office, is aiding Operation Iraqi Freedom as an activated member of the U.S. Army Reserve. "We finally have bird! We are scheduled to depart today," read an email from Chung on Tuesday, April 8. Chung is currently at a U.S. military Camp Arifjan installation in Kuwait.

Chung last reported to work at the FHWA - Florida Division Office in Tallahassee on February 26. He reported to Fort Carson, Colorado, for briefings and inoculations, among other important Army business, following a letter of activation he received in mid-February.

Chung has kept in touch with the FHWA - Florida Division Office while in both Fort Carson and Kuwait. He has made several telephone calls and has sent several emails. Currently he is busy performing duties at the Army facility in Kuwait — making sure air conditioning units are working properly and keeping the facility clean.

Chung is also working on the design of a parking platform for very heavy vehicles. He has contacted our Divisional Pavement Specialist to confer on pavement type selection for this platform. The FHWA - Florida Division Office has sent Chung several care packages consisting of such items as games, books, pictures, cards, and tape recordings of his wife and kids as well as office well-wishers. To date, he has not received a single package or letter. "This is military mail!" Chung replied when asked if he had received anything yet. Seems like it is going to take a while for him to receive any goodies that might be sent.

Chung does not believe he will be back before January, 2004, but we can all reach Chung at chung.t.tran@us.army.mil.

For more information, please contact Norberto Muñoz at the FHWA - Florida Division Office in Tallahassee, (850) 942-9650 or email Norbert.Munoz@fhwa.dot.gov.

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FDOT Involvement in I-95 Corridor Coalition Accelerating

Iselin N.J. - FDOT's ITS Office has now attended its second meeting with the I-95 Corridor Coalition (Coalition). The Coalition's Steering Committee recently convened on April 23 at the Woodbridge Hilton Hotel in Iselin. FDOT, represented by ITS Office Manager, Chester Chandler, was warmly received by the Coalition, which had assembled to discuss proposed projects for the *Fiscal Year 2003 (Year 11) Program*. Over 50 people, representing more than 25 government and private sector entities with business before the Coalition, attended this meeting.

Several preliminary issues were addressed prior to discussion of the main agenda item — Work Plan Development. A briefing was given on the just-concluded visit of the Gary-Chicago-Milwaukee (G-C-M) Corridor staff. The G-C-M Corridor staff were in the New York/New Jersey area to share lessons learned with the Coalition and to attend the Coalition's Steering Committee Meeting. An update was also given by Coalition staff on the effort of Congress to reauthorize the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), which will expire on September 30, 2003. One other preliminary issue taken up was the formal installation of FDOT's Gene Glotzbach as the Coalition's new co-chair of the Inter-regional, Multimodal Traveler Information Systems Subcommittee. Gene will serve with the other co-chair, Sandra Check of New Jersey Transit.

The remainder of the meeting was consumed in debate over the proposed Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2003. Projects are proposed every year in the six major program tracks:

- Program management;
- Inter-regional, multimodal traveler information;
- Coordinated incident management;
- Commercial vehicle operations;
- Intermodal transfer of people and goods; and
- Electronic payment services.

Funding requests by the various program track chairs were modified as needed to bring the proposed program within the total "project funds available" amount. Formal adoption of the Fiscal Year 2003 Work Plan will occur by vote of the Coalition's Executive Committee slated to meet May 14 in Arlington, Virginia.

Florida is the newest member of the Coalition, so logically FDOT involvement in the business of the Coalition is accelerating rapidly. FDOT was represented at the Coalition's Intermodal Track Committee meeting convened March 3 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. And, FDOT will be represented in the May 13 Intermodal Leadership Forum and the aforementioned May 14 Executive Committee Meeting, both to be held in Arlington, Virginia. FDOT looks forward to participating in the Coalition.

For more information, please contact Chester Chandler at the FDOT ITS Office in Tallahassee, (850) 410-5600 or email Chester.Chandler@dot.state.fl.us.

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We invite you to have some fun and complete the *SunGuideSM Disseminator Word Challenge!*
 An answer guide follows the Editorial Corner.

Enjoy and Good Luck!

Z	A	A	M	T	W	V	I	R	Y	O	Y	U	R	G	X	G	X	B	Y	G	B
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P	Y	V	M	R	L	M	C	T	H	I	E	O	M	V	O	E	O	L	G	M	N
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W	T	R	A	N	S	P	O	R	T	A	T	I	O	N	N	G	U	O	A	M	U

Words to Find

Abreu	Infrastructure
Awareness	Jacksonville
Coalition	Jersey
Collection	Multimodal
Committee	NRITS
Communications	Roadways
Corridor	RTMC
Dynamic	Steering
Economic	Toll
Exposition	Transit
FDOT	Transponders
FHWA	Transportation
Florida	Traveler
Glotzbach	Turnpike
Homeland	

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ITS Florida's ITS Awareness Day

ITS Florida recently held its first ever ITS Awareness Day for Florida's elected officials on April 22, 2003, at the Florida Capitol in Tallahassee. The purpose of this event was to demonstrate to our elected officials the true value and benefits associated with developing and deploying ITS. The event was a great success, with participation from several ITS Florida members.

Prior to ITS Awareness Day, invitations were sent to the Florida Transportation Commissioners, key FDOT personnel (Secretary, Assistant Secretaries, State Highway Engineers, Director of Systems Planning, Director of Operations, and ITS managers), Florida House of Representatives and Senate members, and some House and Senate staff directors, inviting them to come by the second floor Rotunda of the Capitol to see what ITS is all about. ITS Florida was assisted by the Florida Transportation Commission's Senior Analyst, Mark Reichert, in distributing the invitations and spreading the word for this event.

Participation for this event, from both public and private sectors, was very good. Participants included FDOT, Florida expressway authorities, vendors, contractors, and consultants. This participation proved to be a beneficial balance of information disseminators to show all different areas of ITS. Most of the participants set up tabletop displays of photos and offered handouts of more detailed information to visitors. A few of the participants set up large exhibit booths similar to the ones exhibited at ITS America's Annual Meeting and Expositions and Transpo. We even had a few equipment demonstrations on ITS devices such as a mini-dynamic message sign, electronic toll collection transponders, a closed-circuit television camera, and a priority control system for emergency and transit vehicles. Based on feedback received from participants after the event, the consensus seemed to be that since people in the Capitol are sometimes rushing through the Rotunda, the information displayed needs to be more eye-catching, highly interesting, and easy to understand. These people don't necessarily know what ITS is all about, so they must be presented with beginner's level information.

Even though much effort was put into designing and distributing the invitations, attendance by legislators was not as great as anticipated. One of the key lessons learned from this year's ITS Awareness Day was to hold this event earlier in the legislative session. ITS Awareness Day was held during the last two weeks of this year's legislative session. Meetings being held during breaks and lunches limited the traffic of elected officials through the second floor Rotunda.

ITS Florida would like to thank all of the participants for being a part of ITS Awareness Day. Without strong participation, this event couldn't have been a success. We would also like to thank Susan Kuca, PBS&J, for providing the posters that were displayed on the day of the event in the Capitol directing people to come by and Lorin Krueger, LK Consulting, for all of his

help with the ITS Awareness Day Committee. ITS Florida also thanks Terry Griffith and 3M for designing the invitations and mailing them out to the appropriate people. Mark Reichert, Florida Transportation Commission, is always such a great help to ITS Florida and their many project. Mark assisted us with ITS Awareness Day by identifying some key people that should receive invitations, as well as assisting with distribution of some of the invitations.

ITS Awareness Day proved to be a worthwhile event for ITS Florida. The feedback received from participants was supportive of having this event again next year. The ITS Awareness Day Committee recommends that the event be held again, but earlier in the legislative session. ITS Awareness Day provides an excellent forum to demonstrate to our elected officials and other key attendees the true benefits of developing and deploying ITS. This is likely one of the few forums that ITS Florida has to reach elected officials.

For more information, please check the ITS Florida Web site at www.itsflorida.org or contact either Terry Griffith at TGriffith@mmm.com or Erika Ridlehoover at Erika.Ridlehoover@transcore.com.

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Editorial Corner

Public Transportation and ITS

A number of weeks ago, on one of his visits to the Districts, Chester Chandler asked for volunteers to write an article for the *Disseminator* and I blithely agreed — never suspecting that the day would come when I really would have to do so. As a result, when I received the friendly reminder from the ITS Office, I, of course, had no concept of what I was going to write about. But helpfully, the reminder also suggested that I read previous editions to get some ideas. Well after doing so, I have only two things to say:

First — All the previous editorials were wonderfully written; and

Second — Oh, am I in trouble!

Having said that, on to the main topic — Public Transportation and ITS.

All right, I am sure at this point, many of you are putting away your *Disseminator*, or moving on to the next article, but think about it! **The whole point of ITS is to improve the operational efficiency of our transportation system here in Florida.** So, what if ITS combined forces with public transportation, which is also working to help the operational efficiency of our transportation system? Doesn't the concept just make good sense? Okay, maybe not for everyone, but it certainly does down here in south Florida.

South Florida's View

In south Florida, we are seeing public transportation take on a larger role in our transportation system; and that role is only expected to continue to grow. Politically, public transportation has been getting major recognition. Our Regional Transit Organization is working to become a Regional Transit Authority (RTA), which would give them the ability to tax (this legislation is currently pending in Tallahassee). The Metropolitan Planning Organizations are all putting more emphasis on the need for public transportation and less emphasis on the need for roadway improvements. The result of this trend is that FDOT has begun to focus on where we can work more with the local public transportation agencies. In south Florida, District Four's ITS Office has taken on the role of developing an Advanced Public Transportation System (APTS) Program.

Under the APTS Program we have nearly completed a master plan for Broward and Palm Beach Counties (due in June 2003). This master plan outlines the needs of our public transportation agencies and where ITS can be used to help with these needs. The master plan also identifies eight projects to be designed and deployed within the two counties.

So, what does this mean? **I mean — what is really being done?** Well, also under the APTS Program, a demonstration project for real-time transit information has been taking place along our major bus routes in Broward County for the last few months. The demonstration included dynamic message signs placed at strategic bus stops along a major arterial that leads directly into downtown Fort Lauderdale and the downtown bus station. The demonstration is being operated via wireless communications with a connection to the vendor and is providing the public with times for the next bus arrival at these stops. A part of the demonstration involves an evaluation for operational efficiency and includes a customer satisfaction portion as

well. So far, all reports have been favorable and we are looking into installing a permanent system in Broward County in the not-too-distant future!

The Future

Enough about what has been, or is being, done. In my opinion, what is most important is where public transportation and ITS are going. **As everyone knows, continuing to build roads in the hopes of keeping up with the increasing travel demands of our transportation system is simply unrealistic.** That is why ITS is here to stay! And, I believe, that is why public transportation is going to continue to play a larger and larger role in our transportation future. It is going to become imperative, in all major urban areas, that more attention be paid to our public transportation systems; and ITS, through the APTS program, can play a major role in making the public transportation system more operationally efficient and attractive to non-dependent (choice) riders. From where I sit, as part of the ITS Program, public transportation is one area that we really need to take a closer look at and plan for the future.

This editorial was provided by Tahira Faquir, PE, District Four Traffic Operations. She can be reached at (954) 777-4370 or email to Tahira.Faquir@dot.state.fl.us.

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Wherein a compendium of various random facts and snippets of humor is presented on an irregular basis for purposes of cerebral edification and mental diversion!

A Few Observations —

I wish the buck stopped here — I could use a few!



A fine is a tax for doing wrong. A tax is a fine for doing well!

The things that come to those who wait may be the stuff left by those who got there first.





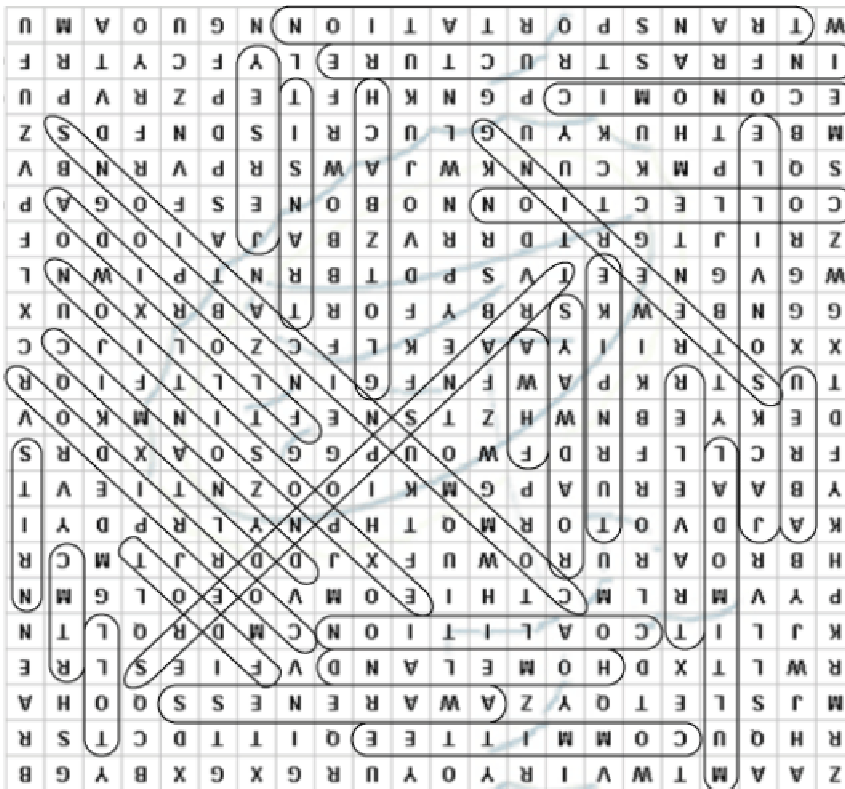
Despite the cost of living, have you noticed how it remains so popular?

And remember, it's not the high cost of living that gets you down, it's the cost of living high!



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SunGuideSM Disseminator Word Challenge Answers



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Announcements

Hurricane Evacuation Workshop — Confirmed Dates and Location

FDOT's ITS Office, along with the FDOT Safety Office and the Department of Emergency Management (DEM), has

scheduled a Hurricane Evacuation Workshop to be held on Tuesday, July 1, 2003, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Wednesday, July 2, 2003, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., in Jacksonville, Florida at the Adam's Mark Hotel.

The workshop will bring together several hurricane-prone states in the southeast to discuss hurricane evacuation and emergency management-related issues.

For more information, please contact Leslie Boatman at the FDOT ITS Office in Tallahassee, (850) 410-5620 or email Leslie.Boatman@dot.state.fl.us.

... And a Hearty Welcome

We are happy to introduce David Jones, PBS&J, as a new addition to FDOT's ITS Office as a Senior ITS Specialist for the FDOT ITS General Consultant. Mr. Jones attended Auburn University and has been active in ITS and ITS communications design for more than 10 years. Previously, he was the principal owner of ICC Engineering Service where he participated as a prime ITS consultant or sub-consultant on 14 major ITS projects throughout the US. Most recently he served as the prime ITS consultant in Alabama and the prime communications consultant for Houston Metro, Harris County, and Houston, Texas. He is a member of ITE, ITS America, and IMSA. His background is in the design, specifications, and construction standards side of ITS.

Florida ITS is Hot! Hot! Hot!

ITS Florida, in partnership with FDOT's ITS Office, is hosting the Florida ITS Pavilion (Pavilion) in the exhibition hall at ITS America's Annual Meeting and Exposition in Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 19-22, 2003. This is a unique public/private partnership in which the major transportation agency in the state is sharing its exhibit space with public and private partners — giving them the opportunity to showcase their products and services.

The Pavilion will have a central FDOT booth, with a number of ITS Florida members sharing space in adjoining booths. FDOT's booth will include a presentation theater in which Pavilion participants will present their Florida ITS programs, projects, and products. The surrounding exhibit areas will feature Florida ITS-related exhibits of private-and public-sector organizations.

Participants in the Pavilion include Atlantic Scientific supported by DKS, Center for Advanced Transportation Systems Simulation at the University of Central Florida, DFA Communications, FDOT, PBS&J, South Atlantic Traffic, Southwest Research Institute, the Florida Toll Authorities, MasTec, and Viasys.

Stop by and learn why Florida is one of the hottest ITS markets in the U.S.A!

Can You Rename This Mouthful?

FDOT's ITS Office is searching for just the right name for the Statewide Transportation Management Center Software Library System (STMCSLS). If you have a name you would like to have considered, please submit via email to Karen.England@dot.state.fl.us. We will provide the list of names in a future *SunGuide*SM *Disseminator* for your review and voting.

ITS Florida's Member of the Month

ITS Florida is publishing monthly articles on ITS professionals on their web site at ITSFlorida.org. Check to see who is in the spotlight this month!

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<p>District 1 Chris Birozak FDOT District 1 Traffic Operations PO Box 1249 Bartow, FL 33831 (863) 519-2507</p>	<p>District 5 Fred Ferrell FDOT District 5 Traffic Operations 719 S. Woodland Blvd., MS 3-562 Deland, FL 32720-6834 (386) 943-5309</p>	<p>Chester Chandler ITS Office Manager (850) 410-5600</p>
<p>District 2 Peter Vega FDOT District 2 Traffic Operations 2250 Irene Street, MS 2815 Jacksonville, FL 32204-2619 (904) 360-5463</p>	<p>District 6 Jesus Martinez FDOT District 6 1000 NW 111th Avenue, MS 6203 Miami, FL 33172 (305) 499-2446</p>	<p>Gene Glotzbach ITS Deployments (850) 410-5616</p>
		<p>Liang Hsia ITS Architecture, Standards, Research and Training (850) 410-5615</p>

District 3

Elizabeth McCrary
FDOT District 3 Traffic Operations
1074 Highway 90 East
Chipley, FL 32428-0607
(850) 638-0250 ext. 210

District 4

Tahira Faquir
FDOT District 4 Traffic Operations
3400 W. Commercial Blvd.
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309
(954) 777-4370

District 7

Bill Wilshire
FDOT District 7 Traffic Operations
11201 N. McKinley Drive
Tampa, FL 33612
(813) 975-6612 ext. 7869

Florida's Turnpike Enterprise

Ingrid Birenbaum
Florida's Turnpike Enterprise
PO Box 9828
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310-9828
(954) 975-4855 ext. 1290

Mike Akridge

Commercial Vehicle Operations
and Electronic Toll Collection
(850) 410-5607

Nick Adams

ITS Telecommunications
(850) 410-5608

Physical Address Mailing Address

Rhyne Building
2740 Centerview Dr.
Suite 3-B
Tallahassee, FL
32301

Burns Building
605 Suwannee St.
MS 90
Tallahassee, FL
32399

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PBS&J QCAP Document Control Panel	
Created by:	England
Reviewed by:	England, Blanton, Glotzbach, Chandler
Date:	May 20, 2003