# Road Ranger Service Patrol
# Comment Card Report
# Fiscal Year 2012/2013

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# Table of Contents

Road Ranger Background ..... 1

Comment Card Results ..... 2

Written Comments ..... 5

The Florida's Turnpike ..... 7

Conclusion ..... 7

# Table of Figures

Figure 1 - Return Rate by Fiscal Year ..... 1

Figure 2 - Response Rate by District ..... 2

Figure 3 - Time of Assistance ..... 3

Figure 4 - Type of Service ..... 3

Figure 5 - Courteous and Helpful ..... 4

Figure 6 - Satisfaction ..... 4

Figure 7 - Road Ranger Arrival Time ..... 5

## Road Ranger Background

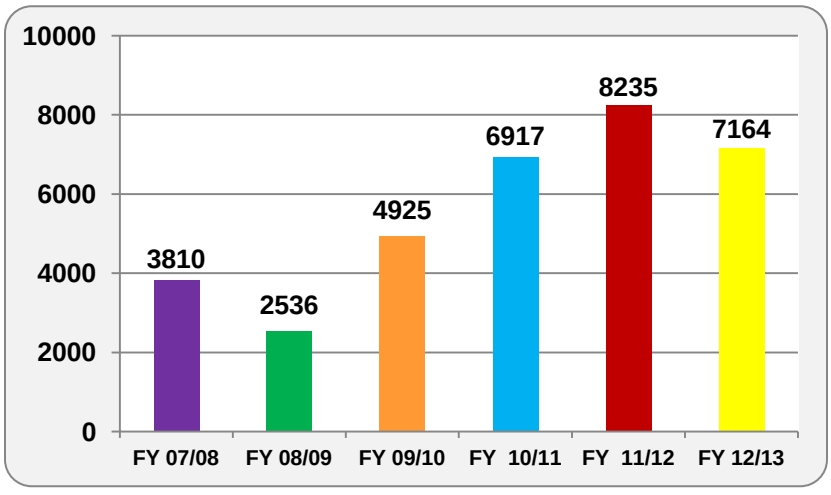
Florida's Road Ranger service patrol program is a free service offered by the Florida Department of Transportation (Department) and other transportation agency partners. Initially used to manage vehicle incidents in construction zones, this program has since expanded to all types of incident responses, 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 R angers 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 3.9 million service assists with more occurring daily.

Figure 1 – Return Rate by Fiscal Year




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

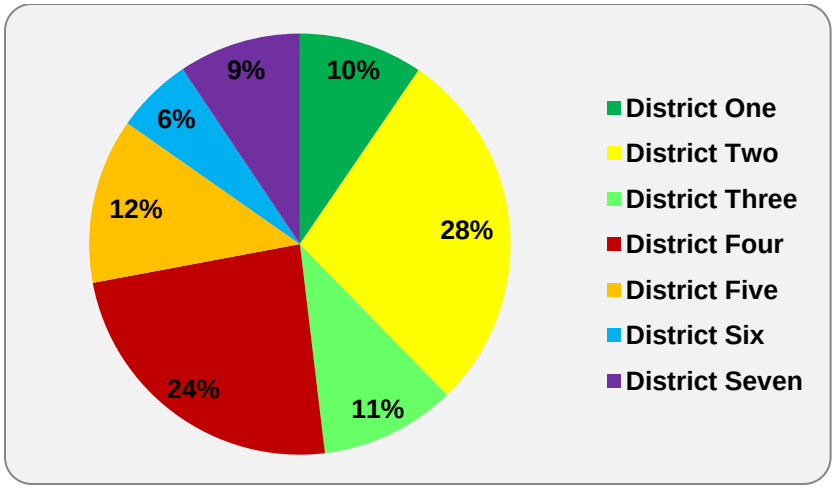
## Comment Card Results

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 2012/2013 (July 2012 to June 2013), the Department received 7164 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**

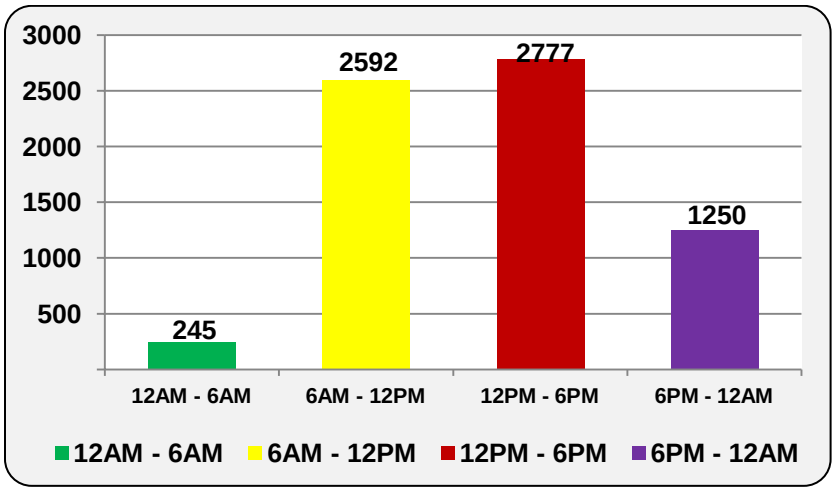



| Response Rate by District | |
|---|---|
| District One | 740 |
| District Two | 2018 |
| District Three | 745 |
| District Four | 1716 |
| District Five | 851 |
| District Six | 421 |
| District Seven | 673 |
| **TOTAL** | **7164** |

**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 12pm and 6pm and 38 percent of respondents received assistance between the hours of 6am and 12pm. Figure 3 illustrates these responses.

**Figure 3 - Time of Assistance**

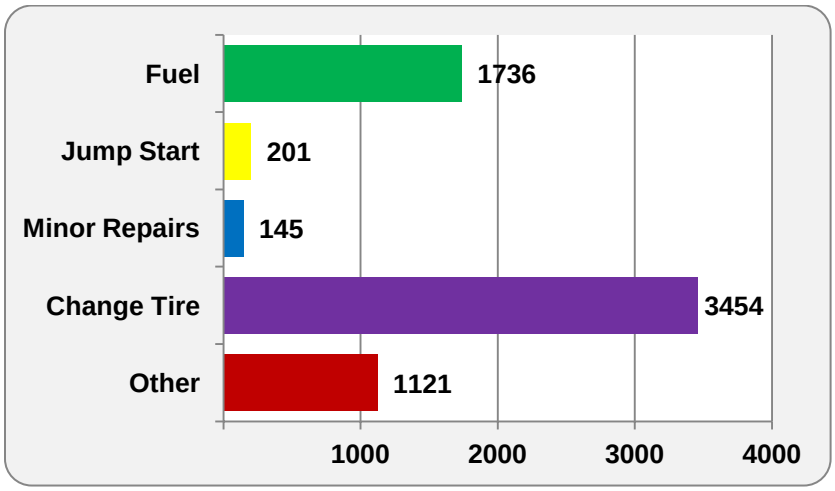



| Time of Assistance | |
|---|---|
| 12AM – 6AM | 4% |
| 6AM – 12PM | 38% |
| 12PM – 6PM | 40% |
| 6PM – 12AM | 18% |
| No Response | 4% |

**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**

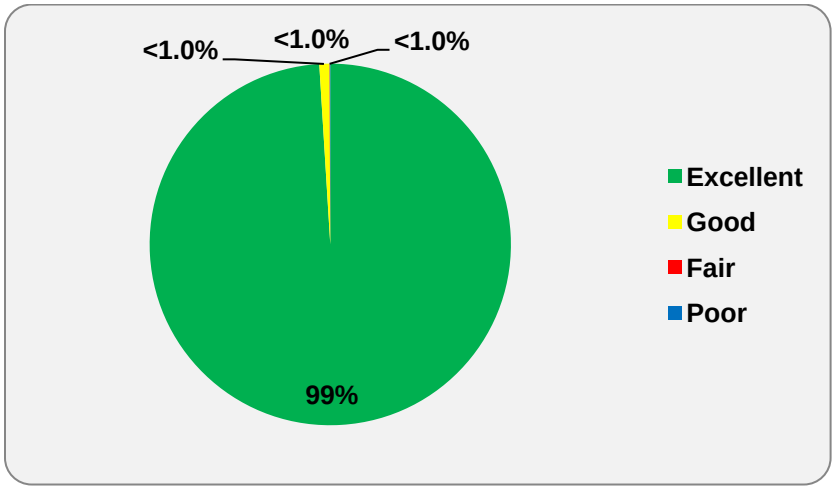



| Type of Service | |
|---|---|
| Fuel | 26% |
| Jump Start | 3% |
| Minor Repairs | 2% |
| Change Tire | 52% |
| Other | 17% |
| No Response | 7% |

### 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 five respondents assessed the operators as fair or poor.

**Figure 5 - Courteous and Helpful**

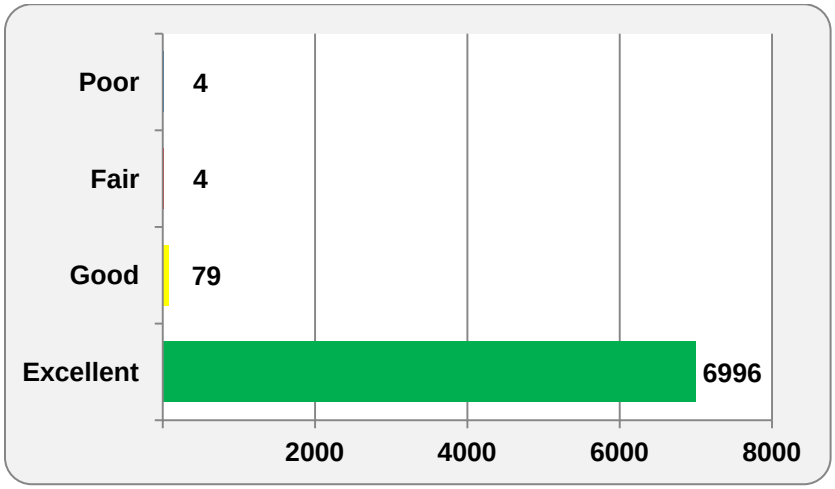



| Courteous and Helpful | |
|---|---|
| Excellent | 7029 |
| Good | 64 |
| Fair | 2 |
| Poor | 3 |
| No Response | 66 |

### 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**

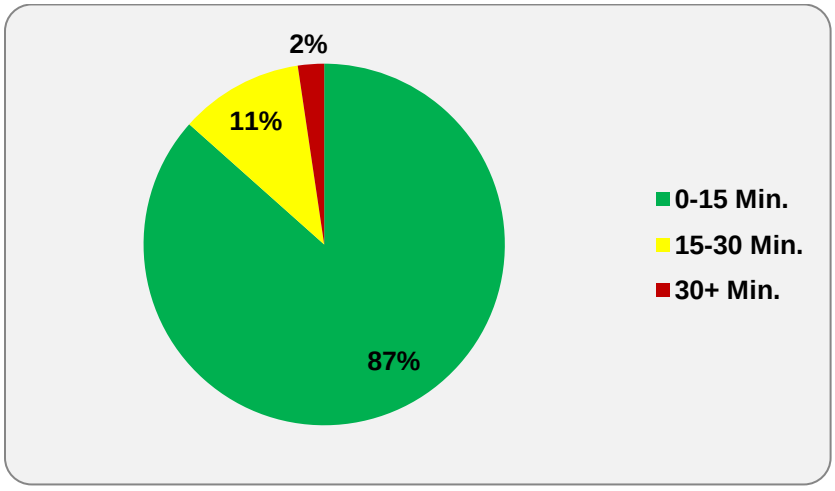



| Satisfaction | |
|---|---|
| Excellent | 98% |
| Good | 1% |
| Fair | <1% |
| Poor | <1% |
| No Response | 1% |

**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-seven percent of respondents stated that Road Rangers were on-scene within 15 minutes.

Figure 7- Road Ranger Arrival Time




| Arrival Time | |
|---|---|
| 0-15 Minutes | 6098 |
| 15-30 Minutes | 780 |
| 30+ Minutes | 165 |
| No Response | 121 |

**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 |
|---|---|
| My Road Ranger was awesome. He really saved the day – I had no cell phone with me and really appreciated the help. He was wonderful. | 1 |
| A passerby called and he showed up within 10 minutes of me pulling over. I had my dogs and children and he made sure everyone was safe with seat belts on. Really great guy! | 1 |
| Thankful for this wonderful service, we are from Wisconsin for a vacation for 2 weeks. | 1 |
| I'm from Oregon, it is so wonderful you have this service. I had nobody to call. | 2 |
| I felt helpless, I am 8 months pregnant and it was raining and he stopped to help me. I am so thankful!! | 2 |
| Great service to have around. Really aided me trying to get to airport in time. Thank you for a great job. | 2 |
| Lifesaver, was on my way home from Louisiana. | 3 |
| We didn't even call and got awesome help. He was a wizard with a floor jack. | 3 |
| Feliciano was so sweet and saved us ladies that were scared to be broke down on the bridge in the middle of the night. Excellent service. | 3 |
| I have a new respect for the valuable and dangerous job the Road Rangers do, especially the gentleman who helped me. Thank you! | 4 |
| This is a great service. The man that came to my assistance was outstanding. I would like all public employees to meet his standards of service. I am a retired circuit court judge and over 83 years old. I appreciated his service very much. | 4 |
| I am a young driver and was very happy not to be stuck on the side of the road. Thank you. | 4 |
| My Road Ranger was awesome! Keep up the good work! I even got to work on time. | 5 |
| I didn't call, he saw me and stopped and was super helpful. Thanks for this great service. | 5 |
| We had a blowout on the highway on our way to Sea World. Your Ranger scoped us up and took care of us in a quick and courteous way. We are visitors from England and appreciate this very much. | 5 |
| Had a flat and 30 minutes away from an interview. This man saved my day! And probably my life. Thanks. | 6 |
| They were very helpful. Great Service. Gentleman had a great attitude. | 6 |
| Lifesaver! So glad they came to help and even waited with us until the tow truck came. | 6 |
| He supplied the crash with waters and cones and helpful advice of what to do in an accident my first time. | 7 |
| I had debris (a refrigerator door) stuck under my car. The Road Ranger jacked up the car and removed the door from underneath the car. Great Job! | 7 |
| He taught me how to change a tire!! | 7 |

| Comment | District |
|---|---|
| The gentleman that helped me was very professional and helpful. I am sure he is an asset to State Farm. | TPE |
| I had no one to help me because all of my friends were out of town, but I would like to say a big thank you to State Farm for finding me. | TPE |
| Wonderful Service. I will never forget State Farm for this. Driver was exceptional, professional and courteous. Thank you, thank you, thank you. | TPE |

## The Florida's Turnpike

In this fiscal year, 15,372 comment cards were returned by motorists assisted by the Florida's Turnpike Road Rangers, which is very close to last year's total of 15,448. In addition to the Turnpike mainline program, in FY 2013, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise also received approximately 3,000 additional comment cards from motorists who received assistance while traveling on the Turnpike's shared Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority roadways and on the Veterans Expressway in the Tampa area.

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.

Florida's Turnpike comment cards received from customers often relay positive comments regarding the service received and compliments regarding the individual Road Ranger service patrol operator that worked with them, citing "above and beyond" service and attention to the customers' safety and well-being. Florida's Turnpike Road Rangers play an invaluable service to increasing safety on the Turnpike for customers and emergency responders.

## 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.