Road Ranger Service Patrol
Comment Card Report
Fiscal Year 2011/2012

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Commercial Vehicle Operations and Traffic Incident Management Program
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Road Ranger Background

Florida's Road Ranger service patrol program is a free service offered by the Florida Department of Transportation (Department) and other transportation agency partners. Initially used to manage vehicle incidents in construction zones, this program has since expanded to all types of incident responses, becoming one of the most effective elements of the Department's Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Program. Road Ranger service patrols (Road Rangers) provide a direct service to motorists by quickly clearing minor incidents from travel lanes in close coordination with the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) and other law enforcement agencies. They also assist disabled motorists with basic services, such as furnishing a limited amount of fuel, assisting with tire changes, and helping with other types of minor vehicle repairs. Road Rangers typically patrol Florida's interstates, other major freeways, and construction zones on these facilities.

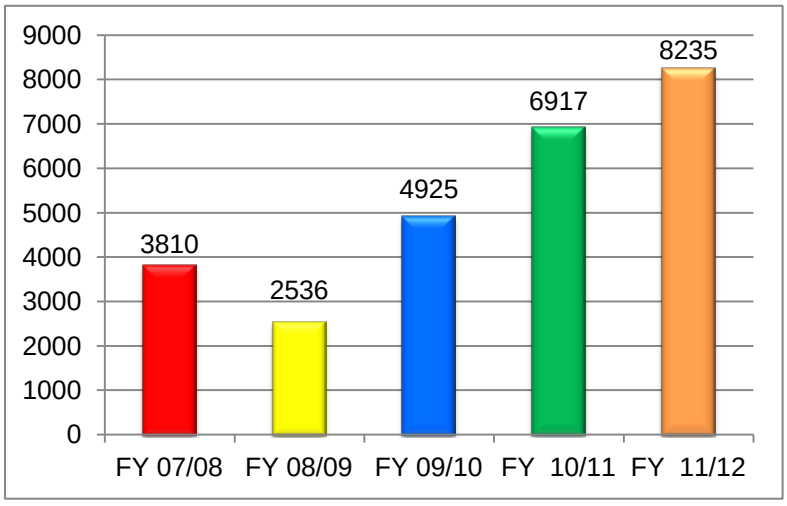
The Department began funding this statewide program in December 1999. Documented program benefits are:

- Decrease in accidents
- Decrease in incident durations
- Assistance to disabled or stranded motorists
- Removal of road debris
- Decrease in air pollutants related to congestion
- Increase in safety at incident scenes

The program is managed at the local District level as a contracted service provided by private vendors. The Department's Central Office TIM personnel facilitate program issues of statewide interest. Since the program's inception, the Road Rangers have made over 3.5 million service assists with more occurring daily.

The Department has been tracking comment card return rates for several years and the

Figure 1 – Return Rate by Fiscal Year



FY 07/08	FY 08/09	FY 09/10	FY 10/11	FY 11/12
3810	2536	4925	6917	8235

return rates continue to improve each year. The decrease in 2008/2009 can be attributed to the decline in available Road Ranger services due to a reduction in program funding that year.

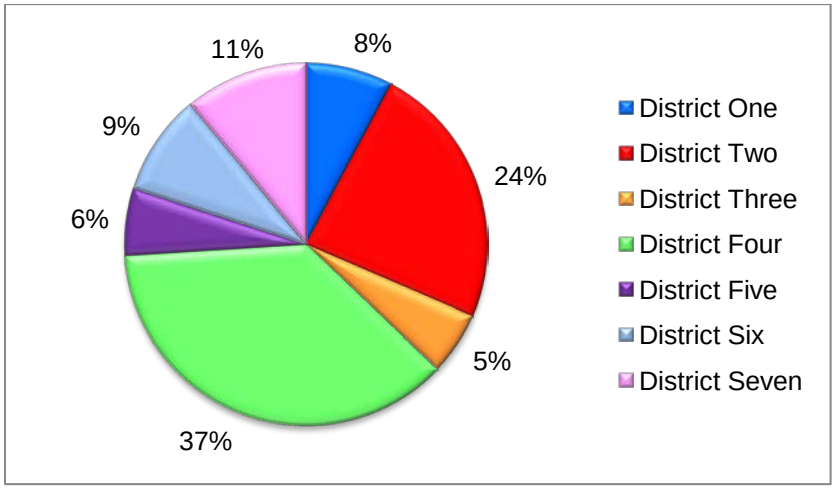
Comment Card Results

Receiving feedback from the public helps determine that the Department's Road Rangers program is performing at a high level of customer satisfaction. The Road Rangers and their shift supervisors often distribute postage-paid comment cards to customers, recognizing that providing comment cards may be precluded by more important considerations—safety, prompt restoration of traffic flow, or respect for individuals in stressful situations. Additionally, some duties performed by Road Rangers do not directly involve assisting a customer, such as providing maintenance of traffic devices at an incident scene, removing roadway debris, tagging an abandoned vehicle, or notifying other agencies that assistance is needed.

For fiscal year 2011/2012 (July 2011 to June 2012), the Department received 8,235 comment cards from motorists who received assistance from Road Rangers. (Note: This does not include customer comments for the Florida's Turnpike Enterprise, Orlando Orange County Expressway Authority or the District Four I-595 Road Rangers; there are separate processes in place to collect information for these roadways.) Each card is scanned, processed, and compiled to create Road Ranger Comment Card Summaries, which are provided quarterly to each District TIM Program Manager.

The comment cards all have a unique bar code, which allows the Department to analyze data to determine where the motorist received assistance. Figure 2 below shows the response rate by District.

Figure 2 - Response Rate by District

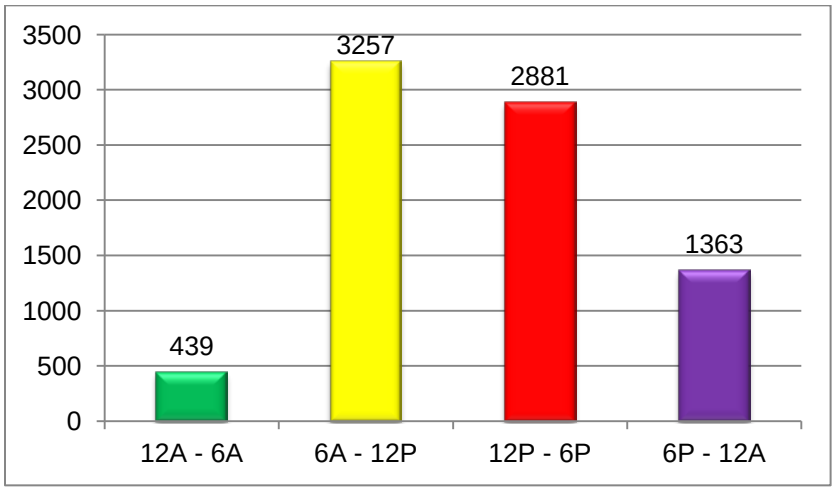


District One	District Two	District Three	District Four	District Five	District Six	District Seven	TOTAL
641	1953	463	3036	495	739	908	8235

Question 1 – When did you receive help from the Road Rangers?

Responses to this question allow the Department to determine if there are variances in the responses attributable to time-of-day. Forty percent of the respondents received assistance between the hours of 6am and 12pm and thirty-five percent of respondents received assistance between the hours of 12pm and 6pm. Figure 3 illustrates these responses.

Figure 3 - Time of Assistance

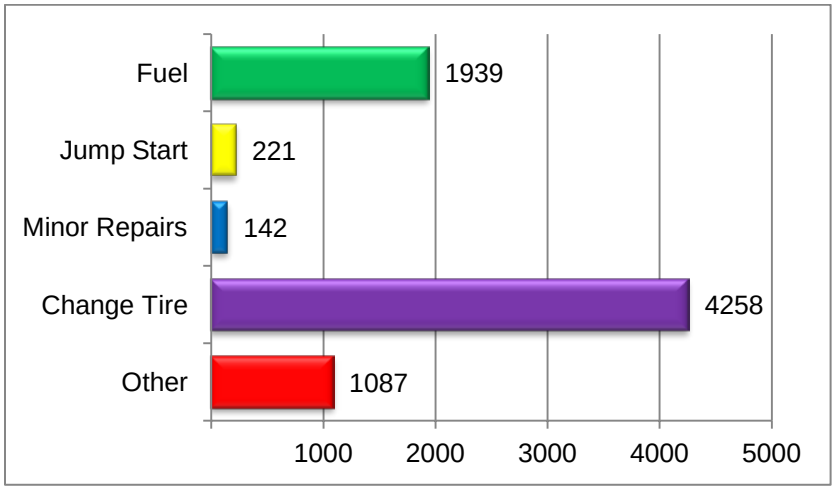


12AM – 6AM	6AM – 12PM	12PM – 6PM	6PM – 12AM	No Response
5%	40%	35%	17%	3%

Question 2 – Type of service performed?

From the responses received, it was determined that 52 percent of the respondents received tire change services. Determining what service the customer is utilizing allows for analysis of customer satisfaction in each of the listed service types.

Figure 4 - Type of Service

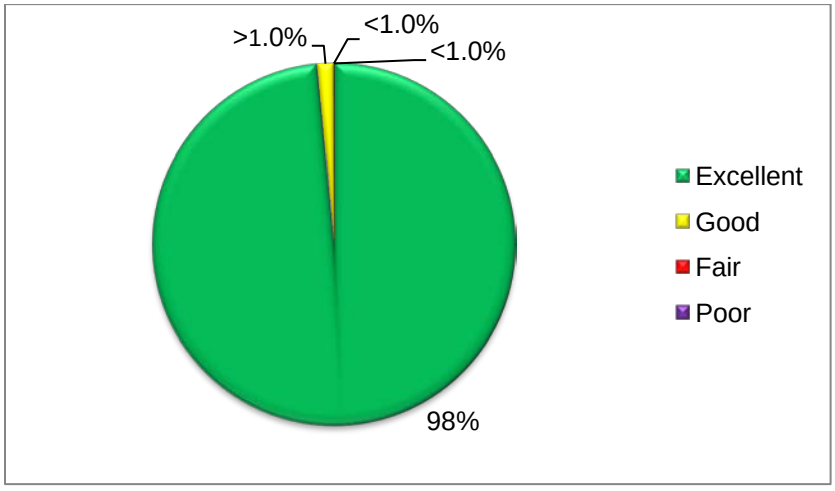


Fuel	Jump Start	Minor Repairs	Change Tire	Other	No Response
23%	3%	2%	52%	13%	7%

Question 3 – Operator was courteous and helpful?

Of the respondents expressing an opinion, more than 99 percent rated the operators as excellent or good when it comes to being courteous and helpful. It should be noted in Figure 5 below that only one respondent assessed the operators as fair and there were two responses for poor.

Figure 5 - Courteous and Helpful

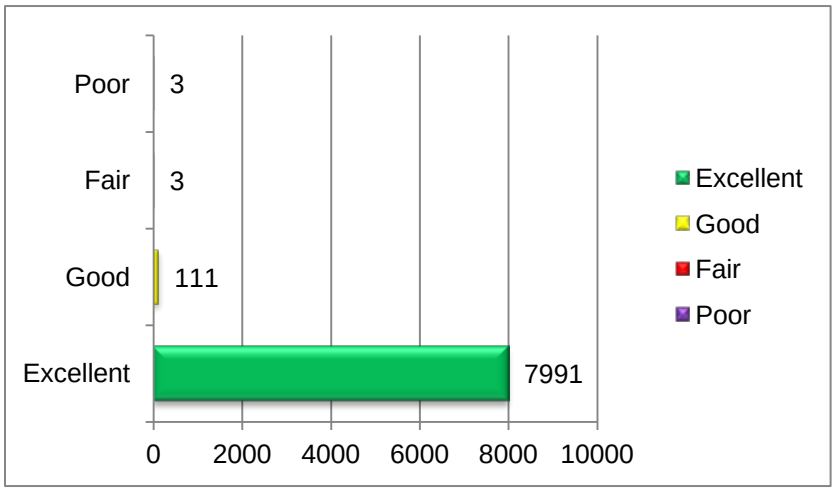


Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
8047	121	1	2

Question 4 – Satisfaction with services provided?

In the area of satisfaction with services provided, more than 99 percent of the respondents rated the program excellent to good. This indicates a high level of satisfaction with the assistance received.

Figure 6 – Satisfaction

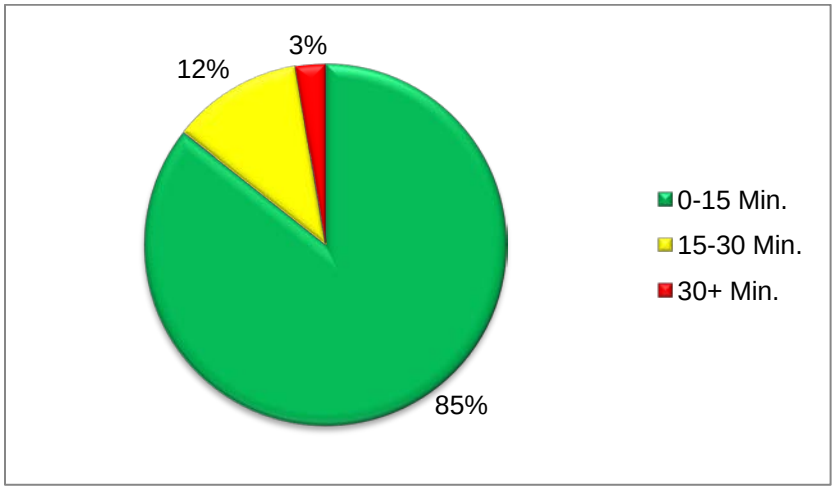


Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
99%	1%	<1%	<1%

Question 5 – Road Rangers arrival time?

Generally, Road Rangers proactively patrol their coverage areas looking for stranded motorists. Road Rangers are also dispatched by operators in the transportation management centers who observe incidents using closed-circuit television cameras and/or automated detection software. This allows for rapid detection and response to incidents. Several factors affect the response time, such as time of day, availability and location of the Road Ranger, etc. Eighty-five percent of respondents stated that Road Rangers were on-scene within 15 minutes.

Figure 7- Road Ranger Arrival Time



0-15 Min.	15- 30 Min.	30+ Min.
6932	946	215

Written Comments

The comment card includes a space for the respondent to provide written comments if they choose. The following excerpts include representative comments from each of the Districts represented in this report.

The Department also receives feedback through e-mails, letters, phone calls, and personal conversations with citizens, law enforcement officers, fire and emergency medical services personnel, tow truck operators, and local transportation officials. During this fiscal year, the Department received a few negative comments, mostly from motorists who had to wait longer than they expected or thought that the Road Ranger was not sufficiently helpful. Road Rangers Program Managers addressed these complaints promptly and thoroughly. Overall, the comments from all sources during this fiscal year were positive.

Comment	District
We were in a dangerous situation on the roadside of highway 75. The rangers were a great help and reassuring until a tow truck arrived.	1
I called FHP and they told me Road Rangers were done for the night. Ten minutes later Michael was there to help me. I was his last call. Thanks.	1
Bob, was very helpful with my mom after she had a seizure in the car and we waited for ambulance to arrive. I appreciated his help. Thank you.	1

Comment	District
My daughter was in an accident. They stayed with her until I got there and even until wrecker arrived. Kind, courteous, helpful, calming and sensitive.	2
He was an angel, just happened to be behind me when my tire blew and able to fix it and have me to work on time. Thank you guys!	2
I am from Texas and this service is not available out there unless you pay for it. I feel secure knowing it is here. Thank you.	2
I'm so thankful for this on Christmas Eve. Great service.	3
I am on temporary assignment from Virginia, this is a great service. Thank you all.	3
He was a lifesaver!! I was traveling by myself with my 8 month old. What a wonderful service.	3
With just my flashers – your truck was most welcome with I-95 traffic speeding by at night. Tim was outstanding. Friendly, calm, professional and a gentleman, with all the right tools – He was the best.	4
I had a flat tire with my conversion van with my daughter who uses a wheelchair – what a great service Road Rangers is! The operator was very professional.	4
John was wonderful and my angel. Blowout on horse trailer – he saw it from the other direction and was there in 2 minutes. Program is wonderful. Please keep this program going.	4
Life Saver! My cell phone was dead and I was going to have to walk a LONG way to the exit. He was done in 10 minutes.	5
A very fine young man. He helped us considerably after we had a blowout on I-4 in heavy traffic. Thank you.	5
Always thought the program was a good idea, now I think it's a "Great" idea. Thank you!!!	5
Being a visitor to the State of Florida and Miami area, I was impressed with the response time and how courteous all were in response to the accident.	6
At an accident Road Rangers took me out of the highway and to a safe location. Thank you.	6
Very Speedy, very helpful and kind. Couldn't fix the problem, but they tried their best. Very appreciated.	6
Way to go Florida! Thank you so much! This is a great service and wish the other states would provide the same!	7
Paul showed up within 3 minutes after I stopped on the bridge and changed the tire within 10 minutes. He's real friendly and an asset to the Road Rangers.	7
Road Ranger was there before I could even call! Absolute life saver! I am so grateful for this service!	7
Thanks so much for helping me and my children. I'm switching over to State Farm when I get home.	TPE
Jimmy was very nice and helpful. I do thank you (State Farm) for this service.	TPE
Awesome service, greatly appreciated State Farm and the Florida Turnpike. Thanks.	TPE

The Florida's Turnpike

In this fiscal year, over 15,500 comment cards were returned by motorists assisted by the Florida's Turnpike Road Rangers, which was a significant increase over the previous fiscal year when approximately 9,500 were received. Florida's Turnpike also received more than 4,000 additional comment cards from motorists who received assistance while traveling on Orlando Orange County Expressway Authority roadways and on the Veteran's Expressway/Suncoast Parkway. A majority of the comment cards are filled out by motorists on site of the assist and returned back to the Road Ranger operator directly. A small percentage is received through postage-paid direct mail. The comment card is provided to motorists as a "tear-off" card from a brochure that promotes the State Farm Safety Patrol Program, provides roadway safety information as well as explains the services the Road Ranger program offers.

Nearly every comment card includes positive input from motorists, citing their gratitude and appreciation for the service received and/or referencing the program as a necessary service. A small percentage of non-positive comments typically reference a long wait for a Road Ranger's arrival, the need for more patrols and additional patrol hours, or that the Road Rangers should be allowed to complete u-turns on the Florida Turnpike for a faster response.

Conclusion

The Road Ranger comment cards continue to serve as a valuable tool for the Department and its contractors for receiving feedback from customers. Even though the cards take just a few moments to complete, the fact that so many people do is a credit to the operators.

Although the comment cards cover a limited amount of the services the Road Rangers provide, it is important to realize that the operators do much more to ensure the safety of the roadways. These activities include, but are not limited to, providing maintenance of traffic devices at an incident scene, removing roadway debris, tagging an abandoned vehicle, or notifying other agencies that assistance is needed.

The Department continues to see the need to have Road Ranger vehicles properly equipped to handle tire changes, vehicles out of fuel, minor repairs, jump starts and other services. Road Ranger vehicles and the cones they carry create a safety zone for both the Road Ranger and the motorist receiving assistance. We often see additional comments on the cards relating to "feeling safer once the Road Ranger arrives."

FDOT will continue to monitor the performance of the Road Ranger program from the customer comment cards that are returned to the Department and other measures that are in place. The number of emails and phone calls the Department receives is another reminder of how this program directly impacts the traveling public, including tourists visiting our state. The Road

Ranger program directly supports the Department's mission of providing a safe transportation system.