

FDOT DISTRICT TWO

Intelligent Transportation Systems Newsletter –
May 2010
Issue 32

THE OFFICIAL START OF
FLORIDA SUMMER



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Notes from the District Two ITS Engineer	1
Performance Measures	3
Construction	4
Road Ranger Update	5
RISC Update	6
Traffic Incident Management	6
Maintenance	7
North Florida TPO Update	8
Operations	9
Spotlight on...Captain Urana Harris	10
Marketing	11
Photo Gallery	12
Staffing/Contact Info	13

Cover photograph courtesy of traffic surveillance pilot, Garrett Knoll

ITS Announcements

Alachua TIM Meeting N.E. 39th Avenue , Gainesville **6/9/10 10:00 a.m.**

Best wishes to Jill Dawson, as she heads off on a month long mission trip to Nicaragua

Please contact the ITS Office at (904) 360-5465 if you would like to participate in the meetings.

Notes from the District 2 ITS Engineer

The month of May has been interesting and extremely busy to say the least. During the month we interviewed three consultants for CEI services on the Phase VII and VIII projects. We also had to interview firms for the Phase IX project and TMC Engineering Consultant contract. Then, there was the Road Ranger Service Patrol Contract that had its final selection in late May. The incumbent, First Coast Road Rangers, was the winning vendor and should begin with the new contract in mid-June.

Finally, I was part of a statewide technical selection committee team that interviewed four firms interested in the SunGuide Software support contract. Whew!! And to think we still have to deal with incident management, maintenance and operations on a daily basis as well. No wonder the gray hairs are popping up much quicker!

I will begin with the Road Ranger contract since it is the most critical function within TMC operations. The goal is to have this contract executed by the first or second week of June, thereby providing a smooth transition to new aspects of the program. The top priority will be acquiring the sponsorship dollars we have discussed over the past year. This opportunity seems promising, with several private enterprises clamoring to get a piece of the action.

The goal is to start slow with moderate funding and then increase sponsorships exponentially

over the next year as we try to match the current annual budget.

First Coast Road Rangers impressed the team in that they did not rely on their past accomplishments and instead worked on certain areas that would make the program much stronger. For instance, they knew that fuel would be a major issue in the near future due to costs, replenishment options and hurricane season so they went out and acquired two 1000 gallon fuel tanks to accommodate this need. They also improved their capability at avoiding “down time” for the operators by utilizing their existing five ASE certified mechanics to respond to vehicle maintenance issues/damages on demand. As part of this effort they also are keeping spare parts at the shop for all their vehicles to avoid the normal long delays when acquiring replacement components.

This firm also took a local approach to sponsorship opportunities by speaking to firms that have been established in Jacksonville for several years. To get this part of the program going, they currently have at least five sponsorship opportunities that could generate a generous amount of funding the first year, with the hope that they can build upon this through industry competition (i.e. envy). We will start off the program with large static message signs displaying the beginning/ending point of each

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Notes from the ITS Engineer continued

route, the hours of operation and the sponsors of the program. From this approach we hope to expand to decals and/or wraps on Road Ranger vehicles, as well as additional static signs if the funding makes it worthwhile.

As for the projects involving consultants, we feel very fortunate in that we had the opportunity to select from a very strong pool of candidates. The winning firms have extensive experience with ITS and District Two, therefore we see the program getting much stronger over the next three years.

Many of the proposals presented concepts “outside of the box” and incorporated the future of ITS, which is the Intellidrive program.

Speaking of Intellidrive, have you noticed the latest commercials by car manufacturers? It makes me “giddy” just to think about it. A little technology here and a little there gives me hope that we are on the cusp of great things in the near future. I feel that once the dust settles we will be tasked by FHWA to deploy wireless or blue tooth technology that will allow for vehicle to road communication. Once this is accomplished there will be an endless supply of data and information sharing that will take ITS to the next level of evolution. Keep your fingers crossed.

I would like to end my monthly report with reflection on the statewide SunGuide software selection process. I will not lie! It was BORING,

tedious and difficult to keep up with the computer lingo, however this software is the most significant and important aspect of our performance. Be that as it may, the future of this software is limitless with improvements to the mapping system, integration of partner agency data and use of Smart phone technology for information sharing. The winning vendor was the incumbent, Southwest Research Institute, who did not sit idly by living off their past accomplishments. They competed with a vengeance and opened up the possibility of features that were unheard of several years ago. Keep your fingers crossed that our luck continues with this firm as I feel they have provided one of the best software packages in the nation.

Oops! One final thing to mention is that in May the Central Office Traffic Engineering Research Lab (TERL) has advertised a contract that incorporates all approved ITS products for use by Florida based agencies. Once this contract is executed we will have the opportunity to purchase ITS devices at cut rate prices, thus getting us more “bang for our buck.” As an example, the previous statewide ITS contract cut product costs by nearly 40%, thus a Dynamic Message Sign that would normally cost the Department \$100,000 was listed at \$60,000. Sounds like a bargain to me! This contract should be available to all agencies by July 5th.

Pete Vega
District 2 ITS Engineer

Performance Measures

The weekly audits of events are continuing as before. Similar audits are being conducted now for District 3 events. Many discrepancies have been identified whether it is software or operator error. It is expected that when the new version is released in June, there will be many improvements and thus resurgence in findings in the weekly audits. Continuous auditing and monitoring of the data and calculation is essential to ensure a beneficial product.

Due to the weekly Performance Measures audits and evaluation of operations, there has been a constant increase in the ratio between the number of events included in the performance measures and the number of events entered in SunGuide. In regard to District 2, there were only about 2% of events included in the Performance Measures for January, but in April that percentage reached 8% and for May, through the 24th, 11% of events entered in SunGuide were included in the Performance Measures. This shows the value of conducting Performance Measures audits and evaluating the functionality of operations.

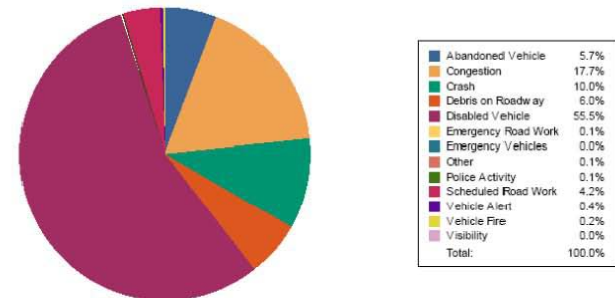
Additionally, a PowerPoint presentation is being prepared to explain the purpose of the performance measures. There are several reports in the SunGuide system and the presentation will explain the various uses of each of the primary reports. For all those involved in operations at the

TMC, this serves as an opportunity to understand how their daily tasks impact the overall objective of the TMC.

The chart shown is taken from the Quarterly Summary of the second quarter including data up to the 24th of May. There were 2,229 events entered in SunGuide in April and so far 1,634 events have been entered in SunGuide for the month of May.

All Responders	Total	April	May
Events included in Performance Measures	307	183	124
A. Notification Duration (min.)*	0.0	0.0	0.0
B. Verification Duration (min.)	0.8	0.9	0.8
C. Response Duration (min.)	3.0	3.3	2.6
D. Open Roads Duration (min.)	50.3	43.9	59.8
E. Departure Duration (min.)	5.3	7.8	1.7
Roadway Clearance Duration (min.)	54.2	48.1	63.2
Incident Clearance Duration (min.)	59.5	55.8	64.9

Percentage of Event Types for all Events



Jill Dawson
Metric Engineering

Construction

The I-95 Project (Phase VI) is installing 96-fiber cable, CCTV cameras, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) and Vehicle Detectors along I-95 from the I-295 Southern Interchange to the St. Johns County Line. This project continues to run smoothly, with approximately 95% of the work completed and only 85% of the Contract Time used. All major work items have been completed. Device Stand Alone Testing is underway and the Sub-System Testing will take place the first week of June. The Project is on schedule for completion in July.

This project will allow the Traffic Management Center to monitor traffic congestion resulting from commuters exiting onto both Old St. Augustine Road and CR 210 and provide motorists advanced warnings of the congestion. These advanced warnings along with the newly completed Interchange improvements at CR 210, will provide some long needed relief from congestion for the people who live along CR 210 and commute into Jacksonville.

The SR 9A Project (Phase VII) has submitted completed Signed and Sealed Plans. This project is installing 96-fiber cable, CCTV cameras, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), Vehicle Detectors and Roadside Weather Information Sensors along SR 9A from Atlantic Blvd North to I-95. The Project also includes two Arterial Dynamic Message Signs and two CCTV

cameras on Heckscher Drive approaching SR 9A in each direction. The Construction Contract will be let in late September with an anticipated start of Construction in Early 2011.

This project is critical to this area due to the continuing growth of JaxPort and also the development along SR 9A. The ITS devices installed by this Project will provide Traffic Management Center Operators with the ability to view the roadways and provide information to motorists and responders alike. This Project has also opened up better communications with members of JaxPort and will hopefully lead to a coordinated effort to provide both Truckers and commuters with congestion free travel.

The I-295 Project (Phase VIII) has submitted 60% plans. This project is installing 96-fiber cable, CCTV cameras, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), Vehicle Detectors and Roadside Weather Information Sensors along I-295 from I-10 North to I-95. This project will complete the Fiber Communications ring around the Western side of Jacksonville. This project is important to this area of Jacksonville due to the large number of Trucking companies along the corridor and the proximity to Jacksonville International Airport.

Several projects are ongoing with Duval and Clay Counties. The State Road 21/Blanding Blvd Project has submitted Signed and Sealed Plans

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Construction continued

and the Contractor, Miller Electric, broke ground on the project in the last few weeks. Currently Miller Electric is forming up the extensions to the Signal Controller bases and has installed 5 of the 6 power service poles. The SR 5 / US 1 Project has been re-advertised with bids being due on June 9th. The US 17 Project has been given the Notice To Proceed and is currently working on the 90% plans. All of these projects are using existing fiber infrastructure and adding Arterial Dynamic Message Signs and CCTV cameras to allow for the City of Jacksonville and Clay County to view their arterial roadways, provide information to travelers, and dynamically adjust their signal timing to help alleviate congestion.

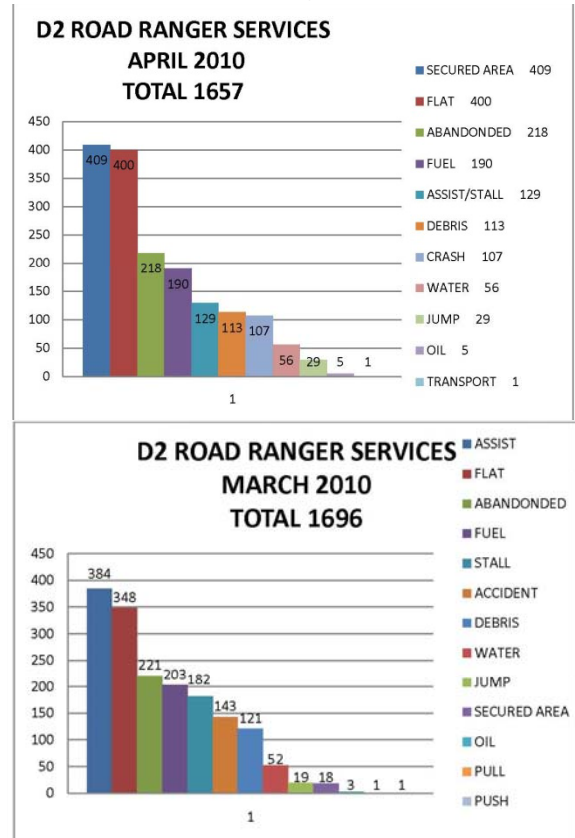
John Kell
District 2 ITS Construction Project Manager



www.fl511.com

Road Ranger Update

The Road Ranger Service Patrol Ranger Contract has been awarded to First Coast Road Rangers, LLC. The service area and hours will remain the same - 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM, Monday through Friday on I-95, I-295, 9A, I-10 and J. Turner Butler. Safe tows will continue as needed. Our current Road Ranger Operators assisted 1657 stranded vehicles in the month of April. The Road Ranger Service Patrol Program continues to be a great asset to our District 2 Traffic Incident Management Program and we look forward to starting our new contract.



RISC (Rapid Incident Scene Clearance) Update

Since December 18, 2010, we have not had an incident that required the services of our Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC). Our Contractors - Southern Wrecker and Recovery, LLC., Walt's Wrecker Service, John's Towing Auto and Truck Services, Inc., and University Towing and Transport, Inc. – are ready to be activated if the need arises.

Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Update

ALACHUA TIM TEAM UPDATE

The Alachua Traffic Incident Management will hold its team meeting on Wednesday, June 9th at the FDOT Gainesville Maintenance Conference Room, N.E. 39th Avenue at 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

FIRST COAST TIM TEAM UPDATE

The First Coast Traffic Management Team met on Tuesday, May 18, 2010, at the Florida Department of Transportation's Urban Office Training Center at 10:00 AM. The following agencies were represented: FHP, ICA, City of Jacksonville Traffic Operations, Metric Engineering, FDOT Traffic Operations, FDOT ITS, FDOT EOC, SmartRoute Systems, Nassau Sheriff's Office, Jacksonville Fire/Rescue, City of Jacksonville Environmental, First Coast Road Rangers, and Jacksonville Transportation Authority. After incidents were discussed, the 2010 District 2 Diversion Routes CD was made available for all agencies. Ed Ward

gave a presentation on "One Way Evacuation" and advised this plan will be used as a last resort and only if activated by the Governor. Ed also gave a report on the upcoming hurricane season and reported information can be found at: <http://tropical.atmos.colostate.edu/forecasts>.

D2 TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM MISSION:

The Florida Department of Transportation District Two's Traffic Incident Management Teams through partnering efforts strive to continuously reduce incident scene clearance times to deter congestion and improve safety. The Teams' objective is to exceed the Open Roads Policy thus ensuring mobility, economic prosperity, and quality of life.

D2 TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM VISION:

Through cooperation, communication and training the Teams intend to reduce incident scene clearance times by 10% each year through 2015.

Welcome back to Captain Urana Harris!

Donna Danson
District 2 ITS Operations
Program Manager

Maintenance

The ITS Maintenance Contractor, Traffic Control Devices (TCD), continues to do a good job of maintaining the ITS field equipment. In April over 95% of ITS Devices were available on any given day. When devices are found to be inoperable, TCD is issued a work order and is able to respond and repair most devices the same day. This type of service is why we are able to have almost all of our devices available to view the roadways and provide traveler information to motorists.

As an update on the fiber connection to the Jacksonville Maintenance Yard, following receipt of comments from the City of Jacksonville Permitting Department, the TMC Consultant revised the plans. The plans have since been resubmitted to the City of Jacksonville Permitting Department and are still under review. The monitoring equipment that is needed in the Jacksonville Maintenance Buildings to view the CCTV images, have been received and will be installed by the end of May.

The replacement DMS and structure for the damaged equipment along I-10 has been ordered and should be received in the next 60 days. The maintenance team is coordinating with Construction's widening project staff on this section of roadway in an effort to determine the best time to begin the installation. The ultimate goal will be to wait until their project has completed work at the site prior to reinstalling the sign and structure.

TCD will also be assisting with the installation of static 511 signs on existing CCTV and detector poles. The objective of this effort is to remind motorists to call 511 if they are stuck in stop-and-go traffic. Hopefully, this promotional tool will prevent the existing pattern of motorists who are stuck in traffic from calling *FHP to inquire on traffic conditions from their dispatchers.

The new Maintenance Contract is in place and with TCD winning the new contract, our ITS Maintenance effort has not skipped a beat. We look forward to continued successes as we move forward.

Kevin Jackson
District 2 ITS Field Specialist



North Florida TPO Update

Activity with the North Florida TPO (NFTPO) projects has been low key during the month of May. The State Road 21 project has begun with initial construction starting in late May. The US 17 project is picking up steam and should start construction in the next two months. The US 1 project is advertised and a selection is expected in the next two weeks. Projects involving County installations in St. Johns, Duval and Nassau County are in the process with a hope of completing all of the work prior to Christmas.

The greatest challenge has been the ITS office keeping up with the workload. We are pretty much spread thin at the moment, thus we are fortunate that we have a pretty strong support structure incorporating FDOT construction personnel, the TMC consultant and local agencies. Without them I don't know what we would do to keep up with the number of simultaneous projects currently in motion.

One project that is gaining steam is the Road Weather Information System (RWIS) deployment. The North Florida TPO gathered ITS Coalition partners for a discussion on the bridge location for initial deployments, future opportunities and the process that will be used to benefit from the weather data that is obtained at various locations.

The objective is to effectively deploy manpower while standardizing the decision making process

during high wind conditions on bridges. Research was performed by the NFTPO consultant, HNTB, on studies done throughout the nation and Florida. They assimilated this information and provided the team with several options for response to high wind conditions.

Currently, the TERL is testing some RWIS devices and should have something available by this coming August. Hopefully, these products will be available in the new Statewide ITS device contract at the cut rate prices mentioned previously. If this is the case, the Department will purchase the devices using NFTPO funds, local partners will perform the installation and the Department will figure out a method to get this information back to a server. Once this is accomplished we can package up the information and distribute it our partners for use in determining bridges that are impacted by strong winds. They can then utilize the process mentioned above to determine whether to close the bridge or just allow small profile vehicles to cross. The goal is to have most of the deployments in place and operational prior to the Hurricane season in 2011.



Operations

Two Seasons are almost here.....Summer and Hurricane. Both affect traffic patterns around the District and our lives. Whether it is being stuck in morning congestion or stuck in an evacuation route, traffic is no fun and can prove costly. Being prepared BEFORE Hurricane season is a must. Make sure to have in place a Family Plan, Hurricane supply kit and a place to go or meet up. For more information on the upcoming Hurricane Season and Hurricane Preparedness Plans you can visit:

<http://www.floridadisaster.org/index.asp>

<http://www.actionnewsjax.com/weather/hurricane/default.aspx>.

The summer brings a reduced amount of congestion but accidents are still aplenty. Just like being prepared for a Hurricane Season, it is beneficial to know what traffic is like when a natural disaster is impending. Call 511 before you get out on the road or visit fl511.com. Knowing what traffic conditions are can save you time and money. Knowledge of slowdowns will also greatly reduce secondary crashes. An informed motorist is a safe motorist.

April was busy for the TMC, very similar to March, as almost 2,200 events were worked in District 2.

Of those 2,200 events 281 of them were lane blocking events which is down 14% from March. The Road Rangers chipped in on approximately 1,500 events in April working to keep our roadways safe.

Remember, we depend on the many different partners in District 2. The outreach continues to bring in all the information we can to the TMC in a timely manner, so that we can, in turn, get that quality information out to the traveling public.

You can reach our 24/7 line at (904) 301-3700 (ext. 122) or our work day line at (904) 360-5465. You can also leave feedback on the Next Generation 511 System to report any notable traffic conditions, incidents, or 'bugs' you may find in the system. This user feedback is relayed directly to our operators, in real-time, and is an important supplement to our deployed devices.

Remember: **Know Before You Go!**

Dial 511 or go to FL511.com

Ryan Crist
Senior TMC Supervisor

Spotlight on...Captain Urana Harris

Spend a little time talking with Captain Urana Harris of the Florida Highway Patrol, and she'll instantly win your heart over. Her enthusiasm for life and dedication to her job are second to none. Add to that her knowledge of law enforcement and her witty personality and you've got a winning combination.

"I became a Florida State Trooper because I thought all the FHP troopers looked like John and Poncho on CHIPS," Harris jokes. Even if her expectations weren't met, she must've had good reason to stick around. She's been with the Florida Highway Patrol for almost 27 years, 24 as a State Trooper and 3 as a Commander.

Captain Harris was recently stationed in Tampa but was transferred back to Jacksonville in April of this year as Commander of District I, which includes North Duval, Nassau County, Traffic Homicide Investigations Squad for Nassau, Duval, Clay, Baker, Bradford and Union Counties and the Troop G Jacksonville Motorcycle Squad. She has also spent time in Pinellas, Orange, Okaloosa and Broward Counties over her 27 year career with FHP.

Harris graduated from Jacksonville University with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and later earned her Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of North Florida.

When things get tough, Harris' motto is "adapt, improvise and overcome." (a quote made famous by Clint Eastwood in the movie 'Heartbreak Ridge') Harris knows all about "adapting" for the job. One of her most memorable assignments as a State Trooper came when she had to go undercover as a prostitute in rest areas throughout the state to keep the rest areas safe for the motoring public. After all, part of the mission statement reads, "providing highway safety and security through excellence in service, education and enforcement leading to a safer Florida." Just another day on the job.



Captain Harris, with the ever-present smile (well, almost always)

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Spotlight on...Captain Urana Harris continued

One of the most touching moments in her career came when she was assigned to help dedicate a stretch of Interstate 95 in Nassau County to slain trooper Charles Parks. Parks was killed in the line of duty on February 6, 1973 while attempting to apprehend two armed robbery suspects.

Harris has had quite an impressive career. But she also enjoys a quiet life at home with her husband, Mark, of 16 years. In her free time, she enjoys traveling and running.

Harris adds, "I am looking forward to being back in Jacksonville working and continuing with and improving on the great relationship between the FHP and the DOT."



Editor's Note:

After having the pleasure of working for years with Captain Harris, here in Jacksonville, it's a wonderful feeling to be able to say "Welcome Home, Captain Harris, Welcome Home!"

Marketing

The 511 Marketing Team took an exciting trip around the world while attending the 18th annual World of Nations Celebration in downtown Jacksonville earlier this month. Over 35 nations were represented at this year's event, and 511 was proud to take part in this multi-cultural celebration.

The 511 Marketing Team also took part in a high seas adventure. It was "shrimp galore" at the 47th annual Isle of 8 Flags Shrimp Festival in beautiful Fernandina Beach. The festivities kicked off with a pirate parade Thursday night, April 29th. Then it was 3 days of fun in the sun with arts and crafts, food and even a pirate reenactment. For those with strong stomachs there was even an ice cream eating contest... shrimp ice cream, that is.

Back on dry land, we headed over to Blue Cross Blue Shield to participate in their "Be Ready Expo" for hurricane preparedness. And our next stop found us at the Modis Building downtown for their annual Health and Safety Fair.

It's been a fun month, but it's not over yet. This weekend (the last weekend in May) we'll head over to Metro Park for the Jacksonville Jazz Fest. It starts Friday, May 28th and runs through Sunday, May 30th, complete with artists like Chris Botti, Patti Labelle and more. For more information check out their website www.jaxjazzfest.com. We'll see you there!

Sherri Byrd
511 Marketing Manager

Photo Gallery



Blue Cross Blue Shield invited 511 to attend their "Be Ready" Expo about hurricane preparedness



Standing room only, as Shrimp Festival Attendees wait to "spin the wheel" and learn about 511



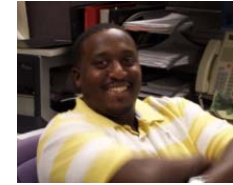
511 was a part of the Isle of Eight Flags Shrimp Festival in Fernandina Beach

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 Penny Kamish, Project Manager
 Ryan Crist, TMC Lead Supervisor
 John (Sean) Wilcox, TMC Supervisor
 Jason Summerfield, Network Manager
 Santos Morin, TMC Assistant Supervisor
 Derrick Odom, TMC Assistant Supervisor
 Sherri Byrd, 511 Marketing Manager

D2 Day Operators

Jesse Gilmour
 Jessica Lakey
 Adam Page

D2 Night & Weekend Operators

Jason Evans
 David Rolfe
 Rebecca Reid
 Tyler Sowers

D3 Day Operators

Santos Morin
 Adrienne Catapano
 Jessica Vazquez
 Ed Capps

511 Probe

Sherri Byrd
 Michelle Warren