

SUNGUIDE® DISSEMINATOR

Florida Department of Transportation's Traffic Engineering and Operations Newsletter

Leon County-City of Tallahassee Public Safety Complex Opens

By Lee Smith, FDOT District Three Body text

City of Tallahassee and Leon County officials hosted the grand opening ceremony for the Leon County-City of Tallahassee Public Safety Complex. The 90,000-square foot multi-purpose facility is located on approximately ten acres in Tallahassee at the intersection of Easterwood Drive and Weems Road and is designed to withstand winds from a Category 3 hurricane or F4 tornado.

The focal point of this state-of-the-art complex is the Tallahassee Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) for the new Interstate 10 (I-10) freeway management system (FMS), which will also serve as the control center for the City of Tallahassee's advanced transportation management system (ATMS) for traffic signals. The most noticeable feature of the RTMC is the substantial video wall that provides the capability of monitoring traffic along I-10 and many local roadways throughout the region.



Video wall in the RTMC portion of the Leon County-City of Tallahassee Public Safety Complex.

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The SunGuide Disseminator is a publication of:
Florida Department of Transportation
Traffic Engineering and Operations Office
605 Suwannee Street, MS 36
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450
(850) 410-5600
<http://www.dot.state.fl.us>

In addition to the transportation management aspects of the Public Safety Complex, a number of key safety-related agencies will now be collocated, including the Emergency Communications Center, which provides dispatch services for the Leon County Sheriff's Office and Tallahassee Police Department; Leon County Emergency Medical Services; Tallahassee Fire Department Administration; and the Leon County Emergency Operations Center.

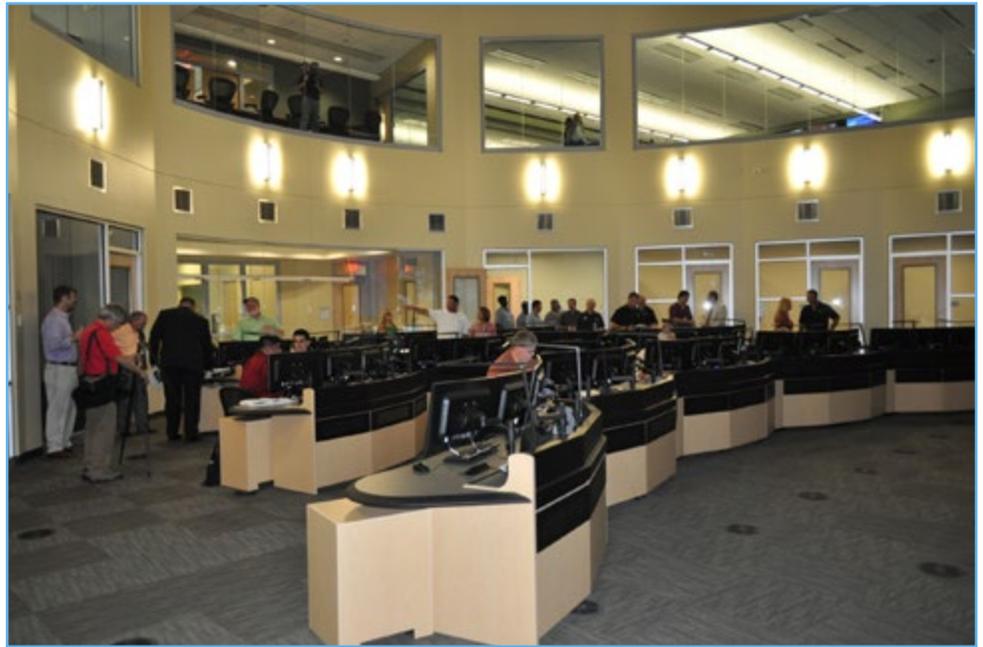
The transportation component of the Public Safety Complex resulted from a partnership between the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the City of Tallahassee, when a Joint Participation Agreement (JPA) was executed in June 2008, under which the city agreed to administer the design, establishment, operation, and maintenance of the Tallahassee I-10 FMS and the associated RTMC. This agreement contributed funding from FDOT's Ten-Year Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Cost Feasible Plan towards the Public Safety Complex in order to create an integrated, interoperable ITS deployment for the I-10 corridor. The two parties to the agreement also recognized that a mutually beneficial scenario could be attained by collocating the regional control function of FDOT's FMS for I-10 with the City of Tallahassee's ATMS for traffic signals for local roadways.

The I-10 FMS is deployed along an 18-mile segment of I-10 (from approximately mile marker 192 to mile marker 210) and extends into adjacent Gadsden County to provide coverage of the U.S. 90 interchange west of the Tallahassee metropolitan area. The deployment includes 25 traffic monitoring cameras at approximate one-mile increments, 58 traffic incident detection stations at approximate half mile increments, eight dynamic message signs strategically located approaching interchanges, a weather information system, and a fiber optic communications cable backbone throughout the limits of the project. This system provides an overall integrated network between the RTMC, major local roadways, and I-10, resulting in more efficient monitoring of travel conditions and increased safety on area roads for motorists in the Tallahassee area.

Under the terms of this JPA, FDOT has committed up to \$8.0 million towards the cost of establishing the RTMC within the Public Safety Complex, and approximately \$8.0 million towards the cost of the FMS deployment along I-10.

For information, please contact Mr. Smith at (850) 415-1504 or e-mail to Lee.Smith@dot.state.fl.us.

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Inside the RTMC.



The Leon County-City of Tallahassee Public Safety Complex.

Moment of Humor!



Hi -Yo Florida! The Road Ranger rides!

District One Trains First Responders in SHRP 2 National TIM Responder Training

By Bill Fuller, FDOT

In 2005, Congress authorized the second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP 2) as part of the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users to investigate better ways to improve the safety, renewal, reliability, and capacity of the nation's highway system. In pursuit of these goals, SHRP 2 training was developed by the partner organizations – Transportation Research Board, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the National Research Council.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One's Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Team, and Florida Highway Patrol Troop F recognized the need for this training and, with our partners, coordinated the training of 295 first responders over six days in 12 four-hour training sessions in

June. Special thanks go out to the Manatee Technical Institute-Criminal Education Center in Bradenton and to the Swift SunGuide® Center in Fort Myers for providing ample space to hold classroom instruction and areas for role-playing table top exercises designed to practice maintenance of traffic at a crash site. By rehearsing together, multi-agency first responders learned the proper measures designed to maintain traffic through a crash scene, which saves responder lives and reduces the chance of secondary crashes.

This multi-agency TIM training is a national program that equips responders with a common set of core competencies and assists them in achieving the TIM National Unified Goals and in strengthening TIM programs. The training curriculum includes topics such as:

- Responder Safety
- Statistics
- Standards and Terminology
- Quick Clearance
- Notification and Response
- Role of Dispatchers and Traffic Control Center Operators
- Differentiate between 'Move It' and 'Work It' incidents
- Responders parking at the Scene
- Situational Awareness
- Nighttime Emergency Lighting
- ANSI 107 Standard Highway Safety Vest Requirement
- Initial Scene Size up
- Command Responsibilities under ICS
- Public Information Officer
- Diversion Routes
- Staging Areas
- Hazmat and Non-hazmat Spills
- Hybrid Electric and Electric Vehicle Crash Response
- Medical Helicopter Operations
- Efficient and Effective Crash Investigation
- Traffic Management
- Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices

- Traffic Control Zones
- Removal and Laws related to Quick Clearance
- Incident Termination Cleanup
- Hands On Table-Top Activity of Mock Incidents

FHWA has set an ambitious target to reach over one million responders over the next ten years with this multi-disciplinary training course. To assist in this goal the District One TIM Teams are planning SHRP-2 sessions in the Polk County area and will be looking for first responders from fire, law enforcement, emergency medical services, and other transportation agency partners to join in the effort to promote “Best Practices” of Traffic Incident Management as a National Unified Goal.

For more information contact Mr. Fuller at (239) 225-9815 or email at William.Fuller@dot.state.fl.us, and visit us at <http://www.swftim.org>.



FDOT District Seven SHRP-2 training.

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Bridge Wind Speed Monitoring on the FDOT Statewide ITS Network

By Randy Pierce, FDOT, and Brian Kopp, Ph.D., The Semaphore Group, Inc.

In 2012, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Two, with the assistance of the Central Office Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Program, embarked on a pilot project to provide bridge wind speed monitoring. Since then, FDOT has installed wind speed monitoring equipment at 22 bridges in the Jacksonville, Florida area. Each bridge has an ultrasonic wind speed and wind direction instrument, a solar panel for power, a data-logger to manage the wind speed data, and a satellite transmitter. These devices monitor wind conditions at the level that vehicles are moving on the bridges. They report in every hour and can also allow reporting in real-time when they measure a high wind condition. The equipment sends this data to FDOT using a free satellite service provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).



Satellite earth station at Lake City.

In June 2013, FDOT achieved a major milestone in this pilot project. Through FDOT’s ITS Program, Central Office commissioned primary and back-up satellite earth stations that now make it possible for FDOT District transportation management centers (TMC) to view bridge wind speed data without using the Internet or any outside telecommunications services. Previously, FDOT had to rely on NOAA to collect data at their satellite earth stations in Maryland and Virginia and provide it to the TMCs. If Internet service was not available, as is the case most times during a hurricane or tropical storm, then real-time wind speed data was not available. Since wind speed data is needed in Florida when the Internet is most likely to fail, FDOT elected to install two earth stations to provide connectivity on the ITS network.

With completion of satellite earth stations in Lake City and Tallahassee, the wind speed monitoring equipment can now send data to FDOT using a free satellite service, the Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite (GOES) in orbit over the Atlantic Ocean, provided by NOAA. The earth stations consist of satellite antennas, satellite receiver equipment, database servers, and Intranet web site servers that operate on the statewide ITS network. The earth station installed at Lake City is a strategic hub for the statewide ITS network at the District Two radio shop where fiber and microwave services from all over the state come together and connect. This is an inland site and has the lowest hurricane wind rating of any area in the state. The Tallahassee earth station is installed at FDOT's Traffic Engineering Research Laboratory, which is also on the statewide ITS network and provides a back-up site.

FDOT is making final improvements to the software and it should be ready for deployment at the TMCs in summer 2013. FDOT is already looking to the future, planning improvements, and making changes that will increase the system's functionality and versatility. Several FDOT Districts, some local TMCs (such as Bay County), and some other state departments of transportation have expressed an interest in this system. The improvements FDOT is planning will help ensure the bridge wind speed monitoring project can grow easily and support all of the TMCs in the state, providing critical wind speed data during hurricanes and tropical storms even when the public communications infrastructure may not be there.

For information, please contact Mr. Pierce at (850) 410-5608 or e-mail to Randy.Pierce@dot.state.fl.us.

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New Contracts in Place to Improve Florida's Turnpike Incident Management

By Michael Washburn, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise

Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) issued new Road Ranger and Specialty Towing and Roadside Repair (STARR) contracts this spring that continue to serve Florida Department of Transportation's priorities of customer service and safe, quick clearance of incidents from travel lanes.

Road Ranger

FTE kicked-off a new five-year Road Ranger contract on February 15, 2013, for patrol service on the 312-mile Florida's Turnpike Mainline from Florida City to Wildwood, including the Sawgrass Expressway in Broward County. FTE awarded the contract, which includes complete replacement of the previous Road Ranger fleet with 19 new and upgraded vehicles as well as improvement of the Road Ranger capability with a new vehicle-type mix, to Florida Turnpike Services, a private vendor.

During the previous contract, nine utility pickups, two wreckers patrolling Broward and Orange Counties, and a single incident response truck provided Road Ranger coverage for the Turnpike. The new fleet will improve safety and quick clearance capabilities through the addition of three wreckers and a second incident response truck. Once the fleet transition is completed, scheduled by the end of August, Road Ranger relocation tow capabilities will be available 24/7 throughout South Florida's tri-county area and into Martin County as well as Orange County in Central Florida. The two incident response trucks are larger, enclosed utility pickups that carry additional maintenance of traffic and clearance equipment as well as a message board instead of an arrow board, and will provide patrol coverage in Miami-Dade and Osceola Counties.

The focus of the State Farm Safety Patrol Road Rangers is to safely and quickly remove incidents and debris from the roadway as well as provide basic assistance Florida's Turnpike customers whose vehicles have become disabled. This includes furnishing motorists with a limited amount of fuel, assisting with tire changes, and helping with other types of minor vehicle repairs. In 2012, Florida's Turnpike State Farm Safety Patrol Road Rangers provided 130,160 assists to Florida commuters, motorists, and visitors. This included assistance at 5,398 crash scenes and clearing 47,236 pieces of dangerous debris from travel lanes. Courtesy assist totals to travelers also included 15,491 tire assists and 8,591 gas calls.

Florida's Turnpike Mainline and the Sawgrass Expressway have 12 established patrol zones. Road Rangers patrol Florida's Turnpike Mainline 24/7 in metro areas and an average of 14 hours daily in rural areas. Each vehicle is outfitted with state law enforcement system 800 MHz radio communications, cellular phones, and an automatic vehicle locator that utilizes a global position satellite transponder for communication with the FTE's transportation management center. Annual training of quick clearance techniques and initiatives is mandated for all Road Ranger operators and supervisors.

Road Ranger service patrols are also provided through separate contracts along the FTE's Toll 417/Central Florida GreeneWay, Toll 589/Veterans Expressway, Toll 429/Western Beltway, and Toll 528/Beachline Expressway.

STARR

The STARR program continues to be a significant asset in FTE's traffic incident management program. New contracts with six private towing vendors were finalized in June and July to provide tow and repair services on Florida's Turnpike Mainline and Sawgrass Expressway.

The STARR program assists in meeting FTE's goal of providing safe and quick clearance of traffic incidents utilizing dedicated contracted tow companies to respond to Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) calls for incidents or motorist services on assigned zones of the Turnpike. The private tow vendors are committed to provide contractual response times for light duty wreckers that range from 20 to 30 minutes in urban areas and to 40 minutes in rural areas.



FTE incident management.

Launched in June 2009, the STARR program provides fee-based light- and medium-duty towing and minor vehicle repairs to FTE customers. Through quick and safe response to and clearance of traffic incidents of varying severity levels, STARR vendors contribute to the safety of customers and incident responders. For calendar year 2012, STARR vendors responded to 7,099 FHP-dispatched calls. Vendors met the required quick response timeframes more than 88 percent of the time, with an average response time of 20 minutes, 3 seconds. Through their prompt and professional actions, STARR operators help minimize roadside exposure and the potential for secondary incidents, which are an all-too common occurrence on limited-access roadways.

The STARR program is a key component of Turnpike's efforts to increase travel time reliability and improve service and safety to our customers. The Towing and Recovery Association of America certifies STARR personnel and they receive training to work safely under high-speed traffic conditions. STARR service wreckers and facilities are inspected to meet STARR specifications, and authorized STARR service vehicles are identified by an FTE decal. Six different STARR vendors selected through a competitive Request for Proposal process provide service in ten defined sectors. Each awarded contract is incentivized as a one-year contract with up to three one-year renewals, depending on performance. STARR information and maximum towing rates and fees are published on FTE's web site.

STARR vendors also provide services to assist FHP and FTE during a storm evacuation or other major event, and are integral to the Turnpike's response plan. STARR vendors, as part of the FTE emergency management team, are committed to mobilizing and staging tows and wreckers along the Turnpike to facilitate evacuation traffic flow.

The perception of the STARR program by FTE customers has improved greatly since the program's inception. This can be seen by the number of positive Customer Comment Cards received in 2012. During the year, FTE customers mailed in 514 Customer Comment Cards, of which 513 were positive. The vast majority of scores indicated that FTE customers are "Very Satisfied" with the service the program provides. Considering the circumstances involved when a customer has to deal with a tow operator, this overwhelming positive response is one indicator of the success of the STARR program.

For information, please contact Mr. Washburn at (954) 934-1621 or e-mail to Michael.Washburn@dot.state.fl.us.

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Exploring Safety

By Joseph Santos, FDOT Safety Office

In previous newsletters, I shared a general overview of national and state transportation safety efforts with you. The efforts mentioned included national efforts through legislation efforts (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century – MAP-21) and state efforts through the *Florida Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)*. The efforts of the *SHSP* bring together all of Florida's safety partners to focus on the 4Es (engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency medical services) of safety and includes the following emphasis areas: aggressive driving, intersection crashes, vulnerable road users (pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists), lane departure crashes, impaired driving, at-risk drivers (aging road users and teens), distracted driving, and traffic data. This month I would like to highlight some key excerpts from the 2012 *SHSP* on impaired driving.



Impaired Driving was identified as one of three Continuing Priority Areas in Florida's 2006 Strategic Highway Safety Plan. The SHSP Steering Committee's rationale for this decision was that these three areas received sufficient resources, already were being addressed in a comprehensive fashion, and their inclusion would be redundant and reduce the focus on the four selected emphasis areas.

In 2008, a review of the impaired crash data showed crashes, fatalities, and injuries remained constant from 2005 to 2008. The State felt more should be done and requested the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration conduct a technical assessment of Florida's impaired driving program. This assessment highlighted the programs and activities making a positive difference but also indicated areas for improvement. Based on the assessment, the State formed the Florida Impaired Driving Coalition (FIDC) which developed a comprehensive strategic plan that focused on many of the recommendations in the assessment. While the impaired driving numbers began to decrease in 2009, the SHSP Executive Committee felt more attention on the impaired driving problem was needed and added the issue as one of the eight emphasis areas for the 2012 SHSP update.

The FIDC was formed to identify and prioritize the State's most pressing impaired driving issues; review proven strategies; develop a strategic plan to serve as the blueprint for programs, funding, and potential legislative strategies that maximize the State's ability to reduce these crashes; and oversee implementation of the Impaired Driving Strategic Plan (IDSP), which was released in September 2011. The accomplishments from the FIDC along with strategies from the IDSP are key components to the SHSP. The IDSP specifically focuses on seven emphasis areas that are focused on reducing impaired driving fatalities and serious injuries. The seven emphasis areas are as follows:

- *Improve DUI Enforcement;*
- *Improve Prosecution and Adjudication of Impaired Driving Cases;*
- *Improve the DUI Administrative Suspension Process;*
- *Improve Prevention, Public Education, and Training;*
- *Improve the Treatment System (i.e., DUI programs, treatment providers, and healthcare providers);*
- *Improve Data Collection and Analysis; and*
- *Enhance Impaired Driving Legislation.*

The lead "E" selected for the Impaired Driving Emphasis Area to ensure the action plan is focused and stays on track is Enforcement.

As noted in the *SHSP*, the Florida Impaired Driving Coalition with the *Impaired Driving Strategic Plan* is the driving force in leading implementation efforts to address impaired driving. Awareness of the coalition and plan increases not only awareness of the issue, but allows an opportunity to team efforts in addressing this issue. More information concerning the Florida *SHSP* can be found online at <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/safety/SHSP2012/SHSP-2012.shtm>.

In my next month, I will cover the first of a series of "education" related *SHSP* emphasis areas – at-risk drivers / teen drivers.

For information, please contact Mr. Santos at (850) 245-1502 or e-mail to Joseph.Santos@dot.state.fl.us.

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District Six Publishes 95 Express Annual Report

By Javier Rodriguez, FDOT District Six

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Section recently completed its annual report for the 95 Express Program. This report outlines the project's operational components, such as tolling, transit, revenue, customer service, and overall performance for fiscal year (FY) 2011/2012. The report shows 95 Express continued to improve the overall operational performance of I-95. Customers, including transit riders, choosing to use the express lanes have significantly increased their travel speed during the morning (AM) peak (6-9am, southbound) and evening (PM) peak (4-7pm, northbound) periods – from an average speed in the high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane of approximately 20 miles per hour (MPH) (prior to program implementation) to a monthly average of 63 MPH and 56 MPH in the southbound and northbound directions, respectively. Drivers traveling via the general purpose lanes have also experienced a significant peak period increase in average travel speed – from an average of approximately 15 MPH (southbound) and 20 MPH (northbound) to a monthly average of 50 MPH and 42 MPH, respectively. All of these speeds had nominal fluctuations since the end of FY 2011 and, in fact, have stayed relatively constant since the opening of the lanes.



95 Express toll lanes.

Probably more important than the improved speeds when it comes to operational performance are the improvements to the travel time reliability on the facility. Average volume along the express lanes in the AM and PM peak periods were over 9,000 vehicles (on average, 33 percent of the total I-95 traffic during peak periods); a 9.2 percent increase in volume over FY 2011. These vehicles were traveling at speeds greater than 45 MPH during the AM peak period 99.7 percent of the time and 91.2 percent of the time in the northbound direction during the PM peak period. The federal requirement for HOV to high-occupancy toll lane conversion is a minimum of 90percent for 45 MPH speeds during the peak period.

During fiscal year 2012, 95 Express Lanes also:

- Remained open to motorists 94.5 percent of the time, with 2.1 percent closed due to incidents; the balance, 3.3 percent, was related to planned construction and maintenance activities;
- Serviced approximately 20.4 million vehicle trips (107 percent actual versus projected forecast) of which over 30,000 per month, on average, were registered toll-exempt trips by nearly 8,830 registered vehicles;
- Had total revenue of approximately \$16.8 million (113 percent actual versus projected forecast);
- Charged tolls that ranged from \$0.25 to the \$7.00 maximum in both directions; the average monthly maximum toll charged was \$5.50 (southbound) and \$6.50 (northbound); approximately 85 percent of customers were charged \$2.45 and \$2.25 or less (southbound and northbound, respectively);
- Saw increased 95 Express bus ridership (transit) by an average of 170 percent since pre-95 Express:
 - February 2008 average daily boardings (Pre-95 Express) – 1,746
 - February 2010 average daily boardings (Phase 1 operational) – 2,638
 - June 2011 average daily boardings (end of FY 2011) – 4,286
 - FY 2012 average daily boardings – 4,718

Operationally, a minimum of one operator is dedicated to monitoring the corridor utilizing the dynamic pricing software – Express Lanes Manager – and closed-circuit television cameras, 24-hours per day, seven-days per week. Overall, operations and maintenance costs for the facility (i.e., transportation management center operations, incident management, service patrols, maintenance, etc.) were approximately \$8.6 million over the reporting period, including transit.

A survey completed during FY 2012 indicated that 31 percent of survey participants use 95 Express two to four times per week and 80.4 percent agree or strongly agree that the express lanes provide a more reliable trip than the I-95 general purpose lanes. Public information continued to have a major role in FY 2012 as well. 95 Express had nearly 40 media stories published or aired during the year as well as nine media interview days, helping to provide valuable information on 95 Express goals and

operations to the public. Furthermore, approximately 30 tours and nearly 290 public inquiries were answered regarding the project. The team also launched its public information campaign in support of the project's expansion to Broward County.

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

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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 12.

Enjoy
and
Good Luck!

SunGuide® Disseminator Word Challenge



Remember what was like before ITS?

A V I R I G I N

One of the states where NOAA has a satellite earth station.

T E F

STARR provides towing to these customers.

S A E E L A A S T L H

New Public Safety Complex is located in this city.

S M F

FDOT is committing approximately \$8 million for this on I-10.

ITS Florida Upcoming Events

By Sandy Beck on behalf of ITS Florida

August

- **ITS Florida's Board Meeting and Workshop*** will be held at the Manatee County Transportation Facility in Bradenton, **August 13-14**. This event will focus on strategic planning. A Call for Scholarship applications will be posted.

September

- **ITS Florida's Monthly Board Meeting** will be held via teleconference on **September 10**. There will be a call for nominations to serve on the ITS Florida 2014 Board of Directors.

October

- **ITS Florida TechForum2013*** will be held **October 9-11, 2013** at the Rosen Shingle Creek in Orlando, Florida. This is ITS Florida's Annual Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)/Transportation Technical Conference, which will combine ITS technical forum training with ITS Florida's Annual Meeting and the new United States Department of Transportation's ITS training course titled "Connected Vehicles 101." Presentation topics may include:

- Transportation Systems Management & Operations
- New ITS Technology Advancements
- Lessons Learned on ITS Installations
- Data Warehousing/Data Archiving
- Connected Vehicles
- Incident Management/ Emergency Management
- Managed Lanes
- ITS Standards
- Adaptive Signal Control

This technical conference also provides the opportunity for member companies that market ITS equipment to do a presentation.

- **Annual Awards Banquet on October 10.**

Register today at: http://fs16.formsite.com/ITSFlorida/ITS_Technical_Conference/index.html.

*Professional Development Hours (PDH) earned by attending the technical sessions or training, may be used to fulfill continuing education requirements for renewal of the PE license.

November/December

- **ITS Florida's Monthly Board Meeting** will be held via teleconference on **November 12**.
- **ITS Florida's Monthly Board Meeting** will be held via teleconference on **December 10**.

In addition to the ITS Florida Monthly Board Meetings in 2014, there are several **2014 Upcoming Events**.

- An **ITS Florida Technical Conference*** is proposed for **April 2014** (date to be announced).
- **ITS 3C Summit*** will be held in Mobile, Alabama, **September 14-17, 2014**. ITS Florida along with the Gulf Region Intelligent Transportation Society (GRITS) and ITS Georgia join forces to host a multi-state, multi-chapter conference on intelligent transportation systems. This event replaces the ITS Florida Transpo for 2014.

Sponsorship Opportunities:

The success of these events is due to your support. Please help continue to support these initiatives through your sponsorships:

- ITS Florida Calendar is a premier opportunity to have your organization featured on a monthly basis.
- ITS Florida Scholarship program awards well deserving students and technicians in transportation-related programs.
- ITS Florida Technical Forum Conference Sponsorships and Exhibitors* are key elements to a successful meeting.

Please contact Sandy Beck at ITSFlorida@ITSFlorida.org for additional information.

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Editorial Corner: FDOT Trade and Logistics Academy—It’s Not Just Another Class

By Paul Clark, FDOT Traffic Operations and Engineering

Recently I had the opportunity to attend the Florida Department of Transportation’s (FDOT) first Trade and Logistics Academy in Jacksonville at the University of North Florida. This three-day class allowed participants the ability to learn more about how transportation effects the day-to-day decision making processes of companies as well as the complexities of logistics and transportation management.

We started out by looking into supply chain management. I never realized how complex this process can be. Supply chain management is a wider concept than logistics in that it seeks to build upon the logistical framework and to achieve linkage and coordination between the processes of other entities involved.

I didn’t realize how much I take for granted that the item at the store is on the shelf when I want it; but there is an entire process to get it there. Generally, we just think of the finished product, but this class educated us on the entire process starting at the beginning with the raw materials being purchased and then shipped to a manufacturer where it is assembled, processed, or manufactured into the final product. Next, this final product has to be shipped to a distribution center and then to the point of sale. The supply chain is so dependent on receiving materials and products in a timely manner, and if it’s not recieved on time, it could cripple the entire process.

The next area we studied was transportation management. We looked at the different modes used to transport materials to manufactures and distribution centers. These included truck, rail, air, water, and pipeline. Each mode has different benefits and limitations and we learned about them. For example, if you were shipping computer hard drives to your manufacturing facility, you would probably use air due to its high reliability of fast delivery. This allows you to keep less inventory on the shelf since delivery is so quick.

The following table shows some of the strengths and limitations to each mode:

| | Truck | Rail | Air | Water | Pipeline |
|-------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| Strengths | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible • Fast and Versatile • Customer Service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High capacity • Low cost | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed • Freight protection • Flexibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High capacity • Low cost • International capabilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-transit storage • Efficiency • Low cost |
| Limitations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited capacity • High cost | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility • Inconsistent service • Damage rates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility • High cost • Low capacity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow • Accessibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow • Limited Network |

We also reviewed freight design considerations and how many different entities are involved. Under the United States Department of Transportation, you have the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Railroad Administration, Federal Transit Administration, and the Maritime Administration; each one is over a different. All these agencies have their own focus areas and tools that they provide, and you need them all to efficiently manage freight.

If you look at the domestic and international modal mix in Florida, you see that freight utilizes multiple modes: 73 percent utilize truck, 15 percent water, 12 percent rail, and less than 1 percent air. Research indicates that the mode of distribution choice in the supply chain is not likely to change dramatically in the next 15 years.

So what does this mean to FDOT? It means that we need to take a closer look at freight and the modes they are utilizing. We need to concentrate on that last mile to ensure that we can move goods from the port to the manufacture or distribution center, allowing companies to process freight more efficiently and, in the end, hopefully lower the overall cost to the consumer.

We, as a society, are so used to just going to the store, gas station, or wherever, and finding what we want on the shelf or at the pump. This class allowed me to understand what is associated with getting that product from initial purchase, to manufacturing,

and to the final customer. I believe it has also enlightened me that there are other considerations we need to look at when we are doing our day-to-day jobs—freight shouldn't be an afterthought, it should be a focal point.

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

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Announcements

Join Us in Welcoming Chris Lewis

The Traffic Engineering and Operations office is pleased to announce the appointment of Chris Lewis to the position of Highway Signing Program Specialist. Chris comes to us from the Office of Roadway Design. Prior to that, Chris was on the P.E. Training Program in District Three. Chris received his bachelors degree in Civil Engineering from Florida State University. Please help us welcome Chris to Traffic Operations Team.

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Word Challenge Answer

S M F
 E T F
 E E S S A H A L L A T
 A I N G R I V

was like before ITS?
 Remember what
 T R A F F I C

FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Mission and Vision Statements



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