



RESPONDER

Volume 1, Issue 3

September 2020



National Traffic Incident Response Awareness Week, November 9-15, 2020

Major Interchange Opens Early on I-4 Ultimate



TIM Team & Working Group

MEETINGS & WEBINARS

DATE	DISTRICT/COUNTY	TIME
September 15, 2020	First Coast TIM Team Meeting Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC), 980 N. Jefferson Street, Jacksonville, FL	10 am - 12 pm
September 23, 2020	Talking TIM Webinar - National Operations Center of Excellence (NOCoE) https://transportationops.org/event/talking-tim-webinar-series-september-2020	1:30 pm - 3 pm
October 1, 2020	National Traffic Incident Response Awareness Week 2020: October Planning Call https://www.transportationops.org/event/national-traffic-incident-response-awareness-week-2020-october-planning-call	1 pm - 2:30 pm
October 7, 2020	Broward/Miami-Dade County Joint TIM Team Meeting MS Teams	TBA
October 8, 2020	Polk TIM Team Meeting Polk County Sheriff Office Complex, 1891 Kim Keene Blvd., Winter Haven FL 33880	10 am - 12 pm
October 13, 2020	Sarasota-Manatee TIM Team Meeting Manatee County Public Safety Center 2101 47th Terrace East (19th Street Court East), Bradenton, FL 34203	1:30 pm - 3:30 pm
October 14, 2020	Collier, Lee, Charlotte Counties TIM Team Meeting SWIFT SunGuide Center, 10041 Daniels Parkway, Ft. Myers, FL 33913	9:30 am - 12 pm
October 14, 2020	Alachua-Bradford TIM Team Meeting FDOT Gainesville Operations Office, 5301 N.E. 39th Avenue, Gainesville, FL	10 am - 12 pm
November 4, 2020	I-4/Metro Orlando Area TIM Team Meeting FDOT RTMC, 4975 Wilson Rd, Sanford FL 32771	9:30 am - 11:30 am
November 5, 2020	I-75 Area TIM Team Meeting Sumter County Public Safety Building, Emergency Operations Center 7361 Powell Road, Wildwood, FL 34785	9:30 am - 11 am
November 5, 2020	National Traffic Incident Response Awareness Week 2020: Final Planning Call https://www.transportationops.org/event/national-traffic-incident-response-awareness-week-2020-final-planning-call	1 pm - 2:30 pm
November 10, 2020	Pinellas County TIM Team Meeting FDOT District 7 Pinellas Maintenance Office, 5211 Ulmerton Road, Clearwater, FL 33670	10 am - 12 pm
November 12, 2020	I-95 South TIM Team Meeting FHP Brevard Headquarters, 3775 W. King St, Cocoa, FL 32926	9:30 am - 11 am
November 17, 2020	First Coast TIM Team Meeting Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC), 980 N. Jefferson Street, Jacksonville, FL	10 am - 12 pm
November 17, 2020	Hillsborough County TIM Team Meeting FDOT District 7 Tampa Bay SunGuide Center, 11201 N. McKinley Drive, Tampa, FL 33612	10 am - 12 pm
November 17, 2020	Turnpike (South Region) Quarterly TIM Team Meeting Mile-Post 65, Pompano Beach Service Plaza, Pompano Beach, FL 33069	10 am - 12 pm
November 18, 2020	Monroe TIM Team Coordination Meeting MS Teams	TBA
November 18, 2020	Turnpike (North Region) Quarterly TIM Team Meeting Mile-Post 263, Turkey Lake Service Plaza, Bldg. 5315, Ocoee, FL 34761	10:30 am - 12 pm
November 19, 2020	I-95 North TIM Team Meeting Volusia County Emergency Management, 3825 Tiger Bay Road, #102, Daytona Beach, FL 32124	9:30 am - 11 am
December 8, 2020	Sarasota-Manatee TIM Team Meeting Manatee County Public Safety Center 2101 47th Terrace East (19th Street Court East), Bradenton, FL 34203	1:30 pm - 3:30 pm
December 9, 2020	Collier, Lee, Charlotte Counties TIM Team Meeting SWIFT SunGuide Center, 10041 Daniels Parkway, Ft. Myers, FL 33913	9:30 am - 12 pm
December 9, 2020	Alachua-Bradford TIM Team Meeting FDOT Gainesville Operations Office, 5301 N.E. 39th Avenue, Gainesville, FL	10 am - 12 pm



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TIM Program Manager Update

Greetings Traffic Incident Management (TIM) professionals. Welcome to the third edition of the Florida TIM Responder, Florida's Statewide TIM Program newsletter. The goal of the newsletter is to provide you with relevant and timely information that will collectively help us advance the TIM state of practice throughout Florida. It is also expected that the TIM Responder newsletter will increase awareness of TIM and promote its benefits. The newsletter will focus primarily on the current state of the practice, articles from peers and partner first responder agencies, technology updates, National TIM updates, upcoming events, and awards/recognition.

The Central Office continues to advance the statewide [TIM Strategic Plan](#) that was adopted in January 2019. The Department-wide Plan, at its core, is designed to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, and ensure that stakeholders and TIM Program partners are working towards common goals of supporting the Florida's Open Roads Policy. In an effort to standardize the Road Ranger Program, the Central Office has been working on revising the Road Ranger Scope of Services and Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) procedure. The Central Office has also developed an Incident Responder Field guide to further streamline the TIM response and guide practitioners responding to roadway incidents and other emergencies. These and several other initiatives continue to move forward.

Please mark your calendars for the National Traffic Incident Response Awareness Week coming up November 9-15, 2020. This is a great chance for all first responders to jointly make an impact by teaching each other, and the motoring public, about our common goals and responsibilities to one another while operating at incidents of all types on the nation's roads and highways. Please contact your District TIM Program Managers for any social outreach ideas or events that you may have in mind.

The following issue of the TIM Responder focuses on some amazing articles received from the Districts. One highlights the use of propane in the Road Ranger vehicle fleet while another reviews the implementation of connected vehicle technology in incident response vehicles to alert drivers of roadway incidents. Some of the other articles in this issue focus on: installation of a new video wall at the Florida Highway Patrol's Lake Worth Regional Communication Center (LWRCC), utilization of a new software program to assist Road Rangers in District Seven, and the early inauguration of a major interchange on I-4 in Orlando.

The Central Office and the Districts stand well-prepared for the peak of the hurricane season. The emergency contracts and emergency fuel provisions are set up; the primary/backup communications and the inner-District mutual aid is in place as well.

In closing, it warrants emphasizing that a multiagency, multidisciplined team effort is critical to the success of TIM. As such, we always value your input and would like to extend an open invitation to you to send us TIM Responder newsletter ideas and comments as well as articles and announcements that you'd like to share.

Thank you for your steadfast commitment to the TIM Program for the State of Florida as we continue to navigate our current reality with COVID-19. Prolonged changes to daily life and routine can wear one down while keeping focus on your health remains critical. Please know that we thank you for your service and we are with you during this difficult time. Please be safe and take the necessary precautions.

Shawn Kinney
Traffic Incident Management

Vision...

To increase the delivery rate of fatality-free and congestion-free transportation systems supporting the FDOT vision and Florida Transportation Plan goals.

Mission...

To identify, prioritize, develop, implement, operate, maintain, and update TSM&O program strategies and measure their effectiveness for improved safety and mobility.



Florida Road Ranger Service Patrol - A Propane Driven Fleet in District Four

By Lauren Skiles, Roy Jorgensen Associates, Inc.

Why Propane?

In 2015, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) worked with subcontract partners for the Road Ranger fleet in District Four to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Florida. Greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, absorb heat from the sun and trap warmth in the atmosphere resulting in a “greenhouse effect.” The FDOT has been able to reduce harmful emissions in our environment by converting Road Ranger Vehicles to use propane. Propane-converted vehicles emit 25 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions than vehicles running on gasoline and 80 percent fewer smog-producing hydrocarbon emissions than vehicles running on diesel. In 2018, the Department used 3,838 fewer barrels of oil, reducing CO₂ emissions by 542 short tons. That is equivalent to 55,327 gallons of gasoline or 48,300 gallons of diesel. A reduction in carbon dioxide emissions encourages environmental responsibility within the FDOT and its subcontract partners. In addition to enhanced environmental benefits, maintenance and fuel costs are reduced.



Making the Conversion

Several FDOT subcontract partners were utilized to develop and customize the Road Ranger fleet. The new truck profile includes propane retrofits, large fuel tanks, and various safety devices. Converting a Road Ranger vehicle to propane takes around one day. These propane-outfitted vehicles are certified compliant in accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations.

Additional Benefits and Savings

The FDOT’s Road Ranger fleet in District Four also utilizes private propane filling stations in Fort Lauderdale and Fort Pierce, where the lowest fuel

Florida Road Ranger Service Patrol - A Propane Driven Fleet in District Four, from page 4



price is assured with each transaction. In 2018, this arrangement saved the District an average of \$0.79 per gallon of propane when compared to gasoline. This arrangement also ensures critical fuel availability when preparing for and responding to emergencies such as hurricanes and tropical storms. The mission of the FDOT is to provide a safe transportation system that ensures the mobility of people and goods, enhances economic prosperity, and preserves the quality of our environment and communities. Along with its Road Ranger partners, the FDOT fulfills its mission, delivering world class transportation services and solutions to our Florida travelers, meeting the infrastructure demands of today and tomorrow.

Partners in Progress

The FDOT partners with companies providing a vast array of services, including maintenance consulting, facility management, and roadway maintenance services. The Road Rangers program in District Four has benefitted greatly from such partners that possess a diverse history of accomplishments and provide much-needed expertise. Conscientious Road Ranger partners, on board with the “big picture” relating to the FDOT mission, can be proud of the success achieved with the propane fleet conversion project in District Four.










For more information, please contact Joudy Mendez at (954) 847-2789 or by email at Joudy.Mendez@dot.state.fl.us.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Since the implementation of the program, 10,738 incident responders have received the training in the state of Florida (as of August 10, 2020), representing roughly 27 percent of the responders in operational roles who are supporting traffic incident response operations. During the fourth quarter of FY 2019/2020, about 335 responders received the training.

Responders Trained

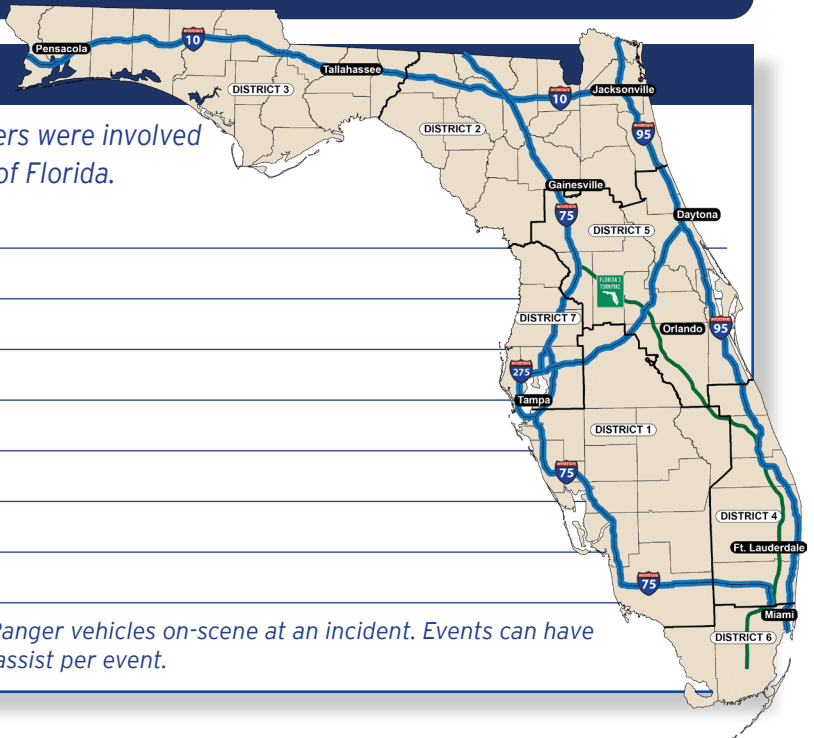
TIM TRAINING RECEIVED BY:	LEO	FIRE	EMS	TOW	FDOT	OTHER	QTR TOTAL
							
1ST QUARTER	22	97	27	3	129	65	343
2ND QUARTER	27	286	14	10	54	16	407
3RD QUARTER	3	162	11	8	18	14	216
4TH QUARTER	158	96	3	9	27	42	335
FYTD	210	641	55	30	228	137	1,301

Road Ranger Assists by District

During the fourth quarter of FY 2019/2020, Road Rangers were involved in 95,336 events providing assistance to the motorists of Florida.

District One	10,480
District Two	8,714
District Three	4,136
District Four	16,634
District Five	14,912
District Six	7,919
District Seven	11,037
Florida's Turnpike	21,504

Note: An event is defined as the arrival of one or more Road Ranger vehicles on-scene at an incident. Events can have multiple assists, and each Road Ranger will have at least one assist per event.



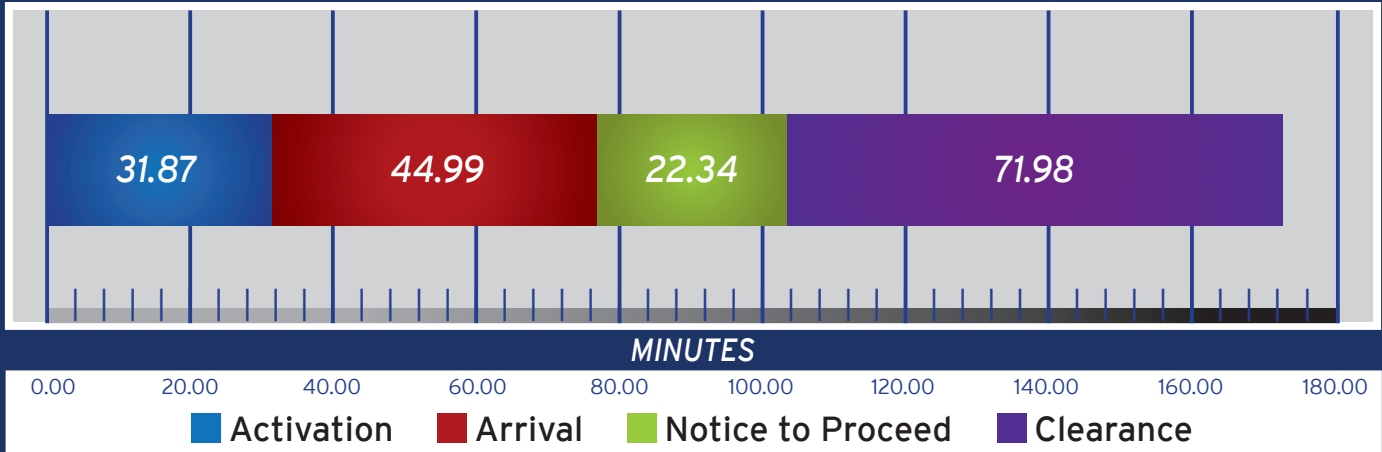
Road Ranger Assist Data

	HIGHEST ACTIVITY TOTALS		LOWEST ACTIVITY TOTALS	
	SOURCE	TOTAL	SOURCE	TOTAL
ASSISTS BY NOTIFIER	ROAD RANGER	61,563	MOTORIST	33
ASSISTS BY EVENT TYPE	DISABLED VEHICLE	61,278	PEDESTRIAN	273
ARRIVALS BY DAY OF WEEK	FRIDAY	16,968	SUNDAY	11,398
ARRIVALS BY TIMEFRAME	3:00 pm - 6:00 pm	23,491	3:00 am - 6:00 am	2,379

Rapid Incident Scene Clearance

During the fourth quarter of FY 2019/2020 (April 2020 to June 2020), seven Districts and Florida's Turnpike activated the RISC Program 91 times with approximately \$282,500 in bonus-incentive payments made to vendors.

Fourth Quarter Statewide Average RISC Incident Duration



2020 National Responder Safety Update

32 Responders Killed in Struck-By Incidents

Law Enforcement (12)

- 9 Traffic stops/LE activity
- 3 Working crashes

Towing (14)

- 13 Assisting disabled vehicles
- 1 Assisting LE and crash scenes

Fire and EMS (3)

- Assisting crash scenes

DOT/SSP (3)

- Debris removal

Road HEROES



Road Ranger Dan Rice receiving a certificate of appreciation from District One TIM Program Manager Tom Arsenault

DISTRICT ONE

Road Ranger Dan Rice was making his rounds, driving through the Northbound I-75 Rest Area at mile marker 63 when he observed a vehicle parked facing the wrong direction. When he looked closer, he noticed that a blue garden hose was connected to the exhaust pipe, extending into the vehicle window which was mainly closed. He immediately went to the vehicle and observed a young woman inside crying and telling him to leave her alone. Dan persisted and was able to pull the door open and remove her from the vehicle. He then called the FHP and requested officers and EMS.

As Dan was waiting for help to arrive (which must have seemed like a long time) he continued talking to the woman about how great life is, and that he has four daughters, and, based on what he had gathered, how her children would miss her. He also talked about wedding

cakes (that's just Dan). He talked about anything to keep this lady's mind off of what just happened.

Help arrived, and the 32-year-old mother of three from the east side of Florida was taken to a nearby hospital.

Shortly after the scene was cleared, District One TIM Program Manager Tom Arsenault contacted Dan to see how he was doing. Dan related that despite being a little shaken by the incident, he was okay and planned to take his lunch break soon. Tom thanked Dan and let him know he had done a GREAT JOB!

One of the State Troopers assisting at the scene said: "If it wasn't for Dan being in the right place at the right time, who knows?" (how things would have turned out). He said Dan handled the situation very well and related that Dan had done a fine job of processing the mental and emotional weight of the incident.

FDOT District Six Implements New Connected Incident Response Vehicle Technology to Alert Drivers of Roadway Incidents

By Carlos Dardes, FMS/AMS Specialist IV, FDOT

The Florida Department of Transportation District Six started a pilot project that will use existing traveler information platforms and applications to alert drivers of active incident scenes. Improving driver information has many potential benefits, including reducing incidents and improving safety for the public and incident responders.

This innovative pilot project installed iCone Technology on eight Incident Response Vehicle (IRV) units, allowing them to connect to popular public-facing mobile roadway navigation applications like Waze.

The Connected Incident Response Vehicle technology uses special equipment connected to the IRV's arrow board, the large multi-directional arrow sign on the back of the vehicle, to transmit alerts to users of the application. Once the IRV operator activates the board to manage an event, the iCone technology sends a hazard alert to nearby drivers on the highway.

This initiative is an example of Infrastructure-to-Vehicle (I2V) communication, connecting motorists with roadway infrastructure in real time. Transmitting travel information, including that of incidents that are upstream, can help drivers make better decisions concerning their commute timing and route.

Additionally, such technology and strategies aid in keeping the Department's incident management teams safe on the roadway by giving drivers more advance warning of active incidents and increasing the public's compliance with the "Move Over" law.

This new Connected Incident Response Vehicle Technology Pilot Project represents the Department's commitment to keeping motorists and incident management teams safe on the roadway. In addition, incorporating new technology on the roadway enhances driver experience and improves the flow and reliability of our region's roadways.



For more information, please contact Carlos Dardes at (305) 640-7331 or by email at Carlos.Dardes@dot.state.fl.us.



FHP Liaison Takisha Brown has been with the Turnpike at the LWRCC since 2011.

Florida's Turnpike TMC/FHP Liaisons Play a Vital Role and Get New Tools

By Mary Lou Veroline, TSM&O Technical Writer, FDOT and Karla Smith, TMC Operations Manager, FDOT

Florida's Turnpike incident response efforts are greatly enhanced by the opportunity to co-locate TMC Staff at the Florida Highway Patrol's Lake Worth Regional Communication Center (LWRCC) located next to the West Palm Beach Service Plaza at mainline mile post 94.

These operators, officially called "FHP Liaisons", sit shoulder-to-shoulder with Florida Highway Patrol Dispatchers, and as their name would indicate, ensure seamless communication between the FTE and FHP.

Liaison positions are staffed sixteen hours per day, seven days per week, providing information from the FHP Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system to the Florida's Turnpike Traffic Management Centers (TMC) located at the Pompano Beach and Turkey Lake operations facilities.

Liaisons are able to monitor the CAD systems of FHP Troops K (Florida's Turnpike), D (east central Florida [Orlando area]) and C (west central Florida [Tampa area]). This teamwork allows timely relay of event information, such as wrong way drivers, crashes, disabled vehicles, and debris, while providing live video streams via the digital video wall to all FHP personnel.

Fostering a true team environment, liaisons will also jump in to assist dispatchers answering the *FHP motorist assistance phone line, documenting calls in the FHP CAD System, and dispatching Florida's Turnpike-contracted Specialty Towing and Roadside Repair (STARR) wreckers as needed.

Based on the success of the FHP Liaison role at Lake Worth, the Florida's Turnpike team is hopeful to duplicate the program at the FHP's Troop D dispatch center covering Osceola, Orange, and Lake counties. In addition to providing assistance to the FHP, those operators would work in close coordination with CFX and District Five partners for event management on shared roadways.

LWRCC Video Capability Gets an Upgrade

The original digital video wall at the Lake Worth FHP facility has served operators well but the time has come for a new system. Work on the highly-anticipated replacement unit began on July 13, 2020.

The new video wall, approximately 20 percent larger than its predecessor, is made up of 12 high-definition LCD screens. The old setup had three individual projectors, each limited to displaying only a single camera stream. The new system runs from a single server capable of sending streams to each of the 12 LCD screens in virtually unlimited viewing formats. The system utilizes Milestone Smart Wall Technology allowing operators to drop video streams to the display with a simple click in addition to customizable dashboard metrics to suit the dispatch center's needs.

The Florida's Turnpike is also installing four side-wall display units with embedded PC technology that will allow video, performance measures, and other online content dedicated to Florida's Turnpike incident response to be displayed, each as an individual workstation.



For more information, please contact John Easterling at (954) 934-1620 or by email at John.Easterling@dot.state.fl.us.

2020 National Traffic Incident Response AWARENESS WEEK

Slow Down, Move Over, Be Safe



November 9-15, 2020 has been designated by the Federal Highway Administration as “National Traffic Incident Response Awareness Week” with the goal of drawing attention to the dangers that emergency responders face each day while on the scene of roadway incidents.

Everyone who works alongside moving traffic knows the associated risks, but the numbers are trending in a dangerous direction. In 2019, 44 members of our incident response family nationwide (law enforcement, fire/EMS, tow and transportation operators) lost their lives while doing their jobs along the roadside and many, many, more were injured. **Tragically, we have already seen 28 fatalities at the end of July 2020.** National Traffic Incident Response Awareness Week (NTIRAW) seeks to reduce those deaths and injuries.

By engaging and educating the public, not only of the dangers but also how their actions impact the lives of these brave men and women, we can foster change. We need **YOUR** help to push this vital information out to the general populace.

Sample activities that you can use within your agencies include:

- » Targeted DMS messaging
- » Ride-along opportunities
- » Video sharing
- » Social media campaigns
- » Open houses
- » Special exercise activities (see example photo below from 2019’s campaign in South Florida)
- » Events honoring the lives wasted in preventable crashes

Engage your team and start planning now for local activities in your area. TIM program managers are encouraged to participate in national brainstorming calls ahead of the weeklong effort to share ideas and collaborate.



For more information, please contact John Easterling at (954) 934-1620 or by email John.Easterling@dot.state.fl.us.

3... 2... 1... LIFT OFF!

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT FOR SPACE TRAVEL

By Sheryl Bradley, District Five TIM Program Manager, FDOT

In preparation for the return to human space flight, the District Five TSM&O group took on the challenge of implementing a regional traffic plan to facilitate the hundreds of thousands of visitors expected at the Space Coast for this historic event. The plan was multi-pronged in approach, including extensive coordination with local emergency management, public information officials, and numerous emergency response partners. The plan focused on providing pre-event outreach and education on available parking for prime viewing areas and alternate east-west routes to aid in dispersing inbound and outbound traffic. The District's Traffic Incident Management (TIM) team developed a GIS mapping system which would geographically locate the parking areas and provide real-time status updates. This was integrated with Waze traffic alerts to provide visitors with as much information as possible in planning their trip to and from the Space Coast.

Operationally, the plan included rapid deployment of cellular communications devices for signal timing flush plans to assist with inbound/outbound traffic, as well as an extensive MOT and DMS/ADMS signing plan, to provide a safer, more efficient experience for Space Coast visitors and our local partners.

The first launch attempt, scheduled for Wednesday, May 27, scrubbed in the final minutes leading up to the launch window. The plans, however, were put to the test in accommodating a huge crowd. Still, the team capitalized on a second launch attempt on Saturday, May 30, making minor changes to the plans based on feedback from local law enforcement agencies and field units. These adjustments proved extremely beneficial when the weekend crowd grew significantly from the first attempt. TIM team personnel were staffed in the County's EOC and the District's RTMC to provide real-time coordination with emergency responders from at least 10 different local agencies, signal timing engineers, and Maintenance staff. TIM coordination was used to deploy plans and facilitate quick detection, response, and recovery of all traffic incidents, while also assisting agencies in navigating overly-congested roadways when responding to non-traffic emergencies. TIM personnel also provided real-time traffic information with Waze to supplement the District's usual driver feedback tools.

According to the Brevard County Tourist Development Office, an estimated 747,000 people were in the Space Coast area during the launch, with over 200,000 coming from 30 miles or more outside Brevard County. The majority of the crowd converged along a 35-mile stretch of Brevard County, east of US 1, primarily on arterial and surface streets. The team's efforts not only made for a safer, more efficient traffic flow, but also lifted a tremendous burden on local law enforcement resources, which freed them to assist with other areas like controlling ingress/egress from various parking areas that have been a source of hazard in the past and monitoring/controlling pedestrian movement for safety.

Overall, these efforts established a foundation for a regional traffic plan ... a first for the Space Coast ... that will be utilized and improved upon for future launch events. This is critical with the anticipated growth of the space program. Local partners praised the District's efforts and support throughout both launch attempts, and FDOT received several positive mentions in the media for their involvement in the traffic management effort.

For more information, please contact Sheryl Bradley at (321) 257-7347 or by email at Sheryl.Bradley@dot.state.fl.us.

Road Ranger Incident Management System (RRIMS)

By Romona Burke, District Seven TIM Project Manager, FDOT

Since early 2000, the FDOT District Seven Road Ranger program had been using hardened Panasonic brand ToughBook® computers and a program called LOCATE/AVL. This gave Road Rangers the ability to enter and edit events that could be uploaded into the SunGuide system without assistance from a Traffic Management Center (TMC) operator. This technology enabled the District to operate the TMC with fewer operators.

In the spring of 2019, the owner of the LOCATE/AVL system announced they would no longer support the program and it would be decommissioned at the end of the year. They were working on a new system to offer to the District, however, the minimum annual cost to obtain the new system was significantly higher and did not include the upfront cost to have the system integrated into SunGuide. The District Seven team began exploring other options.

One of those options was to speak with another longtime FDOT vendor about the possibility of having our existing state-owned system developed and what they thought the cost might be. The vendor came back with an estimate that was about half of what the proposed new program would cost for one year.

With the consent of the Project Manager for the vendor contract, development of the new system, which would be owned by the Department, began. The vendor worked many hours and quickly came up with a program that would meet the District's needs. That program was given the name of "Road Ranger Incident Management System" (RRIMS). The vendor used the FDOT-owned Smartphone Application for Road Rangers (SPARR) system driver to integrate with SunGuide, which also saved the Department money. To ensure continuity of Road Ranger and TMC operations, RRIMS was implemented before the decommissioning of LOCATE/AVL.

RRIMS provides the Road Ranger drivers a map and event list. The TMC operator can assign the driver an event which will send an audible signal. The driver can also create their own event without coordination with the TMC. This is helpful since the Road Rangers find the majority of events while patrolling. There is no need for TMC operator involvement for a disabled vehicle that is not blocking the roadway but the TMC operator can see all events the drivers are working. The TMC operator, however, must close out all events, which was a choice made by TMC management. Having the drivers input and modify events reduces the amount of radio traffic and provides less chance for errors because of misunderstanding in communications. The use of RRIMS to manage events enables the TMC to function well with less operators per shift, at a substantial savings to the Department.

Ownership of the event can change between the driver or the TMC operator, based on need. If the driver is on the roadway and closing a lane, for instance, he can notify the TMC via radio and an operator can easily update the event.

Early in the development of RRIMS, there were several "bugs" that had to be addressed, but the system has had few issues since the testing period was completed. An access software was also installed on all Road Ranger computers which enables our IT technicians to work on any issues remotely. District One has adopted RRIMS for their Road Ranger operations as well.

RRIMS has proven to be a valuable tool for the Department and improvements are continuing to be made as the program moves forward.

Road Ranger Incident Management System (RRIMS), from page 14

Supervisor Mode Display

The Road Ranger Supervisor vehicle is assigned credentials to see the status and location of all Road Rangers. Default credentials allow each Road Ranger to see event locations only.

Road Ranger Event Display

Upon arrival at the event, the Active Event dialog on the left allows the Road Ranger to document event information. This active event is highlighted in yellow on the right portion of the screen, along with additional events assigned to other Road Rangers. The RRIMS app display uses large point and click boxes to take advantage of the laptop's touch screen.

For more information, please contact Romona Burke at (813) 615-8613 or by email at romona.burke@dot.state.fl.us.



District Four SIRV Team:

Always Ready to Provide Direction and Assistance

By Tom Mangan, SIRV Operations Manager, AutoBase, Inc.



In 2004, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) recognized that a state presence was needed on interstate highways when a lane blocking event was expected to last two hours or longer. In 2005, the Severe Incident Response Vehicle (SIRV) Team was created to meet this need in Broward County, adopting a new philosophy of Incident Management rather than Incident Response. Continuously evolving to meet the ever-increasing demands of South Florida's highways, the SIRV Team currently has 25 operators and 10 trucks and is available for support and assistance on the interstate highways anywhere in District Four.



SIRV Team operators are all retired police and fire rescue professionals, who were carefully selected based on their particular skills, training, and experience. They are all trained and certified in incident command procedures, the National Incident Management System (NIMS), Advanced Maintenance of Traffic (AMOT), incident quick clearance procedures, CPR/ First Aid/AED, and emergency vehicle operations.

On scene, the SIRV Team operator acts as the FDOT Incident Commander, whose primary function is to establish and maintain a safe work zone for other responders, such as police and fire rescue personnel. Working with the local Road Rangers, SIRV units will close lanes as appropriate and re-direct traffic around the site. Once it is safe to proceed, the SIRV personnel will clear the affected lanes of any vehicles, debris, or other materials that may present a hazard to passing motorists and re-open the lanes to restore the normal traffic flow.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, lane closures cost between \$244 and \$365 per minute for each lane closed. In just the first half of this year, the SIRV Team has saved 12,831 minutes of lane blockages, resulting in a savings to Florida residents of up to \$4,683,315. On July 29, 2019, the SIRV Team began providing the same type of service to the Arterial Roads in Broward County, with a similarly high level of success.

Besides crashes and other roadway incidents, the SIRV Team also provides traffic control and assistance to local agencies at public event and service sites. These include providing support at drive-up food pantries and drive-through Covid-19 test sites, freeing up police and fire personnel to respond elsewhere.

For more information, please contact Joudy Mendez at (954) 847-2789 or by email at Joudy.Mendez@dot.state.fl.us.



BUILDING A BETTER I-4

NEW RAMPS OPEN AT THE I-4 AND S.R. 408 INTERCHANGE

1. New ramp from eastbound I-4 to eastbound S.R. 408.
2. New ramp from eastbound I-4 to westbound S.R. 408.
3. New ramp from westbound I-4 to eastbound S.R. 408.
4. New ramp from westbound I-4 to westbound S.R. 408.

Major Interchange Opens Early On I-4 Ultimate

By Sheryl Bradley, District Five TIM Program Manager, FDOT

In line with the State's plan to expedite construction projects while traffic volumes were low due to COVID-19, District Five was able to advance completion of a major interchange within the I-4 Ultimate project. The interchange at I-4 and SR 408 includes nine ramps, the tallest of which is 120 feet above ground level. Two of the nine ramps were already open, but in late May, six of the remaining seven were opened three months earlier than planned. Part of this accelerated plan involved closing two of three lanes on westbound I-4 over a long weekend, leading up to opening day.

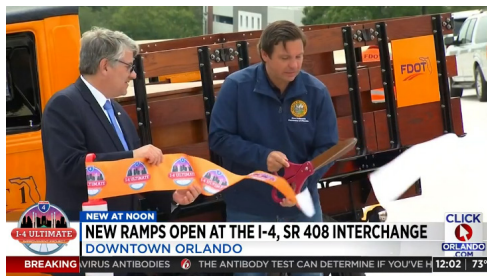
Although traffic volumes were significantly lower than normal, the closure had major implications for emergency responders and others who were still committed to traveling I-4 in the first days after the State began reopening. As such, District Five's Regional Traffic Management Center team designed an elaborate signing and arterial diversion plan to provide motorists with ample information to make decisions about their route based on anticipated travel times. This was done in conjunction with the Integrated Corridor Management (ICM) team, who worked through the weekend to ensure efficient traffic flow on the arterial roadways. Additionally, District Five TIM staff coordinated with emergency responders whose routes to the region's trauma center would be impacted.

In addition, the District's TIM staff worked with the project concessionaire to facilitate ramp tours for emergency responders, allowing them an opportunity to walk the ramps and get a bird's eye view of the interchange. The ramp tours also provided the opportunity to survey on/off ramp configurations and emergency shoulders and ask questions about integrated fire suppression systems, CCTV, and other design features.

District Five also took this opportunity to introduce a new ramp labeling system, designed to assist responders with identifying the location of motorists needing emergency assistance within the interchange's complex ramp configuration. The new labels were coordinated by District Five TIM personnel with input from responders who had requested a labeling system that would avoid use of map books or reference diagrams. As such, the labeling system provides an exit number, direction, and ramp letter designation in a four-digit label, on light posts throughout the interchange. The labels also help dispatchers determine whether motorists are on a ramp or within the mainline when they call for emergency assistance. As express lanes are added, the labeling system will include a new color scheme to further differentiate express lane ramps from mainline ramps.

With this system in place, emergency dispatch centers can easily ascertain enough information from a motorist to identify where they are within the interchange, even if their CAD systems are down. This ramp labeling system was very well received by responders. It is being replicated as a districtwide standard for locations where responders have identified challenges with long collector ramps or other features that make it difficult for motorists to effectively communicate their whereabouts.

A grand opening ceremony was hosted atop a ramp, approximately 85 feet above ground level, where Governor DeSantis, FDOT Secretary Kevin Thibault, and members of the media were present for a ribbon cutting.



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