



SUNGUIDE® DISSEMINATOR

Florida Department of Transportation's Traffic Engineering and Operations Newsletter

District Four: Training for Safety During Air Rescue

By Gaetano Francese, *FDOT District Four*

The Florida Department of Transportation District Four Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Unit is taking safety to a higher level. At Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Team meetings in Broward, Palm Beach, and the Treasure Coast, incident responders received training tips on safety procedures during air rescue operations.



Christine Ponticelli, chief pilot for the Broward County Sheriff's Office, speaks about helicopter landing operations and safety to the Broward TIM Team.

During her presentation to the Broward TIM Team, Christine Ponticelli, chief pilot for the Broward Sheriff's Office, said she does not attempt to land on the highway if she can't do it safely. Ponticelli emphasized that there is no reason to endanger the flight crew or create additional problems at a scene involving patients with life-threatening

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injuries. If there are any doubts about making a safe landing, transporting the patients by ground to the nearest hospital is a better option.

Ponticelli, who has been a helicopter pilot for 28 years, reviewed the roles and responsibilities of incident responders during a medical evacuation. The flight crew's primary line of communications is with fire rescue, so the fire rescue units on the ground help set up the landing zone. The flight crew includes the pilot along with two paramedics, or one nurse and one paramedic.

Some of the safety tips shared with the TIM Team members were:

- Law enforcement officers can help keep the landing zone safe during the rescue operation by making sure responders don't wander into the area. Officers should be posted both in front and the rear of the helicopter, with each having a 180-degree visibility field.
- Responders should never approach the helicopter unless given a signal by the pilot. The flight medics will come to the responders. Paramedics with the ground crew should wear their helmets when working around the helicopter. The pilot has a siren that will sound if something goes wrong.
- A rescue helicopter does not make completely vertical landings or takeoffs. The craft approaches at 45-degree angle and needs about 150 feet of space in front for takeoff.
- Emergency lighting can blind the pilot during night-time operations, so lights should be turned down, if possible. Flashlights may be used to help the pilot locate the landing zone, but they should be turned off while the helicopter is landing. Flares should not be used.



Ponticelli sharing safety tips with TIM team members.

Helicopter pilots say they are on board with TIM policies on safe, quick clearance. Ponticelli said her aircraft needs three lanes to land safely, but will request law enforcement to close the entire highway if there are any concerns about distracting motorists traveling in the opposite direction.

“We’re going to minimize the time we shut traffic down as much as possible,” Ponticelli said. “We do not want to keep traffic stopped.”

Gerald Pagano, director of medical transport and aeromedical facilities for Trauma Hawk, made the presentation to the Palm Beach TIM Team. The

presentation to the Treasure Coast TIM Team was made by Deputy Chief Brian Blizzard of the St. Lucie County Fire District, and pilot J.R. Swinderman, flight nurse Jason Goldstein, and flight paramedic Bob Schooley of Air Methods.

For information, please contact Mr. Francese at (954) 847-2797 or email to Gaetano.Francese@dot.state.fl.us.

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The New SunGuide® Software Project Web Site

By Arun Krishnamurthy, FDOT, and Brian Ritchson, MCG

The Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) SunGuide® software is the primary tool for traffic management in the state of Florida. For many years, SunGuide software users were satisfied with only improving its operational breadth and efficiency, but now SunGuide is ready to grow its user base as well as reach out to and engage its current users. This required a new platform to market and disseminate information. The new SunGuide software project web site at www.sunguidesoftware.com seeks to maintain the operations and capabilities of its previous web site while adding functionality. Also, additional tools included with the web site aid in the distribution and discussion of new information.

The previous project web site met many of the original needs of the SunGuide software users. It provided a location to

download reports and other documents related to the software; it provided information relevant to current users (e.g. contact information for SunGuide support); it tracked the progress of the software as it grew. The new SunGuide software project web site does all of this and more. New and old SunGuide software documents and report templates are located in the Document Library and Report Repository, respectively. A plethora of information is available to users in various informative articles. And the growth and progress of the software is now easily viewed from the past, present, and future SunGuide software release pages.

Now that FDOT is considering marketing SunGuide software on a nationwide scale, it is apparent that more must be done to provide information to perspective users. Previously, the average web dweller

searching for "SunGuide" received little to no information on what the software was for or what SunGuide could offer as a statewide traffic management solution. On the new web site, users are immediately greeted with a brief paragraph on the home page concisely summarizing the purpose and capabilities of the software. In addition, a great deal of information, previously unavailable, is now easily accessible through various "About" pages. Finally, anyone who is unable to find the answers they seek can use the "Contact Us" page to contact parties who can answer their questions.

There are two site features that are entirely new and intended for experienced SunGuide software users—the forums and the web site search bar. Implementation of forums is an attempt to utilize a well-established medium of communication for the betterment of the user experience. The forums are intended to be a place where users can discuss issues and new enhancements with other SunGuide software users. The footprints system will still be the primary source of solutions for SunGuide software issues, but now users can help each other with problems that already have solutions. The Change Management Board and SunGuide Software User Group are also sources of lively debate during their quarterly meetings, but now new concepts and information can easily be discussed at each user's convenience, possibly leading to more informed discussions and decision making in meetings. The search bar, located in the top right corner of each web page, is a simple and powerful tool for searching and sorting a wealth of data on the web site. Simply type a word or phrase, hit enter, and results from the document library, site articles, and forum posts are returned in an enumerated list.



Screenshot of the new SunGuide software web site.

Moment of Humor!

Reading about the new SunGuide software project web site is not nearly as exciting as experiencing it. So take a look at the new site at www.sunguidesoftware.com and experience everything described in this article and more. If you experience any problems, please email Arun.Krishnamurthy@dot.state.fl.us or, if you are a registered member of the site, you can create a topic in the suggestion box in the main SunGuide forum.

For information, please contact Mr. Krishnamurth at (850) 410-5615 or email to Arun.Krishnamurthy@dot.state.fl.us.

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Traffic Incident Management Team Members Take a Vote

By, *William (Bill) Fuller, FDOT District One*

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) asks the top 75 most populated municipalities in the country to develop and participate in Traffic Incident Management (TIM) teams. TIM teams bring together all agencies involved in clearing roadway crashes. Their objective is to improve responder safety, incident detection, verification, and safely clear roadways as expeditiously as possible, resulting in a safer highway environment for both incident responders and motorists. Each year District TIM teams complete a "Self Assessment" of the programs performance.

This year District One TIM teams used "TurningPoint" software, an audience response tool, which allows participants to vote anonymously to questions using a handheld ResponseCard™ keypad.



Out with the old and in with the new!



Voting anonymously using a handheld ResponseCard™ keypad.

"Counting hands is old school and this was way more fun," one member said; "And no one can tell how I voted," said another after voting. Results are instantaneous, viewable for discussion, and reportable in various graphs and formats.

District One purchased the TurningPoint software and it is available to District One employees through the Human Resources Department. "The voting took just as long this year, but it seemed shorter because it was interactive and new fun for all," said Bill Fuller TIM team facilitator for District One.

This powerful data collection and assessment tool collects real-time audience responses and dramatically improves productivity and results to enhance any organization's improvement process.

For information, please email Mr. Fuller at William.Fuller@dot.state.fl.us.

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Inside the TERL

By Jeff Morgan, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations, and Ron Meyer, Atkins

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Traffic Engineering Research Lab (TERL) recently hosted a visit by staff from the Executive Office of the Governor. The Governor's Office and the Florida Government Efficiency Task Force strive to improve governmental operations and reduce costs; they periodically visit many public agencies and offices around the state to learn more about their business and general operations.

FDOT Secretary Ananth Prasad, Eric Carr (FDOT Public Information Office), and others joined in the tour,



Secretary Prasad briefing Executive Office of the Governor staff.



Touring the TERL.

which showcased the lab's various testing infrastructure used on a daily basis to evaluate and certify traffic control devices for use in Florida. The tour included demonstrations of the lab's scaled down, off-line transportation management center (TMC) equipped with SunGuide® software along with how the TMC is used by lab personnel to evaluate various equipment and communications systems for interchangeability, interoperability, and compliance to state requirements, all under simulated real-time TMC operations.

Also demonstrated was how the lab supports testing, monitoring, and maintenance of FDOT's communications infrastructure, such as the intelligent transportation systems (ITS) wide area network and the statewide microwave system, which are an integral part of Florida's transportation and emergency management investment. Lab personnel demonstrated these capabilities by utilizing video walls in the lab to display video streams from several traffic

cameras in Florida. At one point, Secretary Prasad himself used live video streams of I-95 toll lanes being displayed on the lab's video wall as a visual aid.

The tour ended with a walk-around and demonstration of the TERL's outdoor testing infrastructure, which includes two signalized intersections (one mast arm, one span wire) used for testing various equipment; a dedicated test area for large electronic message signs; a mast arm over live traffic in front of the lab used to test camera lowering devices and various vehicle detection devices; and a dark room test tunnel used to test optical characteristics of traffic control devices.

For information, please contact Mr. Jeff Morgan at (850) 921-7354 or email to Jeffrey.Morgan@dot.state.fl.us.

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From Motorists' Eyes

By Patrick Odom, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operation

Daily, across a number of Florida's interstates and toll roads, the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Road Ranger service patrols cruise the highways, responding to varying incidents ranging from reported crashes and debris in the road to motorists who have incurred problems with their vehicles. During many of these responses, the Road Ranger offers the motorist a postage paid comment card. This comment card enables the motorist to provide feedback on the Road Ranger service to FDOT.

The comment card has three multiple choice response areas:

1. What time of day did you receive service?
2. What type of service did you receive?
3. How long did it take for the Road Ranger to arrive?

The comment card also has two areas to rate the Road Ranger service, ranging from excellent to poor:

1. Operator was courteous and helpful.
2. Satisfaction with services provided.

Road Rangers provide these comment cards to motorists who then have the opportunity to complete the cards and return them to the Road Ranger or mail them back to FDOT. For 12 months, from July 2011 through June 2012, FDOT received over 23,000 comment cards. Road Rangers receive a majority of the comment cards, while FDOT receives some mailed from within the state; however, occasionally motorists return comment cards with postmarks from outside of Florida's state boundaries. For these 12 months, 72

cards were returned from 55 different cities in 23 different states. Motorists from Canada also returned three cards. The cards came from as close as Mobile, Alabama, and Albany, Georgia, to as far away as Madbury, New Hampshire, and Seattle, Washington.

FDOT receives additional comments in the small space allotted on the cards. Often the comments reflect the true value of the services received from the Road Ranger. Quickly changing a tire can mean making a flight for a business meeting. Promptly proving a little fuel can mean making an interview on time; sometimes even more importantly, the presence of a Road Ranger can help put

a person or the family at ease while waiting for more assistance to arrive.

The comment cards remain an excellent resource for the public to evaluate the services provided by Road Rangers. The comment card return rates continue to increase with nearly all of them reporting favorably on the Road Ranger services.

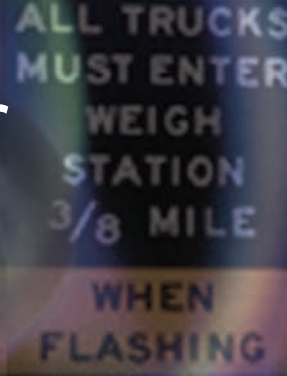
For information, please contact Mr. Odom at (850) 410-5631 or email to Patrick.Odom@dot.state.fl.us.

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A Road Ranger preparing to help a motorist (Courtesy of District Four).

SunGuide® Disseminator Word Challenge



We invite you to have some fun and complete the SunGuide Disseminator Word Challenge!

Unscramble the letters to complete the word for the clue found under the boxes.
Use the letters in the red circles to complete the final puzzle.
The answers can be found on the page 10.

Enjoy
and
Good Luck!



Keep with ITS!

L O A W E N E L H

Transpo2012 theme basis.

L O T O

TuningPoint is an audience response _____ used by District One.

M O C T E N M

These cards are used to evaluate Road Ranger services.

ITS Florida Invites You to Transpo2012

By Jay Calhoun, Gannett-Fleming, and Carlton Urban, Albeck Gerken

Transpo2012 is set to prove “ITS – It’s Not That Scary” is a fact. Come learn how this high-tech industry is evolving and how it can help improve traffic operations and safety throughout our state. Transpo2012 is the premier intelligent transportation systems (ITS) event in Florida with over 300 leading transportation professionals from across the country expected to gather in Bonita Springs from October 28 to 31. Attendees will experience many events – a fantastic (and not haunted) hotel, scarily knowledgeable expert speakers, and lots of amazingly eerie technology from our exhibitors. There will also be events to honor ITS Florida’s (ITSFL) 20th Anniversary. This is an event you don’t want to miss! To sign up for Transpo2012, visit <http://www.event.com/events/2012-transpo-conference/event-summary-b3c993ae4b134b52a71b48a4a5cab87b.aspx>.

Sponsored by ITSFL, Florida Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the Federal Highway Administration, Transpo2012 will be held at the Hyatt Coconut Point in Bonita Springs. This location has something for everyone (For more information on the hotel, visit www.hyattcoconutpoint.com).

Transpo2012 begins Sunday afternoon with a golf tournament at Vasari Country Club, a championship golf course recently redesigned by architect Billy Fuller, which provides a challenging, but fun experience for all levels of golfers. For more information on the golf course, visit www.vasari-country-club.com. Sunday evening will feature a reception where you can meet and network with your friends, as well as make new ones. This will get the conference off to a great start.

Technical activities begin Monday morning. The opening ceremonies will include speakers from the host organizations, ITS America, FDOT, and the Florida Section ITE. Find out what’s going on in your organization at both the state and national levels.

Transpo2012 will provide four technical tracks. Following our Halloween theme, they are: 1) Bewitching Issues (planning); 2) Haunting Ideas (design); 3) Some Tricks and Treats (operations and maintenance); and 4) Seeing Into the Future (emerging technologies). Each of the many sessions in each track will provide local, state, and national experience and expertise from leaders in their fields.

In addition, Tuesday morning will feature a breakout session focused on incident management/emergency management. Learn about this very important facet of our industry from the people who actually do it. Then, in the afternoon, go on the technical tour to the SouthWest Interagency Facility for Transportation (SWIFT) SunGuide® Center. See how one of the state’s newest transportation assets helps to control traffic and provide incident responses throughout southwest Florida. Also see a rollover demonstration and a rapid incident scene clearance demonstration.

One of the highlights of every Transpo is the Exhibit Hall and Transpo2012 will be no different. Come see the latest and the greatest that our industry can provide to help us meet our goals in operations and safety.

Tuesday night will include our Awards Banquet, providing an opportunity for ITS Florida and the Florida Section ITE to recognize their accomplishments and shining stars.

Wednesday will feature a plenary session on Financing Transportation. Come learn how the national experts predict we will continue to fund our industry’s growth.

ITS Florida Awards

The ITSFL Board of Directors is seeking nominations for the 2012 ITSFL Awards, which will be presented at the Transpo2012 Awards Banquet on October 30, 2012. Award nominations are due by September 1, 2012.

Following is a description of the awards qualifications:

ITSFL Member of the Year Award - This award is presented yearly and recognizes outstanding achievement as an organization for an ITS program, project, or other accomplishments that are of significant benefit to the transportation industry and to the traveling public during this calendar year. The award can be for any public- or private-sector member of ITSFL. The primary criteria for award consideration is that the work provides (is providing) improved transportation for Floridians.

The criteria for nomination and selection are: (1) the work is completed or about to be operational by Transpo2012; (2) the work is of major significance to improve transportation in Florida (3) the work is a major innovation utilizing any aspect of ITS; or (4) the work is of state or national significance.

ITS Professional of the Year Award - This award is presented yearly and recognizes an ITSFL organizational member's representative(s) (although generally one person per year), who has contributed significantly to the ITS community during this calendar year. The person nominated should be noted for contributing to the ITS mission/goals of ITSFL.

The criteria for this award include: (1) person has contributed to the ITS mission; (2) person has been instrumental in project management, project completion, project planning, development of planning, financial, or other strategies; and (3) person has had a key role in some significant program or project, which may include activities of ITSFL itself.

ITSFL President's Award - This individual award recognizes superior career achievements in ITS and extraordinary service to ITSFL and may not necessarily be awarded annually. This is ITSFL's highest award, and it should be given only for truly superlative performance and accomplishment.

ITS Champion Award - This award may be given to an individual (ITSFL member or not), who has made significant contributions to advance the cause of ITS in Florida. This award is given only for rare and conspicuous service.

Certificate of Outstanding Achievement - This award is "open-ended" and may be given by ITSFL for outstanding service by individuals or organizational units. Past awards have been given to individuals who have performed superior service, for example, as chairs of ITSFL conferences, to FDOT Districts for deploying new, integrated transportation management centers, and for individuals who have provided outstanding service, such as volunteers serving ITS conferences.

Honor Roll - ITSFL occasionally identifies a person in the transportation business who has greatly contributed to ITS during their career. Persons who have retired, or who are about to retire, are considered candidates. Any member may nominate a candidate for the ITSFL Honor Roll with a letter describing their accomplishments and contributions.

Awards Selection Process

The ITSFL Board of Directors approves all final award decisions. Recommendations for the awards should be emailed to jesus.martinez@swri.org and copied to itsflorida@itsflorida.org. You may nominate an individual, including yourself, an organization, or both. Please enter your submission by attaching a Microsoft® Word document with the email subject header: ITSFL Awards. Your submission should not exceed three pages. A nomination form is available if you prefer to use it. Please contact ITSFL at itsflorida@itsflorida.org to obtain the form. Nominations are not required to be submitted on the ITSFL form and can be typed in the nominator's own style.

Sandra Beck at ITSFlorida@ITSFlorida.org can provide any additional information you require regarding the awards nominations.

This article was provided by Mr. Jay Calhoun of Gannett-Fleming (jcalhoun@gfnet.com) and Mr. Carlton Urban of Albeck Gerken (curban@albeckgerken.com).

If you are interested in providing an article to ITS Florida for publication in The Disseminator, please contact Ms. Sandy Beck at itsflorida@itsflorida.org or Ms. Erika Birosak at erika.birosak@transcore.com.

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District Six Improves Incident Management Efforts in Monroe County

By Javier Rodriguez, FDOT District Six

The Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Monroe County Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Team recently unveiled their annual program figures for Fiscal Year 2011/2012 (FY 11/12).

The team, which was formed in 2009, reported substantial improvements in all aspects of performance, such as events managed, traveler information, and system reliability. The improvements came as a result of the increased coordination between the team and area representatives throughout the year. They built upon their previous work and continued establishing communications with partner agencies, identifying points of contacts, and developing procedures on how to improve incident management efforts in the area. Some of these efforts included identifying dates of high traffic volume, coordinating post incident analysis meetings for major crashes, and regularly communicating with the National Weather Service. As a result of their work, the team reported a 35 percent increase in events managed, from 313 events in FY 10/11 to 482 events in FY 11/12. Traveler information efforts also rose. An average of 42 percent more messages were posted onto the county's dynamic message signs, with an average of 278 monthly messages posted from June 2010 to June 2011, as compared to an average of 396 monthly messages posted for the same period in 2011 and 2012. The team also continued using the Florida 511 traveler information system to compliment awareness efforts, posting more than 1,200 events and three floodgate messages for major incidents on that system.

In addition to the improved coordination, the team's performance was also made possible in part by the network upgrades completed to the county's intelligent transportation systems (ITS) communications infrastructure. The District added leased fiber lines to supplement the county's wireless-based ITS network and then divided it into three separate networks covering Key Largo, Marathon, and Key West to avoid county-wide system interruptions. As a result, ITS devices were available more than 96 percent of the time and thus allowed traffic operators at the SunGuide® Transportation Management Center (TMC) in Miami-Dade County to monitor area traffic more consistently than before. The network's improved reliability will be especially helpful during the 2012 hurricane season especially since US-1 serves as Monroe's evacuation route.

The team will continue to build on their performance through the upcoming fiscal year. They recently hosted their Annual TIM Meeting and identified new milestones to further enhance improvements made during the FY 11/12 time period.

For information, please contact Mr. Rodriguez at (305) 407-5341 or e-mail to Javier.Rodriguez2@dot.state.fl.us.

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District Six DMS message.

Word Challenge Answer

T N E M O C

T O T

N E E W O L V H

Keep C O C T with ITS!

Editorial Corner

By Paul Clark, *FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations*

Recently the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Statewide Traffic Incident Management (TIM) team had the opportunity to meet in Orlando, Florida. This was the first face-to-face meeting of the TIM team, dedicated to discussing TIM and Road Ranger issues, in over three years. It was a great opportunity to come together and discuss issues that need to be addressed to make statewide improvements to our processes and procedures; it allowed the team to come together and promote creativity and innovation that keep Florida on the leading edge.

One item covered was performance measures. While we have been working on Road Ranger performance measures, this meeting allowed us to review proposals and determine the direction we need to take as a state. Although we all use the same software for tracking, SunGuide® software, there are subtle differences in how we record the data at the transportation management centers. To ensure consistent, predictable, and repeatable data, some of the issues we addressed, include:

- Providing well-defined measures and terms;
- Differentiating between numbers of vehicles, zones, beats, hours of coverage, lane miles, etc., which helps to ensure the reader is getting the total programmatic picture;
- Developing a statewide dashboard application for Road Ranger performance measures; and
- Modifying Road Ranger procedures to reflect changes.

The next area of discussion was the Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) program. This program, originally began by Florida's Turnpike Enterprise, is now utilized by most Districts. There was a discussion related to the requirements for RISC contractors. Since the program is maturing, the team will be reviewing the RISC contractual documents to ensure they are still accurate. There were also discussions to ensure that our partners understand what and when RISC should be used. The development of training materials for our partners is also a priority to ensure that everyone understands the clearance and opening of travel lanes and its importance. Other issues discussed regarding RISC were:

- RISC isn't about wreckers – it's about clean-up.
- The Florida Highway Patrol does not have the authority to activate RISC in all of the Districts that have it.



- Responders need to understand it's not about the responsible party, but the traveling public.
- A best practice identified is for Districts to have a representative on scene for each RISC incident, if possible.

Many other items were discussed and will need to be addressed by the team. Some of the items include:

- Major Incident Debrief,
- Road Ranger Incident Responder Survey,
- Spill Mitigation Tip Card,
- Road Ranger Recognition Process, and
- Open Roads Policy.

In today's society we easily address technology and change; it's just part of everyday life. Technology allows us to video conference, which has just become the new standard for meetings. But when we have an opportunity to meet face-to-face, we need to take full advantage of it. This time together allows the team to strengthen bonds amongst members. While video conferencing might be today's standard, meeting together allows for a more concentrated effort on the issues at hand.

For information, please contact Mr. Clark at (850) 410-5607 or email to Paul.Clark@dot.state.fl.us.

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Announcements

Transpo2012: Read All About It!

Did you read about Transpo2012 on page 8? If you didn't, you should. There's a lot going on at Transpo2012 and you will want to be there!



ITS Florida would like to invite you to Transpo2012 at the Bonita Springs Hyatt Regency Coconut Point, Bonita Springs, Florida, on October 28-31, 2012. Program and planning committees are already busy organizing an outstanding lineup of exhibits, demonstrations, and technical sessions that will build on topics driving the ITS industry. Please plan to attend this premier conference October 28 – 31, 2012.

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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

Jerry Ausher, DTOE
Peter Vega, ITS
FDOT District 2 Traffic Operations
2198 Edison Avenue
Jacksonville, FL 32204
(904) 360-5630

District 3

Jared Perdue, 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
Nathan Ruckert, ITS (Interim)
FDOT District 5 Traffic Operations
719 S. Woodland Blvd., MS 3-562
DeLand, FL 32720-6834
(386) 943-5310

District 6

Omar Meitin, DTOE
Rory Santana, ITS
FDOT District 6
1000 NW 111th Avenue, MS 6203
Miami, FL 33172
(305) 470-5312

District 7

Gary Thompson, DTOE
Chester Chandler, ITS
FDOT District 7 Traffic Operations
11201 N. McKinley Dr.
Tampa, FL 33612
(813) 615-8600

Florida's Turnpike Enterprise

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

FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Mission and Vision Statements



Mark Wilson

State Traffic Engineer
(850) 410-5600

Elizabeth Birriel

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

To be named

Deputy State Traffic Engineer - Systems
(850) 410-5617

Paul Clark

Incident Management and
Commercial Vehicle Operations
(850) 410-5607

Fred Heery

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

Physical Address:

Rhyn Building
2740 Centerview Drive
Suite 3-B
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Mailing Address:

Burns Building
605 Suwannee Street
MS 36
Tallahassee, FL 32399

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