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Operations Quarterly News

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DISSEMINATOR

STATE OF FLORIDA • DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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Traffic Engineering and Operations Office
605 Suwannee Street, M.S. 36
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450
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April 2007 Edition

Link to Florida's Statewide ITS General Consultant

Tampa Bay SunGuide^{SM} Center—Just the Beginning

The FDOT District 7 in Tampa is poised to begin operations in their new regional transportation management center (RTMC), commonly called the Tampa Bay SunGuide^{SM} Center. This state-of-the-art facility will be used to manage traffic and coordinate incident response on the Tampa Bay region's roadways, primarily the interstates, using ITS devices and technology. Examples of the ITS devices that will be used to assist in traffic management include: closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras, detectors, and dynamic message signs (DMSs). With the continuing deployment of these devices, District 7 will be able to gather more accurate and timely information about conditions on the region's roadways.
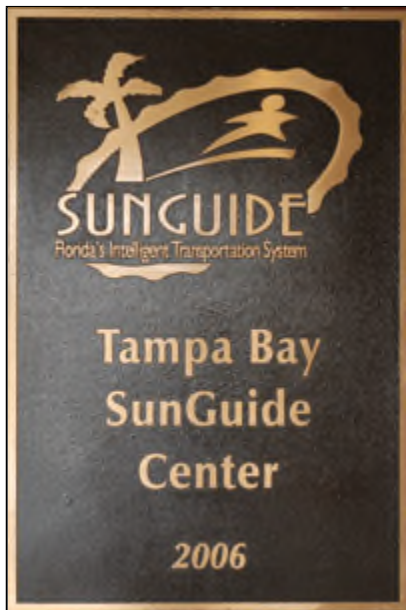

The FDOT District 7 ITS Section utilized the "Systems Manager" contracting approach for the Tampa Bay SunGuide Center and their freeway management system (FMS) projects. The Tampa Bay SunGuide Center was designed under the Systems Manager contract and let for construction using the low bid approach. Design and construction included the building only. FDOT District 7 ITS let a separate contract for the interior systems, which include installation of a video wall, furniture, operator consoles, testing, and systems integration. At this time, the interior systems contract is winding down and the ITS staffs are moving into the new center.

FDOT District 7 is happy to report that the Interim Transportation Management Center (ITMC), currently in the District 7 Administration Building, will be moving to its permanent home in the Tampa Bay SunGuide Center by the end of March. For the past several months, District 7 has been managing the first fully deployed 9 miles of Interstate (I-275 between I-4 to the north of Bearss Avenue), as well as the Sunshine Skyway Bridge, from the ITMC. The ITMC is staffed during peak hours, Monday through Friday.

These two segments managed in the ITMC encompass approximately 17 miles of roadway. By establishing the ITMC, District 7 ITS Section was able to utilize active ITS devices deployed in the field while the interior systems contract progressed.

The ITMC "video wall" consisted of two large flat screen plasma monitors mounted on the wall in the District 7 Traffic Operations. In the field, FDOT District 7
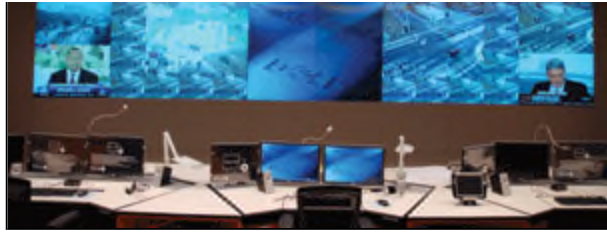
ITS deployed permanent ITS devices, such as LED-type dynamic message signs (DMSs), CCTV cameras, vehicle detection stations, and fiber optic Ethernet-based communications. The vehicle detection stations are located at approximately half-mile intervals. CCTVs were placed approximately every mile, and the DMSs are strategically located approaching interchanges. All the devices and their communications infrastructure comprise the FMS.

The interior systems contract has progressed to the point that the video wall and supporting electronics are installed and functional. Testing is ongoing, but has progressed to the point that the ITMC can be relocated. Relocation of the ITMC will be complete before the end of March. Once the relocation is complete, the Tampa Bay SunGuide Center will expand operations to 16 hours per day, five days per week.

In April 2007, the Downtown Interchange and I-4 from 50th Street to County Road 579 will come online. These two segments will bring the number of managed miles to 30. Over the next several years, FDOT District 7 ITS will continue to work on the remaining FMS projects. Segments will be brought online as they are ready.

In 2003, FDOT District 7 ITS entered into a contract with Mobility Technologies (now called Traffic.com) to utilize federal monies to install approximately 90 sensors to gather travel time data along portions of I-4, I-75, and I-275. In addition to the vehicle detection stations, CCTV cameras, and DMSs that are being installed as part of FDOT District 7's FMS, the data that is gathered from the sensors installed earlier will also be utilized in the Tampa Bay SunGuide Center for calculating travel times. As permanent deployment of ITS devices occurs, the Traffic.com sensors can be moved, at no cost to the FDOT, to other locations. This will allow access to additional information on roadways not yet equipped with permanent ITS devices.

The personnel in FDOT District 7 ITS worked very hard to forge good partnerships with local agencies. The Tampa Bay SunGuide Center will include representatives from Florida Department of Fish and Wildlife, Florida Highway Patrol, FDOT Motor Carrier Compliance Office and the District 7 Emergency Operations Office. These agencies will be able to view the video wall from their offices on LCDs installed for that purpose. In addition, RTMC operators will be able to send real-time video images to them, as necessary. Collocating the agencies allows Tampa Bay SunGuide Center personnel to share information and more efficiently manage the region's roadways. FDOT District 7 ITS will use "center-to-center" communications links to talk to other transportation management centers in the region, as well as across the state.

FDOT District 7 is very proud to debut the Tampa Bay SunGuide Center. Tampa Bay SunGuide Center personnel extend our thanks to the many people who devoted months or

years to the planning, design, and construction of our facility. With the debut of the Tampa Bay SunGuide Center the future is brighter for the traveling public in Greater Tampa Bay.

This article was provided by Bill Wilshire, FDOT District 7. For information, please contact Mr. Wilshire at (813) 975-6612 or email to Bill.Wilshire@dot.state.fl.us.

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Sometimes the Best Outreach Starts by Reaching In

Florida Commercial Vehicle Operations (CVO) accomplishments continue to build upon a solid foundation. What the five agencies (FDOT, Florida Dept. of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, Florida Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Dept. of Revenue, and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration) have accomplished together is making a difference for Florida with respect to increased safety, improved productivity, and reductions in operating costs for Florida's motor carrier community. While much of this hard work is making a big difference, not many outside of a relatively small circle are aware of these benefits. Sometimes 'inreach' is equally as important as 'outreach.' The better educated FDOT and other public agencies are concerning the successes of Florida's CVO Program, the more advocates there will be for the continuation of these beneficial programs.

Unfortunately, it's all too easy to eliminate a program that you don't know anything about and then find yourself in the midst of an increase in accidents and fatalities, higher incidence of damage to Florida's transportation infrastructure, increased illegal activity (tax fraud, stolen goods, elevated illegal drug activity), and an alarming shortage of manpower to carry out the agency's core mission. In order to decrease the chances of eliminating the successful CVO initiatives, it's up to each of us to educate our colleagues so they'll educate their colleagues, and so on, and so on. The more people that know, the more opportunities there are to educate others.

Florida's CVO Program has successfully used several avenues for inreach, not only to agency personnel that are directly involved with CVO activities, but also other state employees whose job responsibilities affect CVO activities in a more indirect manner. There are several effective methods for conducting 'inreach.' The CVO Program has used methods including organized site visits, statewide workshops, professional engineer trainee

presentations, presentations during the FDOT's ITS Working Group Meetings, and regular articles in the SunGuide Disseminator.

One of our first inreach efforts involved educating the various partner agencies that make up Florida's Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Network (CVISN) team. Because several members of the CVISN team were not familiar with what the other partner agencies did with regard to regulation of CVO, the CVISN team organized several site visits to technology deployments around the state to see first hand how other agencies interacted with the CVO community.

The CVISN team visited a Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) Interdiction Station to see how their officers collect bill of lading data for the Department of Revenue. The team also visited a Motor Carrier Compliance Office weigh station to see how officers perform their duties. Participants had the opportunity to witness several ITS technologies in action at the weigh station, such as infrared brake testing technology and HELP/PrePass Pre-Clearance. Officers also demonstrated how tractor trailers are inspected and how the inspection data is submitted electronically to the USDOT's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

Another site visit involved a DACS demonstration of their VACISTM (Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System) equipment. Participants witnessed how DACS uses the VACIS truck, which uses gamma ray technology, to 'see' the entire contents of a 53-foot trailer in a few minutes (versus the old method of physical inspection that can take 30 minutes or longer).

Other successful examples of inreach include the highly successful 2006 CVO workshop in Tampa (sponsored by Florida's Incident Management and CVO Programs). The workshop focused on CVO and the important relationship CVO has with traffic engineering, transportation operations, and planning. Attendees included FDOT District personnel, Federal agency representation, law enforcement, metropolitan planning organization representation, traffic engineers, planners, motor carrier representation, and also representation from Georgia and Texas DOTs. Other successful examples of inreach include presentations on Florida's CVO Program made during FDOT's professional engineer training sessions and internal briefings during departmental staff meetings in the Central Office Traffic Engineering and Operations office.

While these inreach methods have been used by the CVO Program, the same concept and benefits apply to other areas of ITS. For example, too often members of the traveling public have complained about congestion levels and getting 'caught' in a traffic jam and wishing they knew about the incident before they drove up on it. The more inreach we

can do about our services, the better are our chances of one of those inreach recipients explaining to John Q. Public the existence of the 511 service or the existence of traffic information provided over the Internet.
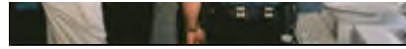
Another good benefit of inreach is the exchange of ideas. The CVO Program may be experiencing success with a technology approach and, while conducting inreach, a traffic engineer may see another application for the same technology approach that could solve his/her challenges.

As Florida's CVO Program continues fulfilling its mission, team members will continue to look for additional opportunities to tell their story to as many fellow state employees as possible. As the saying goes, "knowledge is power," and the more fellow state employees that know about Florida's CVO Program and its successes, the more opportunities there will be for the information to reach the public.

In today's environment of shrinking budgets, tough funding decisions have to be made. It's much easier to see the value of preserving funding for programs that have proven benefits and widespread recognition. Obviously, one cannot support a program that he/she doesn't know exists. Yes, sometimes the best outreach begins by reaching in.

To read CVO-related articles please take the time to read the FDOT Incident Management / Commercial Vehicle Operations Programs Annual Report, Fiscal Year 2006, at www.dot.state.fl.us/TrafficOperations/Traf_Incident/pdf/PageSz-2006-AR-IM-CVO.pdf.

This article was provided by Richard Easley and Sharon Easley, E-Squared Engineering. For more information, please contact Mr. Easley at (703) 858-5588 or email REasley@e-squared.org.

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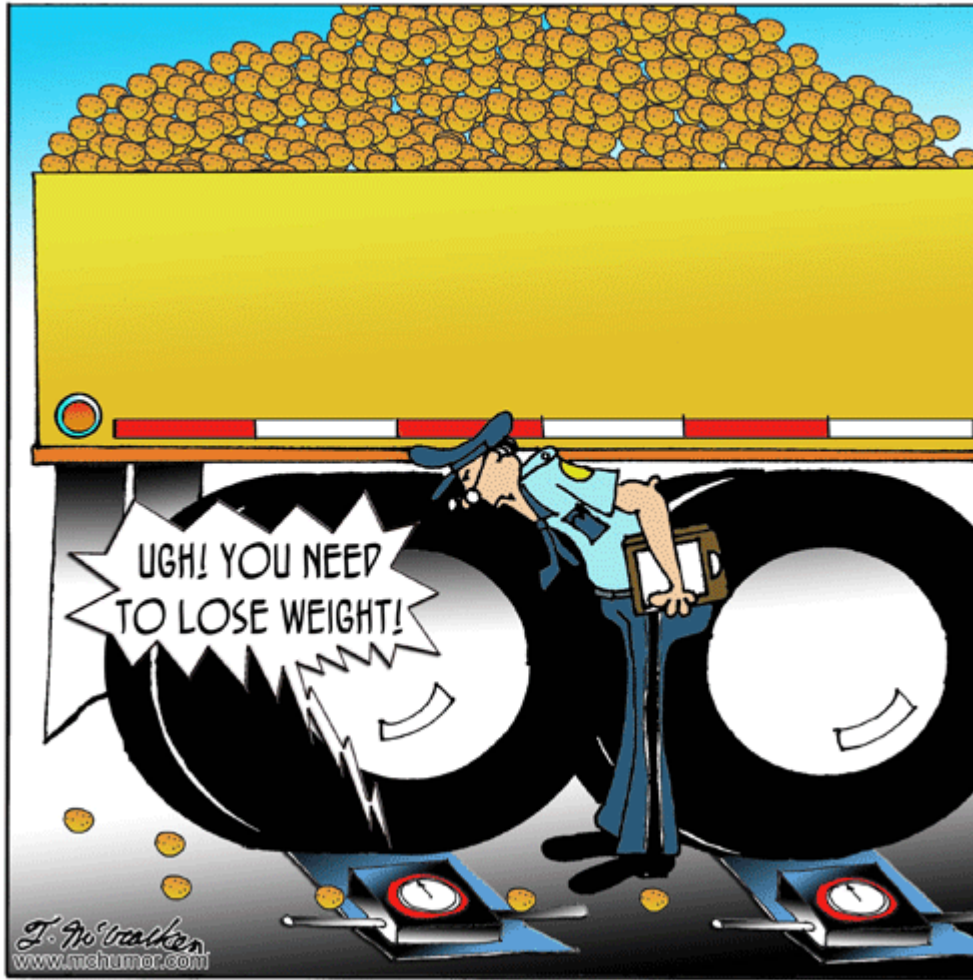
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*Florida's Safe Mobility for Life
Program*
(Former Elder Road User Program)

Although we have a fresh new program name
and logo, our issues still remain the same.
How can the FDOT help to prepare the roads

within our state for the inevitable increases to our over 65 year old driving population?

Safe Mobility for Life

By creating a more positive program image we hope to stress the fact that while the program focus is on improving our roadway systems for the older driver, we create a safer system for every driver, no matter what their age.

Along with our consultant, Cambridge Systematics, the program has been very active in developing resources and tools that not only assist the FDOT, but other state and local government agencies, and also aging service providers that have transportation mobility concerns. Some of the areas we are currently working on are:

Signing and Marking Chapter in the Florida Greenbook

Currently we are co-authoring a new chapter for the 2008 edition of the Florida Greenbook. This new chapter will provide local traffic engineers information on traffic control devices for both signing and marking that not only accommodate the special needs of the older driver, but benefit every driver.

Survey to Local Governments

This survey will seek to determine not only the current level of roadway improvements on local roads, but also identify any of their planning efforts in preparing their communities for the increasing aging population. We also will use the survey to determine any of their senior mobility programs. This survey will allow us to gain a local government perspective as to why roadway improvements for older drivers are not incorporated on their local roads while also determining their problem areas and/or concerns.

Training Course for Planners and Engineers

This training course for transportation planners and engineers, and others (aging service providers, elected officials, etc.) will be based on the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) "Older Driver Design Handbook for Older Drivers and Pedestrians." We are updating the existing FHWA course using FDOT guidelines and other documents and it will be tailored to address Florida's roadways. The course will take into account competing design practices such as those incorporated in Context Sensitive Design/Solutions and Livable Communities.

Senior Driver Safety Handbook

We are developing educational and training materials to improve the safety and driving competency of older adults and information associated with the driving environment. By partnering with Department of Highway Safety Motor Vehicles, Department of Elder Affairs, and State Safety Office, along with representatives from American Automobile Association, AARP, Community Traffic Safety Teams (CTST) Coalition, District CTST Coordinators, and the Florida Safety Council we will be able to determine their needs in terms of information and tools and compile them into a handbook that they can use when conducting older driver safety workshops.

Intersection and Pedestrian Safety Research

The purpose of this study, which is being conducted by Florida State University's Department of Psychology, is to outline a research program that can improve our knowledge about sign legibility in order to develop appropriate guidelines not only for the FDOT, but

also for local governments. This research program will rely on human factors principles and methodologies, which are critical to being able to fulfill the initiatives outlined in our Safe Mobility for Life Program's business plan.

The first task that the researchers will study is the use of fluorescent yellow (FY) sheeting on warning signs. This study is being conducted at the Traffic Engineering Research Lab (TERL) in Tallahassee and will achieve the following:

1. Recognition distance of new FY signs
2. Reading/meaning comprehension time for new FY signs
3. Comparison between existing (standard yellow sheeting) and new FY signs with respect to legibility distance and reading/comprehension time.

The results of these human factors studies will provide us with beneficial information to assist in the implementation of additional roadway improvements, not only to our State Highway System, but local roads as well.

Through the combined efforts of all these activities, and our continued partnering with other state and local agencies, we are effectively working towards achieving our goal of improving the safety, access, and mobility for Florida's aging population.

This article was provided by Gail Holley, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Office. For more information, please contact Mrs. Holley at (850) 410-5414 or e-mail Gail.Holley@dot.state.fl.us.

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SunGuide^{SM} Software Release 3 Kicks Off

The FDOT ITS Program has embarked on a major enhancement to the SunGuide^{SM} Software system. SunGuide Software Release 3 has been in the planning and requirements definition stages for several months. Requirements for Release 3 were reviewed and approved by the Change Management Board at their November 2, December 1, January 12, and March 8 meetings. On March 7, 2007, a Letter of Authorization was provided to Southwest Research Institute to begin work on SunGuide Software Release 3.

The requirements in SunGuide Software Release 3 are needs-driven and incorporate needs from virtually every FDOT District. This release includes the development of seven new subsystems and seven new drivers. In addition, Release 3 enhances nine existing subsystems, as well as the database and the graphical user interface (GUI). Following is the high-level software architecture graphic that shows the Release 3 enhancements as part of the overall software:
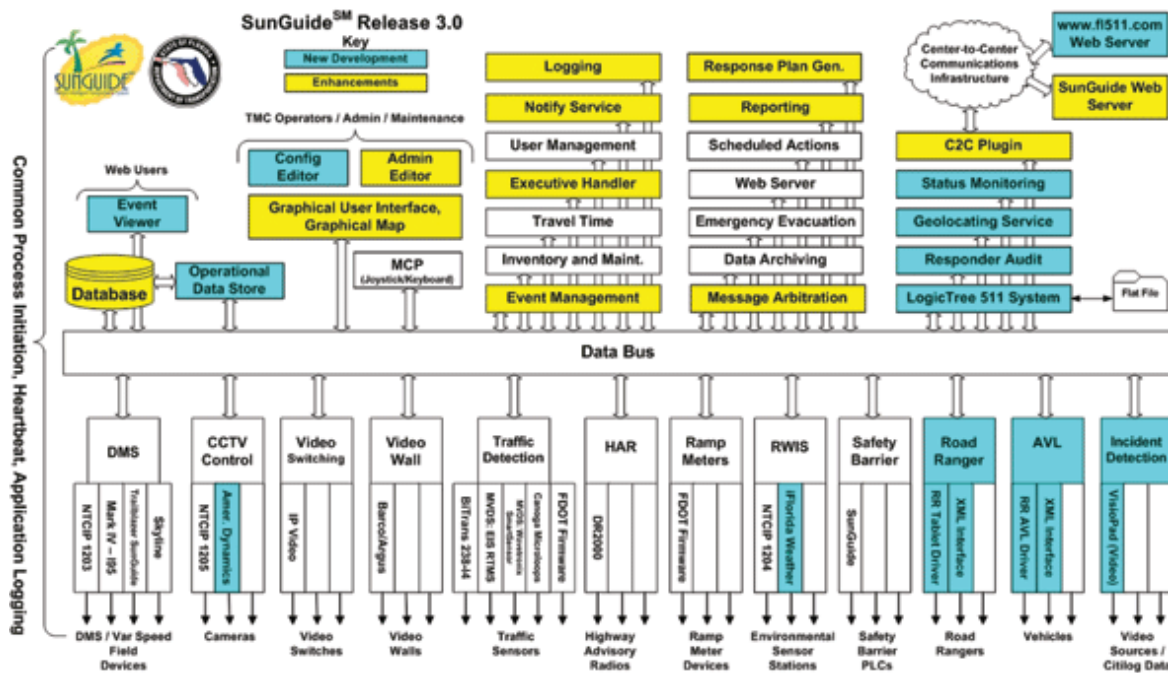
SunGuide Software Release 3 will build on Release 2.2 by further integrating and enhancing the Event Management and Reporting subsystems and adding the Responder Audit subsystem. The Event Management subsystem provides the transportation management center (TMC) Operator with greater flexibility by adding a tabular input mechanism for event information in addition to the existing graphical map-based process of inputting incidents. The enhanced Event Management subsystem gives TMC Operators and Supervisors the necessary tools to track and manage incidents and disseminate traveler information in an efficient and timely fashion. The Event Management subsystem collects additional detailed data such as Road Ranger data for use during incident management activities. Other enhanced data collection consists of the incident data necessary to produce the incident duration timestamps required for performance measures.

The Reporting subsystem allows reports to be generated directly from the SunGuide Software user interface. The Reporting subsystem also enables sorting and filtering of data prior to generating and printing a report. The Responder Audit subsystem allows TMC and ITS management staff with appropriate permissions the ability to audit data collected through the Event Management subsystem. The Responder Audit subsystem becomes a crucial quality assurance tool for the FDOT to ensure the quality of the data and resulting reports. The integrated SunGuide Event Management, Reporting, and Responder Audit subsystems satisfy a key user need by enabling more accurate and efficient performance measures reporting.

Integrated with the Event Management subsystem are two new Road Ranger drivers and two new automated vehicle location (AVL) drivers. These new drivers give the TMC Operator the ability to track and monitor Road Rangers in a dispatch environment. This software functionality improves Road Ranger response times and incident coordination. The multiple drivers give FDOT Districts the flexibility to procure a tablet PC device or any Road Ranger or AVL device that has an Extensible Markup Language (XML) interface.

Other significant enhancements in SunGuide Software Release 3 include integrating an Event Viewer subsystem and a Video Incident Detection driver. Both of these enhancements meet user needs by reducing demands and time on TMC Operators. The Event Viewer subsystem allows a TMC partner to view real-time SunGuide event information remotely over a Web-based application. This application reduces the need for continuous communication between the TMC and its partners by automating the process. The Video Incident Detection driver improves efficiency by including functionality for an incident to be automatically detected through video and sending an alert to the SunGuide Operator GUI.

Finally, a new subsystem that is very appreciated by SunGuide Software Network Administrators is the Config Editor. The Network Administrators are familiar with the existing SunGuide Admin Editor – this subsystem edits database entries and talks to other subsystems. The Config Editor is a separate window application that allows the SunGuide config.xml file to be edited in a user-friendly manner. The subsystem will be developed generically so that as new config parameters are edited (e.g. new subsystem) it will not require source code changes to the config editor.

SunGuide Software Release 3 is approximately a 6 month-effort with deployment to the District regional transportation management center's anticipated in September and October 2007. SunGuide users will benefit from the new and enhanced functionality described in this article; however, SunGuide Software Release 3 has even more to offer. Stay tuned for more updates on SunGuide Software Release 3 in future issues of the SunGuide Disseminator.

This article was provided by Trey Tillander FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Office. For more information, please contact Mr. Tillander at (850) 410-5617 or e-mail Trey.Tillander@dot.state.fl.us.

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The Power is in the Video

Until recently, public agencies in District 4 have been relying on the SMART^{SM} SunGuide Transportation Management Center (TMC) Web site (www.SMARTSunGuide.com) for detailed traffic information and images of the roadways. Although the Web site provides snapshots with a 10-second refresh rate and will soon be even faster, there are new cost-effective or no-cost upgrades available for agencies to use.

Inter-Agency Video Distribution System
The new Inter-Agency Video Distribution System (iVDS) distributes live motion closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera video feeds from District 4 to inter-agency partners (and other authorized users), using existing Internet infrastructure. This tool provides streaming video from 45 CCTV locations along I-95, I-595, and State Road 84 in Broward County. Emergency response agencies, such as 911 centers; police, fire and ambulance stations;

transportation management centers; airports and transit authorities, can benefit from the live images before or during an incident along the freeways.

FDOT District 4 distributes the CCTV video streams from the SMART SunGuide TMC in Fort Lauderdale. The iVDS converts the source of the high bandwidth video images to an industry standard "MPEG-4" format allowing high quality viewing through existing Internet connections. The iVDS solution requires authorized users to sign into a secure Web site, which enables them to select a specific CCTV feed or a tour of CCTV feeds.

Streaming Traffic Video on Mobile Phones

In 2006, the District 4 ITS Program developed and deployed a pilot project to provide access to real-time streaming video of TMC traffic cameras on smartphones, a new mobile phone technology. The success of this tool benefits public responding agencies, including the FDOT Road Rangers Service Patrol and Severe Incident Response Vehicle (SIRV) program, by providing a mobile event verification and monitoring tool. Creatively combining existing ITS technology and mobile phones opens up the possibilities at a low-cost to increase the benefits of ITS devices to partner agencies.

SMART Viewer

To supplement the use of the video, agencies can use a newly developed tool called SMART Viewer. SMART Viewer is a software application developed and implemented by the District 4 ITS Program. Previous to SMART Viewer, partnering agencies were limited to brief text messages. Now they are able to view real-time, detailed information about traffic incidents, accessible without using special equipment.

Agencies such as Florida Highway Patrol credit SMART Viewer to be a great check and balance tool, used to verify that they have real-time information about disabled vehicles or crashes. They also use it to confirm that motorists have received proper assistance. Additionally, partner agencies, such as South Florida SunGuide 511 Traveler Information, have enhanced their services offered to the motorists.

Agencies requiring access to the live database request a username and password to the encrypted Web application, designed to aid in inter-agency data sharing. Logging in provides a full list of traffic events in District 4. Events are hyperlinked to detail screens, providing time stamps, chronology, emergency responders, and other incident clearance information. SMART Viewer runs off of the SunGuide traffic incident management database, which powers real-time updates. SMART Viewer is exclusive to District 4 at this time with plans to incorporate it directly into SunGuide, resulting in statewide use.

This article was provided by Steve Corbin, District 4 ITS Operations Manager. For more information, please contact Mr. Corbin at (954) 847-2791 or e-mail Steven.Corbin@dot.state.fl.us.

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Heavy Rain AHEAD

T. McCracken
www.mchumor.com

S G B T
⬤ ☐ ⬤ ⬤
Acronym for District 7's RTMC.

S P O R T A N
☐ ☐ ☐ ⬤ ☐ ⬤ ☐
An ITS Florida 2006 accomplishment.

S M S D
⬤ ☐ ☐ ☐
Used for Amber alerts.

D I V S
☐ ☐ ⬤ ☐
District 4 tool that provides streaming video.

T E A C H O R U
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ⬤ ☐
In reach can be equally as important as this.

T S M E S S Y   G E M A A N R
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ⬤ ☐   ☐ ⬤ ☐ ⬤ ☐ ☐ ☐
Contracting approach used by District 7 for their RTMC.

It's raining ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ !

Editorial Corner—Amber Alert Notification Utilizing Dynamic Message Signs—A Good Success Story

As a refresher, Amber Alert got its beginning in the Dallas-Fort Worth area nearly 11 years ago. The Amber Alert system was created in 1996 after Amber Hagerman, who was 9 years old, was kidnapped while riding her bicycle near her home in Arlington Texas, a suburb of Dallas. Unfortunately there was not a happy ending to the Amber Hagerman kidnapping. Although there was a dark cloud surrounding the kidnapping, there is somewhat of a silver lining to the cloud. Out of this incident, the Amber Alert program was spawned. This program has been responsible for the safe return of many children who otherwise may have been harmed or killed.

The alerts were initially broadcast on radio and television. However, Florida and other states have expanded the methods by which the alerts are disseminated. The FDOT is helping out by allowing Amber Alert information to be posted on the Department's dynamic message signs (DMSs) as well as allowing the posting of information on the state's 511 service. Information is posted if a vehicle was utilized in the kidnapping and there is enough descriptive information about the vehicle to allow for a positive identification.

The FDOT is proud to note that several children have been rescued based on information posted on dynamic message signs deployed around the state. The latest success story occurred last December 29. An alert went out for two children from Kissimmee. The child and her mother, who was also a juvenile, were abducted by the mother's ex-boyfriend. They were thought to be traveling to North Carolina and in danger.

A North Carolina family who had been vacationing in the Orlando area was traveling back home when the Amber Alert message was being posted on the FDOT's dynamic message signs. They were traveling on I-95 in the Jacksonville area when they noticed the Amber Alert message.

A few hours later, at about 4:30 pm, the family's attention was drawn to the vehicle in front of them because of a child that seemed not to be safety strapped into a car seat. After a moment, the family realized that the vehicle met the description of the Amber Alert information that was posted on the dynamic message signs in the Jacksonville area. They called 911 and were connected to the Orangeburg, South Carolina Sheriff's Office.

Based on information provided by the North Carolina family, Orangeburg Sheriff's deputies stopped the suspect's vehicle and apprehended the ex-boyfriend and placed the child and mother into protective custody until family members could arrive and pick them up.

This article underscores the benefit of getting Amber Alert information out by all means and as fast as possible. Statistics show that the first three hours are the most critical to recovering a kidnapped child alive. There are some built in inefficiencies to the notification process because it takes time for law enforcement to assemble the information to make the decision to issue an Amber Alert. Once the decision is made to issue an Amber Alert, the FDOT has to react fast to get the message on dynamic message signs. The FDOT's process is working, as evidenced by the preceding story. However, the FDOT's notification process is cumbersome and relies on phone calls and faxes to get the Amber Alert information out to the Department's traffic management centers. The notification process can be improved and the FDOT is working to streamline the notification process through the utilization of the statewide SunGuide^{SM} Software and center-to-center connections.

Although the Amber Alert messaging is not a transportation function, it is a positive program and is one of the few alternate uses of the FDOT's dynamic message signs. District personnel can pat themselves on the back for their support of a worthwhile program and a job well done. The support of the Amber Alert Program by the FDOT exemplifies the spirit and character of the employees that are so vital to the success of the Intelligent Transportation Systems Program.

This editorial was provided by Gene Glotzbach, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Office. For more information, please contact Mr. Glotzbach at (850) 410-5616 or e-mail Gene.Glotzbach@dot.state.fl.us.

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Intelligent Transportation Society of Florida—2006 Accomplishments

Over the years, ITS Florida has created, developed, and delivered many creative programs to benefit its members, foster communication, and demonstrate the benefits of ITS and ITS America. In 2006, ITS Florida continued to find ways to fulfill its mission to foster the application of innovative ITS solutions in Florida by sharing ideas and information with our membership, advocating ITS deployment, and encouraging interest and support of ITS.

ITS Florida updated the Strategic Plan for organizational (internal) goals and for external goals at a retreat held in August 2006. Since then, Committee Chairs have established their plans, and each month the Board meets to monitor and provide direction to the committees.

Responding to the changing skills development needs of the state's ITS community, in 2006, the chapter decided to take a fresh look at its Professional Capacity Building (PCB) program. As the state's ITS Program has evolved from a planning stage to an active deployment and operations phase, the chapter's PCB Committee recognized the need to fulfill Florida-specific ITS deployment and operational skills needs. A new ITS PCB plan was adopted, and beginning in 2007 this vision is being implemented. In April 2007, an NHI-offered course on "Managing High Technology Projects in Transportation" is being offered in Orlando, Florida, to both public and private sector ITS professionals.

Events

The most significant accomplishment in 2006 for ITS Florida was the organization of Transpo2006—Empowering Our Mobile Society—in conjunction with the Florida Section ITE, FDOT, and FHWA Florida Division. This conference, held in November 2006, brought together experts from the intelligent transportation industry for presentations and demonstrations on how our transportation systems can be made safer, more convenient, and more efficient. Four tracks provided diverse sessions of interest to the attendees and assisted in meeting the ITS Florida goals to share information about ITS and provide a forum for collaboration and education. The topics covered by the conference were:

- Planning Our Mobile Society,
- Engineering Our Mobile Society,
- Managing Our Mobile Society, and
- Advancing Our Mobile Society.

These tracks provided diverse sessions of interest to the attendees. Transpo—2006 drew 450 attendees from all facets of transportation and from all over the country including: academic and research development staff; emergency service personnel; federal, regional, state, and local transportation officials; ITS consultants, vendors, and contractors; service developers, and providers; transit personnel; ITS professionals from other states; and national ITS and traffic operations experts. Starting with the golf tournament and welcoming reception on the first day, Transpo2006 provided ample opportunities to make those all-important connections. The exhibit hall was another prime time to connect with vendors, contractors, consultants, and other ITS professionals.

Also in 2006, ITS Florida was represented with our exhibition booth at the following events: ITS America Annual Meeting (which drew particular praise from ITSA President and CEO, Neal Schuster), Floridians for Better Transportation Conference (July 2006); Transpo2006; and the 2006 Annual FDOT ITS Working Group Conference.

Outreach

The Outreach Committee focused on legislative outreach in 2006. An "Adopt a Legislator" program was initiated. Twelve key house and senate representatives were identified based on their interest and influence over transportation issues. ITS Florida Board members were assigned to the legislators. Speaking points were prepared by ITS Florida to raise legislators' awareness and to gain their support to ensure the public is getting the most from the intermodal transportation system in the state.

Another target group for outreach in 2006 was the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). A comprehensive presentation outlining the purpose of ITS Florida, description of ITS, and specific benefits to the public was prepared by Board members and distributed to all

members, and is available on our Web site. Presentations took place with the following MPOs: Hillsborough, First Coast, and METROPLAN Orlando. This outreach has been successful in engaging MPOs regarding their role in ITS in Florida.

Our final—but certainly not least important—outreach mechanism is our Web site. The job postings, courses, conferences, calendar of events, and more are constantly updated to ensure members receive the latest information. The Web site had 41,939 hits in 2006.

2006 was a successful year for ITS Florida. We are always looking for new ways to reach out to the ITS community and make get more people enthusiastically involved in ITS Florida. Please visit our Web site (www.itsflorida.org) or contact Diana Carsey at CarseyD@msn.com if you are interested in joining ITS Florida.

This article was provided by Anita Vandervalk-Ostrander, Cambridge Systematics, Inc. For information, please contact Mrs. Vandervalk-Ostander at (850) 219-6388 or email to AVandervalk@camsys.com.

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For more information on ITS Florida, please check the ITS Florida Web site at www.itsflorida.org or contact Diana Carsey, Executive Director, at (727) 409-5415 or email CarseyD@verizon.net.

If you wish to contribute an article to the *SunGuide Disseminator* on behalf of ITS Florida, please email Anita Vandervalk at AVandervalk@camsys.com.

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TERL Investigating Florida-Specific NTCIP MIBs

The Traffic Engineering Research Lab (TERL) has signed an agreement with Florida State University establishing a new research project. Titled "Florida Specific National Transportation Communications for ITS Protocol (NTCIP) Management Information Base (MIB) Development for Actuated Signal Controller (ASC), Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV), and Center-to-Center (C2C) Communications with SunGuide[SM] Software and ITS Device Test Procedure Development," the project is an important component of the TERL's ongoing effort to ensure that ITS devices and traffic-management systems employed in Florida are not only NTCIP-compliant, but also suited to Florida's particular requirements. Project tasks include:

• Investigating and identifying Florida-specific needs/requirements for NTCIP MIB enhancements for actuated signal controllers, CCTV camera, dynamic message signs (DMSs), and C2C communications;
• Investigating and identifying Florida-specific needs/requirements for enhancements to the NTCIP C2C Extensible Markup Language (XML) message set;

- Developing a change management process for Florida-specific NTCIP standards, hardware, SunGuide Software, and manufacturers' firmware;
- Developing software-based tool kits to test actuated signal controllers (ASC) and CCTV devices for NTCIP compliance and SunGuide compatibility.

The Project Manager is Liang Hsia, Deputy State Traffic Engineer and director of the TERL. The Principal Investigator is Professor Leonard Tung of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) at the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering. Working on the project is Khue Ngo, an ECE doctoral candidate; another as-yet unnamed ECE graduate student will also be involved.

Two years in duration, the research project extends from fiscal year 2006 into fiscal year 2008. Emphasis in the first year will be on ASC and CCTV devices, with the second-year focusing on C2C communications.

The project involves in-depth study and research of ASC, CCTV, DMSs and C2C NTCIP standards so as to develop familiarity with standard features and core requirements. District ITS and regional transportation center managers and other stakeholders will be surveyed to identify Florida-specific needs and enhancements. Specific recommendations will be developed, along with actual proposed MIB object and XML message-set changes and additions. Testing procedures will be created so that submitted devices' hardware and software components can be evaluated for general NTCIP conformance and ability to meet Florida-specific requirements.

Another aspect of the project is the development of a formalized change management process to be used in the adoption of Florida-specific enhancements and changes involving interrelationships among:

- NTCIP standards (including device MIBs);
- ITS device hardware, firmware and software;
- SunGuide software.

The draft document describing the process will be submitted to the FDOT ITS Change Management Board for consideration and adoption.

The benefits anticipated to accrue from this project include:

- The development of traffic management software, ITS devices, and systems tailored to the particular needs of Florida's transportation infrastructure users.
- An improved, technologically up-to-date change-management methodology.
- Significantly improved testing capabilities for determining NTCIP compliance and SunGuide compatibility of ASC and CCTV devices.
- Creation of a model for the development of testing capabilities, to be used in developing tests for other ITS devices.

This article was prepared by Bill Lueck, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Office, with the cooperation of Liang Hsia, FDOT TERL. For information, please contact Mr. Lueck at (850) 443-8744, or email Bill.Lueck@dot.state.fl.us.

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FDOT Equipment Certification

The FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Office, through the Traffic Engineering Research Laboratory (TERL), is responsible for approving all traffic control signal devices. Approved devices are kept on the FDOT Approved Products List (APL), a listing of devices that may be relied upon as meeting FDOT specifications, standards, or other criteria.

The APL is a means for the FDOT to meet *Florida Statute 316.0745, Uniform Signals and Devices*, which states, "All official traffic control signals or official traffic control devices purchased and installed in this state by any public body or official shall conform with the manual and specifications published by the Department of Transportation pursuant to subsection (2)."

More information on the FDOT APL may be viewed at www.dot.state.fl.us.TrafficOperations/ TERL/APL.htm. Specific approved products in the FDOT APL may be searched at rite.eng.fsu.edu/iapl/page1.php.

For more information, please contact Carl Morse, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Office, at (850) 410-5417 or email Carl.Morse@dot.state.fl.us.

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FDOT Contacts
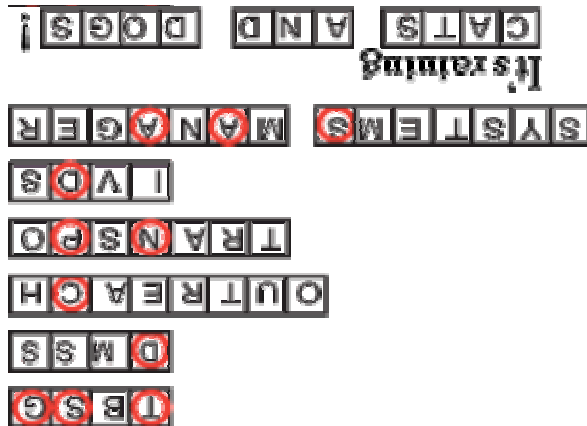
District 1
L.K. Nandam, DTOE
Chris Birosak, ITS
FDOT District 1 Traffic Operations
PO Box 1249
Bartow, FL 33831
(863) 519-2490

District 2
Jim Scott, DTOE
Peter Vega, ITS
FDOT District 2 Traffic Operations
2250 Irene Street, MS 2815
Jacksonville, FL 32204-2619
(904) 360-5630

District 3
June Coates, DTOE
Chad Williams, ITS
FDOT District 3 Traffic Operations
1074 Highway 90 East
Chipley, FL 32428-0607
(850) 638-0250

District 4
Mark Plass, DTOE
Dong Chen, ITS
FDOT District 4 Traffic Operations
2300 W. Commercial Blvd.
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309
(954) 777-4350

District 5
Richard Morrow, DTOE
Michael Smith, ITS
FDOT District 5 Traffic Operations
719 S. Woodland Blvd., MS 3-562
DeLand, FL 32720-6834
(386) 943-5310

District 6
Debora M. Rivera, DTOE
Rory Santana, ITS
FDOT District 6 Traffic Operations
1000 NW 111th Avenue, MS 6203
Miami, FL 33172
(305) 470-5335

District 7
Gary Thompson, DTOE
Bill Wilshire, ITS
FDOT District 7 Traffic Operations
11201 N. McKinley Drive
Tampa, FL 33612
(813) 615-8600

Florida's Turnpike Enterprise
John Easterling, ITS
Florida's Turnpike Enterprise
PO Box 9828
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33310-9828
(954) 975-4855

Lap Hoang
State Traffic Engineer
(850) 410-5600

Elizabeth Birriel
Deputy State Traffic Engineer - ITS
(850) 410-5606

Liang Hsia
Deputy State Traffic Engineer - Systems
(850) 410-5615

Mike Akridge
Deputy State Traffic Engineer - Incident
Management and
Commercial Vehicle Operations
(850) 410-5607

Mark Wilson
Deputy State Traffic Engineer - Operations
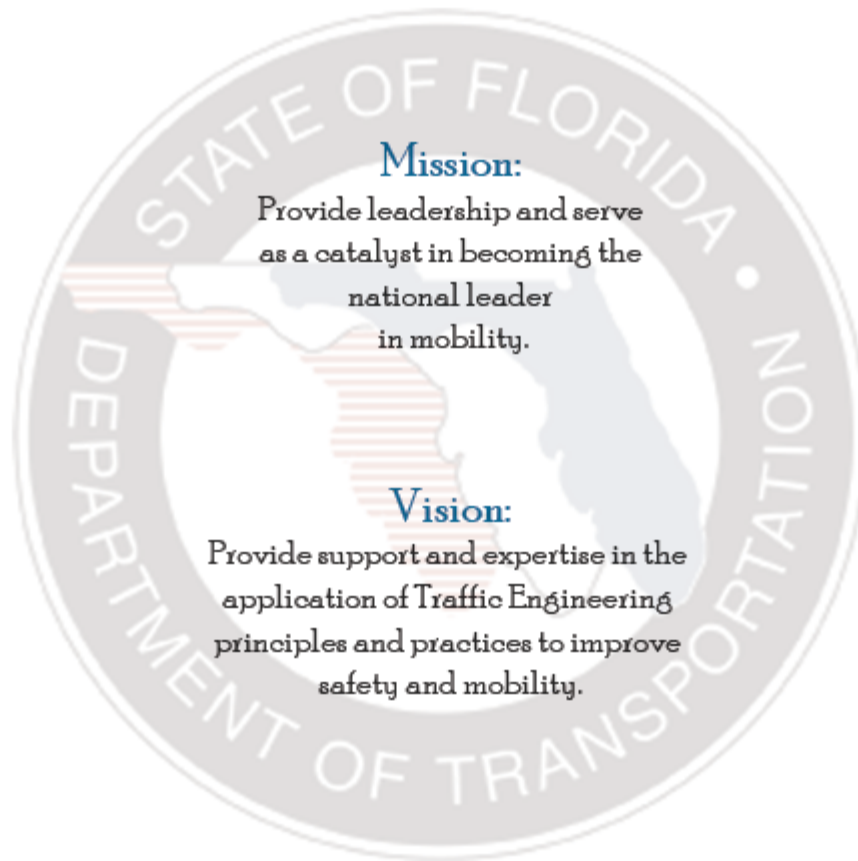(850) 410-5419

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

Mailing Address
Burns Building
605 Suwannee St.
M.S. 36
Tallahassee, FL
32399

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FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations
Mission and Vision Statements

Mission:
Provide leadership and serve
as a catalyst in becoming the
national leader
in mobility.

Vision:
Provide support and expertise in the
application of Traffic Engineering
principles and practices to improve
safety and mobility.

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