



SUNGUIDE[®] DISSEMINATOR

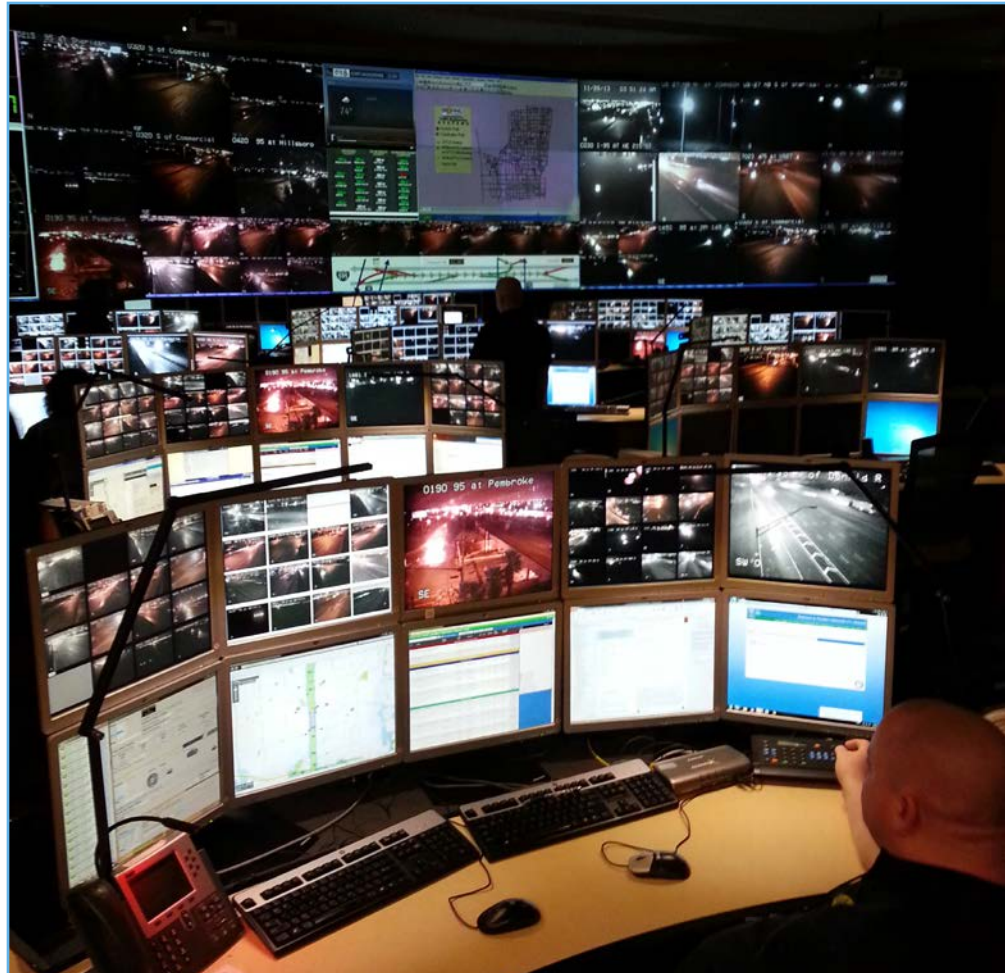
Florida Department of Transportation's Traffic Engineering and Operations Newsletter



Districts Host Media at TMCs Promoting 511 during Holiday Travel

By Gene Glotzbach, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations

'Tis the season for traffic on Florida's roadways. During the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's holidays, millions of Floridians and visitors took to the state's roadways. To help educate travelers about 511 during the holiday season, three Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Districts invited members of the media into their transportation management centers for a behind-the-scenes look at how FDOT helps keep traffic moving during the holidays and to offer safety tips for travelers.



The SMART SunGuide RTMC in Broward County hosted members of the media prior to the Thanksgiving holiday.

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The *SunGuide Dissemminator* 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>



Sgt. Mark Wysocky with the Florida Highway Patrol shares holiday travel safety tips during a media event held at the SMART SunGuide RTMC in Broward County prior to the Thanksgiving holiday weekend.

District Four hosted the media prior to the Thanksgiving holiday weekend on Tuesday, November 26, at the SMART SunGuide® Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) at the Broward County Traffic Engineering Division Building. In addition to having representatives from District Four on hand to speak with the media, the Florida Highway Patrol, AAA, 95 Express, and 595 Express also participated in the event. Members of the media received information on the number of travelers expected on Florida's roadways during the holiday weekend; how the 511 traveler information system can help travelers; how construction in the area may influence travel plans; and safety tips for holiday travelers.

Districts Two and Seven also hosted media at their RTMCs on Friday, December 20. Representatives from the Florida Highway Patrol and AAA joined FDOT spokespersons in sharing information on managing traffic during Christmas and New Year's travel and how 511 can be an invaluable resource for holiday travelers.

Additionally, District Two provided members of the media with a first look at the newly unveiled 22 cameras and eight dynamic message signs along the I-295 East Beltway, starting at Atlantic Boulevard and going north to the I-95 interchange. Representatives from the Road Ranger service patrol and the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization also participated in the District Two media event.

For information, please contact Mr. Glotzbach at (850) 410-5616 or e-mail to Gene.Glotzbach@dot.state.fl.us.

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ITS Deployment Underway on Airport Runway Expansion Project in District Four

By Daniel Smith, FDOT District Four



With the increased growth of air travel in southeast Florida, officials at the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (FLL), Broward County, and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) have embarked on a massive project to increase capacity, reduce flight delays, and keep up with increasing traffic demands in the area. Construction efforts for the Airport Runway Expansion Project broke ground on January 23, 2012, and work is expected to be substantially completed by the fall of 2014.

This estimated \$791 million dollar project is designed to benefit travelers by keeping delays at a minimum, reducing taxi time to and from terminals, and increasing safety. The infrastructure projects include construction of multiple bridges to support the extended runway and parallel taxiway as they pass over the Florida East Coast Railroad, US 1, the airport perimeter road, and associated airport access ramps. In all, six 800-foot-long underground spans will run under the new runway, which will rise about six stories at its east end. Two tunnels will serve US 1 northbound and southbound traffic; one will accommodate the railroad tracks; one will serve the service road; one will serve the airport entrance road; and one is for a future light-rail system.

Motorists, trains, and pedestrians will pass under the new runway through the tunnels, which will accommodate three lanes of traffic and will be 18 feet tall, high enough to accept the largest trucks. The new tunnels will also be equipped with ventilation systems, fire detection and suppression systems, emergency lighting, regular lighting, and intelligent transportation systems (ITS).

The Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) District Four ITS Program is fully supporting these efforts by providing 26 closed-circuit television cameras and two dynamic message signs (DMS) to provide operators at FDOT's District Four SMART SunGuide® Transportation Management Center in Fort Lauderdale with the ability to monitor traffic conditions and broadcast traveler information, such as road closures via the DMSs.

FDOT District Four is proud to be part of a project that further enhances regional traffic management efforts to keep southeast Florida moving.

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FDOT's Communications Trailer – Providing Versatility

By Randy Pierce, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations

The Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) communications trailer had a busy year in 2013. This WiFi®-enabled trailer was deployed for a training exercise and a flooding emergency in District Three. It is also assisting the federal government by providing a platform for a special application. Between deployments several systems on the trailer were upgraded or modified.

The communications trailer started with a deployment at Camp Blanding Florida for the federal, state, and local communications interoperability exercise, known as Operation Radar II. This event provided an opportunity for all of the agencies present to practice their communications capabilities. FDOT's communications trailer was used for several tasks, including day and night visual monitoring using the onboard cameras and mutual aid communications where two radios on different frequencies were connected together enabling federal and state agencies at the exercise to talk with each other and also to FDOT on the existing FDOT radio network.

During the summer of 2013, FDOT's communications trailer was deployed to monitor flooding along SR 77, near the I-10 interchange at Chipley, Florida. District

Three was concerned about closing the road and wanted to monitor the rising water levels adjacent to the road following a severe rain event. With the help of District Two personnel, the trailer was deployed quickly. District Three personnel wanted to monitor the scene using the onboard cameras, but from several different locations simultaneously. This posed a challenge for the communications trailer due to its bandwidth limits in the wireless Internet connections. Mark Nallick, the District Three intelligent transportation systems (ITS) local area network manager, suggested that the trailer camera video be transferred over the Internet to a District Three web server where District personnel could easily access it without overloading the trailer's Internet connection. This proved so successful that FDOT's Central Office is working on a permanent solution that would do the same thing for any District that needs to use the trailer.

When the trailer was not deployed in 2013, several improvements were made to the onboard systems. The motorized satellite antenna, which provides Internet access no matter where the trailer is deployed, was replaced. The original antenna had maintenance problems and the manufacturer had gone out of business. Fortunately,

FDOT had a spare satellite antenna system that was idle, so it was deployed on the trailer. Despite the versatility of the satellite-based Internet connection, it is limited in terms of connection speed. To improve Internet performance and to provide an alternate way to access the Internet, a cellular 4G modem was added to the trailer. In locations where there is 4G cellular service, this faster connection can be used as the primary means of connecting to the Internet while the satellite service will serve as a back-up.

The communications trailer weather station was upgraded so that it is compatible with the bridge wind speed sensor platforms deployed in District Two. This new weather station is being used for testing the bridge wind speed monitoring system, but also as a stand-alone weather station. The unit can report wind speed and direction as well as rain fall. The communications trailer already monitors temperature via its network monitoring equipment.

As the trailer has transitioned from a public WiFi service investigation tool to a full-time ITS and emergency operations support tool, the need to support sophisticated public WiFi access controls has diminished. The communications trailer will still provide secure WiFi



FDOT communications trailer deployment in District Three.

access to FDOT stakeholders and public safety personnel, but the remote access management associated with public WiFi service created a restriction in the ability of the trailer to support other applications. FDOT made the strategic decision to remove the management equipment, and this change is already helping expand the operational profile of the communications trailer. Recently FDOT was approached by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) with a request to deploy some of their equipment on the communications trailer. In the fall of 2013, FDOT worked closely with the FCC to help get their equipment installed and operational on the trailer. It is hoped this partnership will help FDOT to more efficiently manage their communications systems, while at the same time provide support to the FCC.

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Inside the TERL

By Alan El-Urfali, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations

FDOT TERL Phase II Campus Improvements

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Traffic Engineering Research Laboratory (TERL) campus grounds at Springhill Road in Tallahassee have seen many improvements since its inception in the 1970s. Changes at the TERL have been primarily due to the growth of Florida's transportation system and continuing technology innovations in direct response to the demand for better, faster, more efficient, and safer traffic control devices.

To meet new demands and increased needs for safe, controlled testing of traffic control devices, in early 2009, FDOT's Research Office funded the design and construction of a new signalized mast arm intersection (controlled by either a National Electrical Manufacturers Association [NEMA] TS2 or Type 170 controller), a 50-foot intelligent transportation systems (ITS) pole with camera lowering device, and a roadway with pedestrian and bicycle features. The project consisted of a two-lane, four-way intersection with a bike lane, sidewalk, and a mid-block crosswalk. FDOT's Central Office Roadway Design Office produced the construction plans and project construction began on September 25, 2009. FDOT's District Three Midway Construction Office managed the construction and completed the project on schedule and within budget on July 1, 2010. This project, dubbed "Phase I," was planned by traffic operations staff under the leadership of Mark Wilson to complement the existing span wire intersection, recently renovated by the City of Tallahassee signal construction crew. The new mast arm intersection expanded the TERL's capabilities by allowing evaluation of mast arm-related devices and attachment hardware that cannot be evaluated sufficiently on a span wire intersection. Phase I campus improvements included features that support as many testing and research scenarios as possible, including human factor research.

Planned improvements for Phase II are currently in the design and permitting stage with construction planned to begin in early May 2014. Campus improvements for Phase II include the following:

1. Rehabilitation and upgrades to the existing span wire intersection will include:
 - a. Realignment and extension of the southern approach;
 - b. Extension of the east approach and removal of old, existing, overgrown asphalt from long-abandoned areas near the southern end of the campus;



Older span wire intersection.



Newer mast arm intersection.

- c. Removal of obsolete signal/sign ground mounting structures near the southeast corner of the existing span wire intersection; this will be replaced with a new, improved structure that allows span wire and mast arm mounting hardware to be installed and evaluated at a convenient height without the need for a lift or bucket truck; and
- d. Installation of underground infrastructure, including pull boxes and a minimum of four 2-inch conduits to all corners of the intersection.

2. Installation of new pedestrian crosswalks for human factor research will include:
 - a. Test Bed #1 is planned as an uncontrolled approach with a refuge island, rectangular rapid flashing beacons, and overhead lighting; and
 - b. Test Bed #2 is planned as a controlled approach at a signalized intersection with enhanced features.
3. Rehabilitation and resurfacing of north – west road that runs along the back of the campus property, installation of sidewalk, and extension of underground utilities for power and communication.

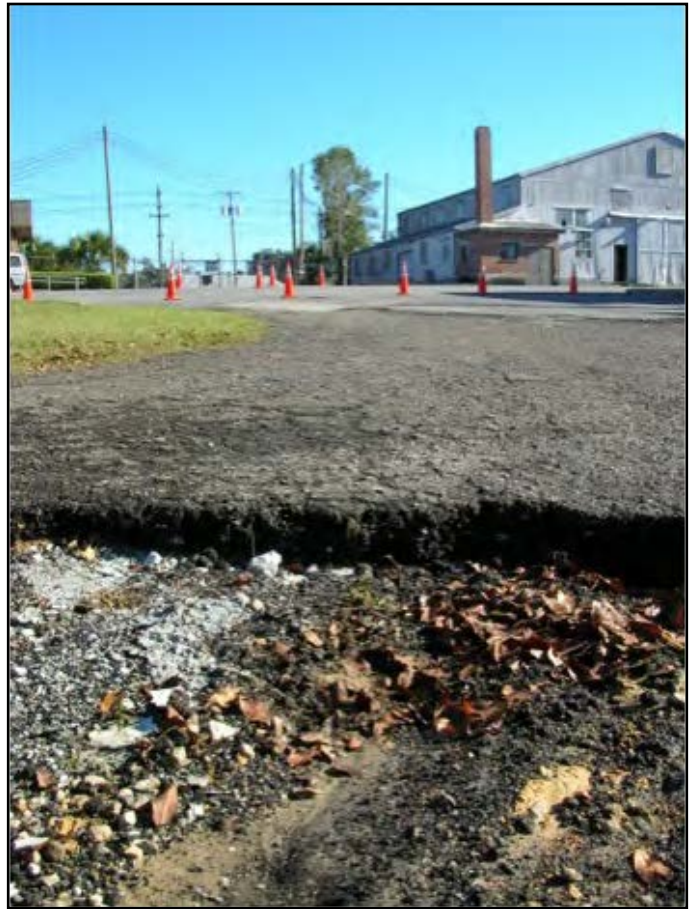
Since Phase II includes paving operations, FDOT will also use this project to mill and resurface parking areas throughout the campus that are in need of repair. Combining rehabilitation of the parking lots and other paved areas at the TERL with the Phase II project will yield a cost savings in comparison to performing multiple projects to achieve the same results. As part of the general rehabilitation of the campus, Phase II will also include:

- a. Milling, resurfacing, and restriping the front parking lot and rehabilitate existing pavement within the campus that is in need of repair; and
- b. Relocating the property front fence to enclose and secure additional areas.

TERL staff looks forward to the improved testing capabilities and general renovations that Phase II will provide. This infrastructure enhancement is a significant contributor to FDOT’s mission to provide a safe and uniform system of traffic control devices to the traveling public of Florida. Much appreciation goes out to the Research Office, Central Office Roadway Design Office, Traffic Operations ITS Program, and District Three for their significant contributions to this successful project!

For information, please contact Mr. El-Urfali at (850) 921-7361 or e-mail to Alan.El-Urfali@dot.state.fl.us.

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Examples of areas needing repair.



District Six Commemorates Five Years of Congestion Relief on 95 Express in Miami-Dade County

By Javier Rodriguez, FDOT District Six

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Six Office is commemorating the five-year anniversary of 95 Express in Miami-Dade County this month. The project was the first of its type in Florida and introduced a new approach to congestion management when it launched in December 2008. Since then, it has serviced more than 85 million vehicle trips on the highway and increased travel speeds for all drivers on both the express lanes and local lanes

District Six reconfigured the pre-existing highway and converted the former high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane to two high occupancy toll lanes in the northbound and southbound directions between downtown Miami and the Golden Glades Interchange. Congestion pricing was introduced to manage demand during peak times, while bus rapid transit service and travel demand incentives helped reduce the number of vehicles during morning and afternoon peak times. These improvements, in combination with ramp metering and enhanced incident management procedures, increased the highway's efficiency without the need for major construction or driver impact. As a result, express bus transit service expanded to five routes from Broward to Miami-Dade Counties increasing ridership by 286 percent since the project's launch. Additionally, drivers choosing to use the express lanes have significantly increased their travel speeds from an average of 20 miles per hour (MPH) in the former HOV lane to 62 MPH and 55 MPH in the northbound and southbound directions, respectively. Similarly, drivers traveling through the local lanes also enjoyed increased speeds from approximately 15 MPH (southbound) and 20 MPH (northbound) to a monthly average of 48 MPH and 40 MPH, respectively. These improvements represent a benefit increase of 300 percent for the express lanes and 200 percent for the local lanes.

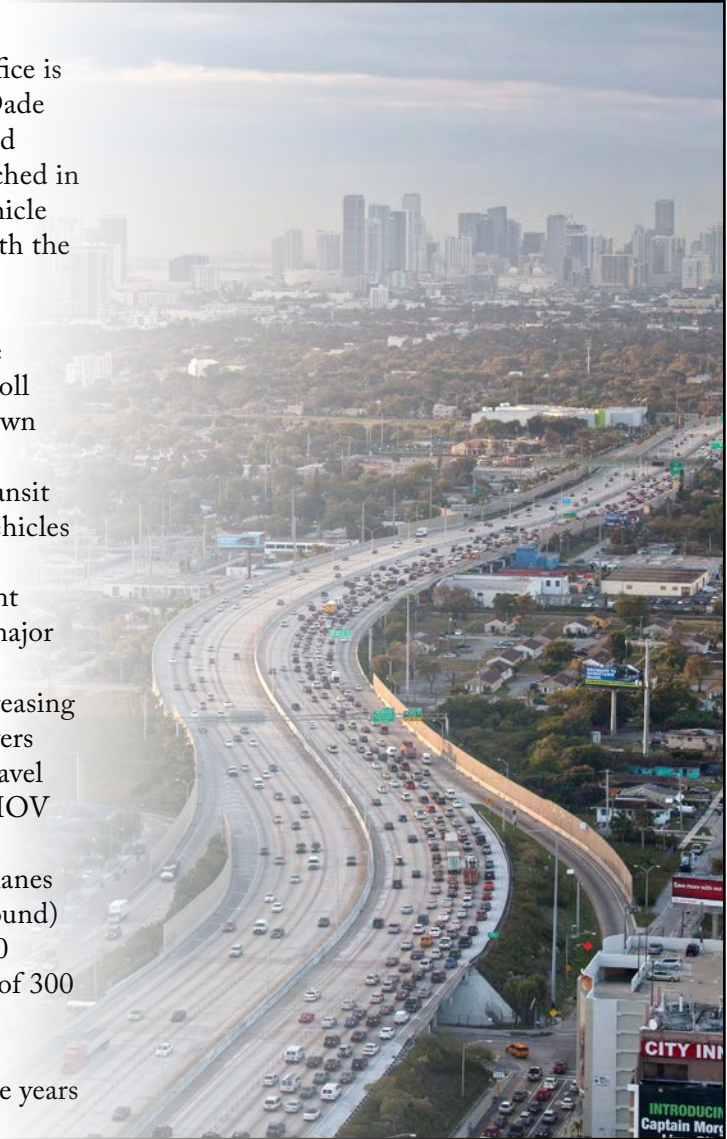
These benefits have remained at this level for the past five consecutive years despite increased traffic volumes. This sustainability is a result of the project's real-time traffic management. Operators at the SunGuide®

Transportation Management Center monitor the facility 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. They work with dedicated incident managers in the field to mitigate events and provide quick clearance along the express lanes and local lanes. In fiscal year 2012/2013, the facility experienced more than 1,700 incidents with an average clearance time for each of 15 minutes. Due to these resources, 95 Express boasts a 94.4 percent availability rate for fiscal year 2012/13. These benefits have been noticed by local drivers and past surveys revealed that over 78 percent of customers have reported faster travel times and approximately 80 percent feel that express lanes are more reliable.

The program's success and impact on travel efficiency has led to the creation of an entire regional network of express lanes in South Florida. Currently, 95 Express is being extended north to Davie Boulevard in Broward County to increase the reach of the program's benefits and is set to open in early 2015. Plans are in place to expand it northward to Palm Beach County. Additionally, I-595 Express is expected to open in March 2014 and both I-75 Express and Palmetto Express will begin construction in early 2014.

For information, please contact Mr. Rodriguez at (305) 470-5757 or e-mail to Javier.Rodriguez2@dot.state.fl.us.

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Renewing Florida's *Open Roads Policy*

By Paul Clark, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations

Since 2002, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) have had a policy regarding quick clearance for safety and mobility in the State of Florida. This policy focused on quick clearance of highway crashes and was formally called the *Open Roads Policy*. This policy has been a template around the state to establish local open road policies as well. After reviewing the policy, FDOT and FHP decided that it is time to update and recommit to the policy. The policy has lasted 11 years without modification showing how well the original authors did in creating this policy.

There have not been any real changes in what was proposed, but the team believed that there should be some information that shows why this policy is in place. We wanted to stress what quick clearance does for all concerned parties, the traveling public, and first responders. The original policy established that FHP and FDOT personnel should expedite the removal of vehicles, cargo, and debris from roadways on the state highway system, in an **URGENT MANNER**. The reason for this is to reestablish the safe and orderly flow of traffic following a motor vehicle crash or other traffic incident on Florida's roadways.

The policy still states that public safety is the highest priority and must be maintained on Florida's roadways before, during, and after traffic incidents. It also continues to recognize how the state is heavily dependent on commerce and free movement on the state highway system and how FDOT and FHP share in the responsibility to maintain the degree of order necessary for free movement. However, some of the reasons this policy is so important have been added. For example, approximately 25 percent of non-recurring congestion and their impacts on commerce can be minimized with sound traffic incident management practices by responding agencies. Additionally, an estimated five fire personnel, 12 police officers, and 60 tow truck operators are killed in struck-by incidents each year on the national level.

We all know that secondary crashes pose safety risks to incident responders and all motorists; quick clearance of traffic incidents promotes safety and vehicle removal, move-over laws, and quick clearance policies minimize exposure and the potential for secondary crashes. What we need to make sure everyone is aware of is that we realize that damage to vehicles or cargo may occur as a result of clearing the roadway on an urgent basis. But as long as reasonable attempts are made to avoid damage, the priority of responders is to safely restore traffic to normal conditions because traffic incident-related congestion has an enormous cost to society.



Road Ranger service patrol assisting disabled motorist.

The *Open Roads Policy* still establishes operating standards for both FDOT and FHP and is based on the philosophy that the state highway system will not be closed or restricted any longer than is absolutely necessary following a traffic crash or other roadway traffic incident. It states that FDOT and FHP will continually work together to ensure that the needs of motorists on state roadways are being met in the most professional, safe, and efficient manner. The key to this is to evaluate and continually update and modify operating policies, procedures, rules, and standards to assure they are consistent with this policy.

The goal of the *Open Roads Policy* remains the same and roadways will be cleared as soon as possible. It is also the goal of all agencies that all incidents be cleared from the roadway within 90 minutes of the arrival of the first responding officer. This goal is made with the understanding that more complex scenarios may require additional time for complete clearance.

In closing it is imperative that all responders realize the importance of quick clearance. While we realize that everyone has specific roles and responsibilities at an incident scene, the goal of ensuring that we work cooperatively with each other is paramount in the successful quick clearance of the roadway. While we are awaiting the final signatures on the revised Open Road Policy we ask that everyone start reviewing their internal policies to see where improvements to processes can be made. As soon as final signatures are gathered we will post the updated policy at www.dot.state.fl.us/trafficoperations/Traf_Incident/Traf_Incident.shtm.

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

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ITS Florida Update

By Sandy Beckon behalf of ITS Florida

ITS Florida Champion Of the Year Award – DARI VORCE

ITS Florida is pleased to announce the ITS Florida Champion of the Year Award recipient for 2013. This award is presented to an individual who has made significant contributions to advance the cause of intelligent transportation systems (ITS) in Florida. On December 10, 2013, Dari Vorce was awarded the ITS Florida Champion Award for her outstanding effort in construction engineering and inspection for ITS projects in the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) District Six. She has been a champion of the ITS industry since the beginning, even as ITS was just emerging and practices were still being standardized. Ms. Vorce has always gone above and beyond to understand the operational complexities of the ITS components in her projects and she helped establish this view as part of her department's culture.



Dari Vorce receiving the ITS Florida Champion Award.

ITS Florida 2014 Board of Directors

ITS Florida held its 2014 Board of Directors elections in November. The highly qualified candidates resulted in the following Board members for 2014:

Immediate Past President:	John Easterling VI, PE., PTOE, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise
President:	Gregg Letts, P.E., AECOM
Vice President:	Erika Birosak, TransCore*
Secretary:	Sara Calhoun, P.E., VIBE Engineering
Treasurer:	Connie Braithwaite, Econolite Control Products

Directors at Large:

Dr. Mohammed Hadi	Florida International University
Corey Quinn, P.E.	Orlando Orange Expressway Authority
Carlton Urban, P.E.	World Fiber
Adam Moser, P.E.	Gresham Smith and Partners
Terry Hensley**	FDOT, District 7
Stephanie Hoback**	Wavetronix

* Sadly, Erika Birosak passed away on December 16

** New to the Board

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

Editorial Corner: ITS International Relations 101

By Peter Vega, FDOT District Two

On the evening of Sunday, December 1st, I received a huge surprise just after unpacking my vacation clothes from a long week of relaxation in the Caribbean. That night I was checking my work e-mail and realized that a delegation of 14 mayors and government officials from China's Yunnan Province were scheduled to visit the District Two transportation management center (TMC) the following morning. Professor Zhong-Ren Peng, Ph D., from the University of Florida (UF), had made arrangements with me prior to my planned vacation, but I was already "adrift at sea" the week of our conversation. The phone line connection was pretty poor during our original discussion, but my take was that he wanted to bring some students for a tour of the facility and get a presentation on intelligent transportation systems (ITS). Guess I missed that one in translation!

Our North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Director, Jeff Sheffield, contacted me early on the morning of December 2nd to discuss the tour since Dr. Peng also asked Jeff to provide a presentation to the visitors. We were both a little confused, but then realized that they were expecting us to provide a two to three hour presentation on the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) ITS, regional planning, and coordination efforts between both agencies. Luckily, Jeff and I have been doing this for quite some time and pulled off the presentation without a hitch. In any case, we were ready when they arrived and afterward realized we learned as much from them as they learned from us.

The first challenge to overcome was our ability to communicate with the UF student handling the Chinese translation. His name was Fei Yang and he did an excellent job of sharing the information we provided to the Chinese delegates. Next thing to overcome was my inability to speak normally to a group of individuals who did not understand a word I said. My staff kept hand motioning at me to pick up the pace of my voice since I began to speak to them like they were a bunch of three year olds. After finally nailing, it I passed the baton to Jeff so that he could cover the region's planning process and role that the North Florida TPO played in ITS and construction projects.

It was ironic to learn that China follows the same process as Florida when developing projects, but at a slightly faster pace. They involve the public, government, and regional partners in each project; however, they said there were still government assigned experts who made the final call on prioritizing projects, funding levels, and what would be done. I gathered



that they had a mix of democracy tied in with some bureaucracy to get road projects under way. During part of Jeff's presentation it even got a little humorous as the Chinese audience reacted in dramatic fashion to the way we deal with right-of-way conflicts within project limits. Hands were flailing, heads were bobbing, and giggles were heard as they spoke in their native tongue about the differences in the process between our respective countries.

After two hours of presentation that seemed like only ten minutes, I came to realize that this was the most fun I've had in a while! The appreciation this audience displayed on their faces made me realize that we can overcome any diplomatic hurdles if we'd just take the time to sit down and talk. During a tour of the TMC, I even made a slight-of-hand comment when they asked about the cost of the facility. I gave them the actual price, but mentioned that they could probably do it much cheaper since most of the equipment is manufactured in their part of the world. I also mentioned that they were so good at reverse engineering that they could probably save about 75 percent of the cost if they decided to build their own TMC. I got a few laughs, but they knew I was right!

The delegation hopped on their tour bus just before noon to continue their journey of other TMCs around the country. They still had to visit Washington, DC, Baltimore, New Orleans, and Houston before they returned to China. I am hoping that their visit with us was worthwhile and educational since it was the most dramatic accomplishment Jeff or I had ever pulled off. My lesson learned is that next time I will pay closer attention to what Professor Zhong-Ren Peng, Ph D., says to insure I've captured all the information I need!

For information, please contact Mr. Vega at (904) 360-5463 or e-mail to Peter.Vega@dot.state.fl.us.

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Announcements

ITS 3C Summit

Mark your calendars now to make plans to attend the ITS 3C Summit in 2014 in Mobile, Alabama.

More information can be found on the web site at www.its3csummit.com.

A New Year...A New Look

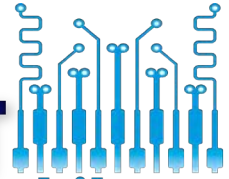
Recently, Secretary Prasad introduced a new logo for the Florida Department of Transportation. The ITS Program is proud to display the logo in our newly design banner.



PRESENTS:



'Combined Intelligence' - Working Together for Smarter Transportation
ITS 3C SUMMIT
September 14 - 17 [2014] Mobile, AL



its3csummit.com



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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