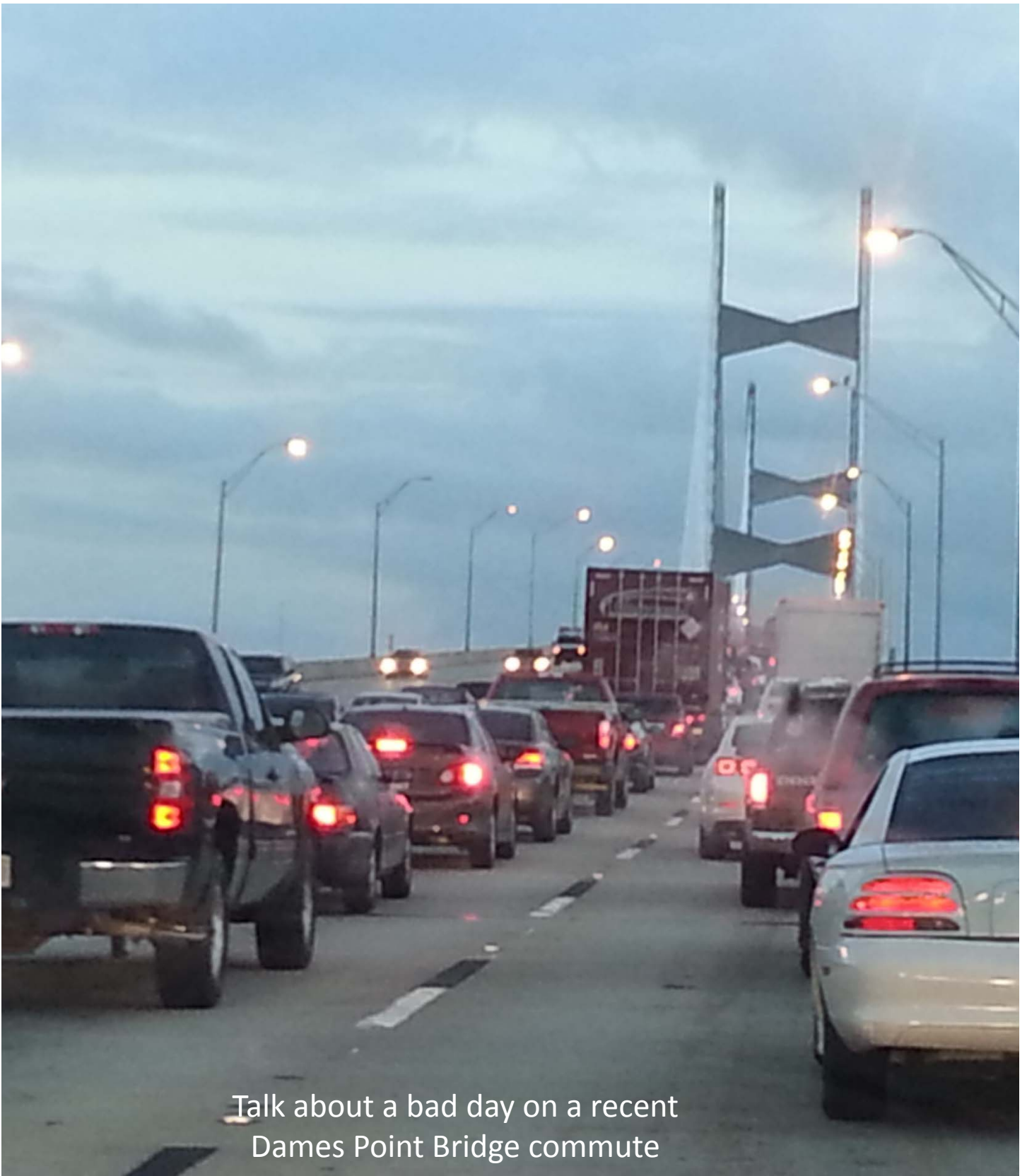




## DISTRICT TWO ITS NEWSLETTER



*April 2013 Issue 66*



Talk about a bad day on a recent  
Dames Point Bridge commute



### **NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS ENGINEER**

I am currently at the ITS America Conference in Nashville learning the latest and greatest about our industry. I was asked to present on two topics during this year's meeting. The first presentation focused on the Gainesville project that will not only be deploying typical ITS devices like CCTV cameras, DMS and vehicle detectors but also visibility sensors and thermal imaging cameras. The second presentation was called "More Bang for Your Buck" and focused on cost saving measures that could be used within any ITS program with minimal investment. Both presentations went well and the audience was surprisingly larger than anticipated based on the allotted time and day of our presentation. Overall it was a very good experience that leads me to believe it's going to get even busier in the next year.

Before going any further I must acknowledge that Florida DOT won "Best of ITS" awards at this annual conference. The first award went to Central Office for their work with the ITS Facility Management program. This project involved gathering an inventory of deployed ITS devices throughout the state based on GPS coordinates. All this information is gathered at one location for review and analysis by Central Office and is incorporated into our equipment replacement program so that life-cycle costs can be clearly determined in the future.

The second award winner was District Six in Miami for their Operations Task Manager software. My close friend and partner in crime, Rory Santana, had a beaming grin when the award winner was announced since he constantly has his staff pushing the envelope each day. This software was introduced to our District last fall and we've been working closely with Rory's staff on learning the ins and outs of how it works. We recently received a version of

this software and plan to install it into our SunGuide software later next month. We are coordinating with the District Six folks so that they can be present in Jacksonville during installation. This will save us time and money as the configuration process moves along since they can provide the expertise necessary during the set-up.

Okay, back to the conference and my presentations. I had the opportunity to share information with three panelists from Tennessee DOT and learned that Florida is so far ahead of the game! Mind you, I am not knocking their ITS program nor the efforts they've put forth but they still have a lot to learn in the next few years. For example, they have an ITS deployment on the outskirts of Knoxville and plan to communicate with the equipment via T1 lines. Once they saw the horror in my face they wanted to know what other means were available. Well, first I told them that a T1 line usually ran about \$3,000 per month and was one of the reasons we dropped this communication method seven years ago. I then told them a better option would be DSL, Broadband or Cellular which would be about 1/5<sup>th</sup> the cost. Likewise, I mentioned that they had the opportunity to take advantage of the height at the peaks to go wireless point to point at one location, and then they could shoot the data via fiber to their TMC.

The other presentation was titled "More Bang for Your Buck," something that's right up my alley. I spoke about the cost saving methods we used in the TMC like the LCD/Plasma video wall and self manufactured video wall controller. I then spoke about the new Activu system we recently installed which will allow for expandability using software revisions instead of hardware purchases. I segued into the Bridge Wind sensor project that saved tons of money by



### **NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS ENGINEER CONTINUED**

hopping on the NOAA satellites. I then addressed the Smart Phone Application for Road Rangers (SPARR) that my staff created with the help of Southwest Research Institute. This drew a lot of interest from the crowd because of the reporting features and AVL capabilities within the application.

Once I had the crowd under my spell the BlueToad deployment in Jacksonville was unveiled to them. The ease of installation and configuration really interested them and the cost had a positive impact on their opinion. I ended by discussing the System Manager approach that is used in District Two. The deployment of ITS projects at a reasonable cost is the goal of many but the fact that you can control your own destiny is what really engrossed them. I must have heard at least four people in the audience say that at the end of their projects they felt they did not receive what was expected and are now in the process of going back to correct the errors. After the presentation I was approached by an Engineer from Alaska DOT. It was kind of a funny conversation because they have about 1/20<sup>th</sup> the amount of roadways that Florida has and their DOT focuses more on the aviation side of things. In any case this Engineer was responsible for CVO operations and was interested in hearing more about the BlueToad deployment. Not surprisingly, gathering data from shippers in her area was impossible (the same holds true in Florida) so she wondered if the BlueToad data could be an option. I thought she would almost jump out of her shoes when I gave her ideas on how this could be a possibility due to the amount of Bluetooth equipment contained within the cab of the freight carriers.

Okay, so enough about my presentations. Let's now talk about the ITS America

Conference! The first session was on Sunday afternoon with a panel of 23 representatives who lead State DOTs throughout the country. Proudly, I can say they began with our State Secretary, Ananth Prasad, and extended a wealth of compliments about the efforts of FDOT in the ITS arena. Secretary Prasad represented us very well and gave me a vision of what's to come. He stated that the next step in our program is to extend ITS into Rural areas, develop a program to address arterial needs, determine where ITS can merge with safety applications and develop a method to generate performance measures on which we can analyze for future roadway improvements. He also spoke about managed lanes and the need for technology to make it work properly. He ended by discussing the importance of incident management and the need to nurture the RISC program since non-recurring incidents are one of the major impacts to the movement of freight and traffic in our area.

The rest of the panel also had great ideas, however the one thing I gladly heard them mention continuously was the need to provide the proper training and recruitment that will help ITS grow. One CEO went so far as to say we need to realize that the ITS programs aren't an Industry that revolves around one engineering discipline but instead many. He said that there is a need to not only recruit Civil engineers but software, computer, mechanical and electrical engineers as well. Likewise, he felt that FHWA and the State DOTs could also do a better job of providing the necessary training that is currently few and far between. To cut to the chase, the panel felt that there will be an extensive growth of their ITS programs in the coming years and MAP-22 (Federal Funding program) will be the driving force behind this shift for their respective Departments.



### **NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS ENGINEER CONTINUED**

During the Monday and Tuesday sessions there was a focus on Transportation System Management and Operations, including presentations on freight, safety, arterial signal management and adaptive control methods. Many of the presentations were interesting but the one common link was that most of these presentations addressed the lack of effort from an operational perspective. It seems that we collect a lot of data, perform a ton of analysis and generate reams of white paper reports but at the end of the day nothing can be accomplished without someone running the show (i.e. maintenance and operations). Part of the problem is that there aren't enough people and expertise to go around so a game plan to draw more engineers into ITS is a need if we intend to grow the industry.

On Tuesday and Wednesday there was a shift to Integrated Corridor Management (ICM). The US DOT had FHWA and their transportation research division looked into generating a program that would study the use of ICM. There were ten cities within the U.S. that were selected for this study and two presented at Wednesday afternoon's session. The first presenter was the Dallas/Ft. Worth region who spoke about integrating real time data from Texas DOT, municipal signal offices, transit and tolls. The goal of their ICM project was to develop a real time response plan to parallel corridors that would maintain the flow of traffic through a region. For example, if an incident occurred on the Interstate they wanted the TMC to take this ICM response plan and implement the redirection of traffic onto arterial roadways. As the incident and traffic conditions evolved the ICM response plan would provide new recommendations to the TMC. The objective was to maintain a steady flow of traffic during incident situations. Most of

this would be accomplished using preplanned analysis and information in a data base.

The second presenter was a team from the San Diego area. Their basic approach was the same however this group was using real time information in their algorithm to make a decision based on options provided in their matrix. In hindsight I believe their objective was to rely on the current data and situation to develop an ICM response plan instead of using the Dallas approach of utilizing prepackaged responses. After hearing both presentations I felt that this is just the first step of many before we truly have an ICM response plan in place. During the break I mentioned to a few colleagues that if we really wanted to see this work as imagined we'd need to bring in some experts from IBM, Cisco and Google to perfect the plan. These experts know how to manipulate data that can provide instantaneous information. So far I did not hear that occurring in any of these presentations.

Well, I made it back to work on Thursday safe and sound but a little weary from the week's activities. Thank goodness the troops held down the fort while I was gone but reality slapped me in the face later that afternoon when I got that dreaded e-mail saying "It is timesheet day!" Then someone came into my office saying they needed to go over some reports before Monday. By the time John Kell came into my office to update me on the ITS Construction projects I realized there's still a lot of catching up to do!

Pete Vega  
District 2 ITS Engineer



### **NORTH FLORIDA TPO**

The North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (NFTPO) projects are moving along nicely, even with a few bumps along the way. The airport interconnection project is nearly done and the Jaxport project should be let within the next few days. The arterial dynamic message sign is nearing completion with about 35 days left, however the contractor is having some issues with materials so final acceptance may take a little longer than expected. The design for the US 17 fiber communication/signal upgrade in Clay County (from Creighton Road to south of County Road 220) is at 90% plans. On a final note, the Transit Signal Priority (TSP) deployment along Philips Highway is completed with the only thing remaining being validation of the signal timing impacts when TPS is activated. I don't know if I'd mentioned it but this system also incorporated a Traffic Signal Preemption feature for Fire/Rescue that will be tested along this corridor. Several Fire/Rescue response vehicles will be equipped with this technology in an effort to determine if the deployment will be beneficial to them when responding to incidents in that area.

My main focus with the NFTPO will be on the latest update to the BlueToad data entry system. Several months ago I may have mentioned how cumbersome it was to set up the database for travel time and origin/destination information. After I examined all the work involved I realized there could be several thousand entries for just one corridor (i.e. Atlantic Boulevard) if I intended to set the data base up correctly. After meeting with the vendor, TrafficCast, it was agreed that there had to be a better way. They proposed using a map and graphical user interface (GUI) to expedite the data entry effort. About three months ago we had a chance to play with the Beta version and were impressed with the progression of this new tool. Well, on April 26<sup>th</sup> the new tool will be unveiled to our team for use on the current deployment. I estimate that what used to take a week to enter into the data base should be about half a day with this GUI feature.

Likewise, I feel that errors with the data entry will be significantly reduced using this new tool since more drop down menus will be available. Our summer intern was given the task of getting the first few hundred entries and by the time he left in August he was about to break into tears. He said that an error with the spacebar, a typo or slight mistake would lead him to go back for extensive corrections. This will not occur once the GUI is used because it removes much of the potential human error that occurred in the past.

Over the next few months we intend to focus on getting more devices out in the field to fill in a few spots on the west side of town. We are still struggling with the fiber connectivity in some locations on the South side but are hopeful it can be resolved by this summer. The Planning Modelers should start to grab reports from this system in the near future to see just how well the origin/destination information works with their models. If successful this will be a huge transition for the planning folks due to the capabilities that this BlueToad system will provide to them.

As for the Regional TMC we are almost there! I feel the architect has nailed down a footprint for the building and there will be some minor revisions to the internal configuration over the next few weeks. Once complete we can begin to work with the Construction Manager at Risk (CM@Risk) firm on material quantities and estimates for construction.

The plan is to use software called BIM to design the building. This software will enable us to get a 3D image of the design so that we can determine if any conflicts like pipes blocked by beams will occur. It will also provide an "image" of what the building will look like inside before construction begins in late summer. In any case, lots of exciting things are going on in ITS and it is all due to the partnership we maintain with the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization.



### **CONSTRUCTION**

The contractor for the Phase 7 Project on the I-295 East Beltway, starting at Atlantic Boulevard and going North to the I-95 Interchange, has been installing DMS structures, CCTV poles, MVDS poles, ITS cabinets and devices. The project is progressing at a rapid pace since the completion of the main conduit system throughout the project. The subcontractor responsible for installing the fiber optic cable is expected to begin work in May and the project is anticipated to begin testing in June. The project should be ready for use by the TMC by the end of the summer.

The Phase 8 Project, on the I-295 West Beltway from I-10 to the I-95 North Interchange, is nearing final acceptance. The Contractor has completed all of the installation work and is cleaning up the project area and finalizing small items still remaining. The Systems Manager is completing the work needed to have all devices communicating back to the TMC and will begin final testing in May. Although the TMC is currently receiving videos from the CCTVs along the project corridor, they will be able to utilize all of the devices by the end of June.

The contract award for the Phase 9 Project, on SR 9A from Atlantic Blvd going south to the southern SR 9A/I-95 Interchange, is currently awaiting a ruling on a protest. Resolution of the protest is anticipated within the next few months.

The Arterial Dynamic Message Sign (ADMS) Project is installing ADMS on several of the major local roadways around the southern portion of Jacksonville along I-95. The contractor has completed installation of all ADMS foundations. Twelve of the ADMS are

installed and the remaining four ADMS are expected to be installed by the end of May. The Contractor is currently installing wireless communications antennas to connect each ADMS to the fiber optic communications system on I-95. The project is scheduled for completion at the end of May.

The Airport Road contract, which will provide connectivity between the FDOT ITS network and the Jacksonville International Airport network, has taken a large step forward since the last newsletter. The contractor has installed the fiber optic cable and is preparing to do the fiber splicing. Once the fiber splicing is completed, the contractor will test the fiber optic cable to ensure there are no problems with the cable which could result in degraded communications. This project is scheduled for completion at the end of May.

The I-10 Interchange ITS Project, which is installing fiber optic cable, CCTVs and MVDS within the area of the I-10/I-95 Interchange, began construction on April 9<sup>th</sup>. The contractor is currently installing conduit and is coordinating closely with a Landscaping Project, which is also working within the interchange in an effort to limit the amount of damage to the new landscaping and irrigation lines. The contractor will continue to install conduit throughout the month of May as well as beginning work on the device power services.

John Kell  
District 2 ITS Construction Project Manager



## MAINTENANCE

The ITS Maintenance Contractor, Traffic Control Devices (TCD), has completed all of the forms and field work needed to receive power from JEA for the wireless communications connection across the Intracoastal Waterway on Beach Boulevard. JEA is scheduled to provide service to the site during the first week of May. Although it has taken quite a while to get this installation completed, motorists traveling the area should notice improved traffic flow due to a fully coordinated signal system and upcoming ITS device installations made possible by this communications link.

The ITS Maintenance Section has recently taken over maintenance for a wireless CCTV camera on J Turner Butler Boulevard, which sits in the median West of Belfort Road. TCD replaced the wireless antennas providing communications between the CCTV trailer and the ITS fiber optic communications system on I-95. Since the replacement of the wireless antennas, the TMC has seen no communications outages to the CCTV and is getting high quality video of the surrounding area. The TMC finds the video especially valuable during the morning commute when traffic can be backed up on J Turner Butler Boulevard from I-95 back to Belfort Road in the westbound direction.



With so many ITS structures, devices and cabinets along the Interstates and now several of the arterial roadways in the Northeast Florida area, we often have damage caused by automobile accidents. During the week of April 15<sup>th</sup>, a cabinet was severely damaged by an accident on I-95 in the area of Martin Luther King Junior Parkway. As a result of the cabinet being damaged, the CCTV and several vehicle detectors communicating back to the cabinet are not able to communicate to the TMC. TCD will be replacing the cabinet and associated equipment in the coming weeks. Luckily, this type of incident doesn't occur often, but as this incident shows, things happen and ITS Maintenance needs to be ready for anything.

As Pete Vega detailed in his section, ITS America was held in Nashville, Tennessee from April 21<sup>st</sup> through April 24<sup>th</sup>. The Exhibit Hall showcased new technologies from ITS Consultants, Manufacturers and Vendors in varying aspects of ITS. From a maintainer's perspective, there wasn't anything that immediately stuck out to me, which will make maintaining our existing ITS devices and equipment any easier or less expensive.

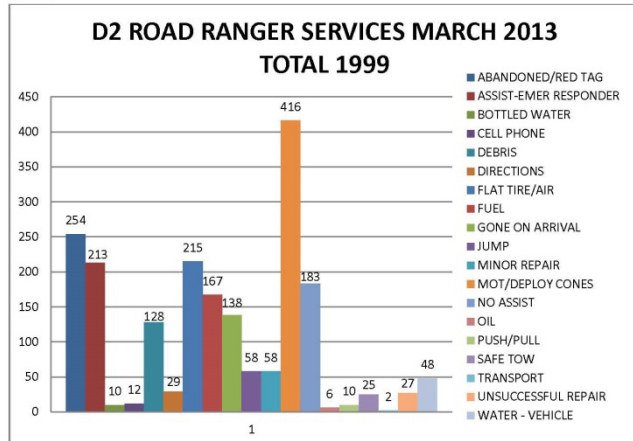
However, when looking deeper into several of the products, there are a few which may be more robust than what we currently have deployed and a few more which may be more user friendly. In the next few weeks I will be contacting the vendors of these products to get more information and possibly a "loaner" to test in our system. Any piece of the ITS system that is more robust and/or user friendly means less system downtime, which results in more real-time data to provide accurate information to motorists.

Kevin Jackson  
ITS Field Specialist



**ROAD RANGER UPDATE**

Almost 2000 motorists were assisted by the District 2 Road Rangers in the month of March 2013. The Road Rangers stay busy assisting law enforcement and motorists between the hours of 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM, Monday through Friday, rain or shine. Each month our Rangers attend a mandatory Safety Training where instructions for all types of traffic situations are discussed and incidents occurring the previous month are debriefed. Since assisting motorists and law enforcement on our interstates puts our Road Rangers in an unsafe situation, safe and best practices are continuously being reinforced. With the hurricane season approaching, the Road Rangers will begin preparing for possible extended hours.



**RISC – Rapid Incident Scene Clearance – Update**

We have not had a RISC incident in the last month but our RISC Contractors remain ready to respond if needed.

**ALACHUA-BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE**

Our Alachua-Bradford TIM Team held its bi-monthly meeting on Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at the FDOT Gainesville Operations Office, 5301 N.E. 39<sup>th</sup> Ave. at 10:00 A.M.

Agencies represented were: Metric Engineering, Bradford County Emergency Management, FDOT ITS Dept, FDOT Maintenance Dept., Atkins Engineering, FHP, FDOT EOC, Florida Forestry Dept., FDOT Construction, AAG Environmental, Alachua County Sheriff’s Office, D8 Medical Examiner, FDEP OER, Gainesville Fire Rescue Dept., Alachua County Fire Rescue Dept., Alachua County Environmental Dept., and City of Gainesville.

Michael Heeder advised Team members this will be a very active hurricane season – much like 2004. Craig Carnes gave the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) report explaining the new ITS features added to the Gainesville area. He announced FDOT ITS Engineer, Peter Vega, will be conducting a special meeting soon with the Team to discuss the upcoming features. After all agency reports, the incidents occurring since we last met were debriefed.

Bruce Strickland, with FDOT Maintenance, gave a report on the upcoming training and shared the “hands on” exhibit with the Team after the meeting. The next Alachua-Bradford Traffic Incident Management Team Meeting will be held on June 12, 2013, at the FDOT Gainesville Operations Office at 5301 N.E. 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue at 10:00 AM.

Donna Danson  
District 2 ITS Program Manager





**FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE**

The First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team will hold its next monthly meeting on May 21, 2013, at the FHP Training Center at 10:00 AM. FHP Captain Gaston will be giving a presentation on *Signal 4 Analytics Software*. MARK YOUR CALENDARS – YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS THIS.

**District 2 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.*

**District 2 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.*

NOW AVAILABLE DISTRICT 2 TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM WEBSITE:

<http://jax511.com/D2TIMwp/>

**TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT 2013 MEETING SCHEDULE**

**FIRST COAST TIM TEAM MEETING**  
**FDOT URBAN OFFICE TRAINING CENTER**  
**2198 EDISON AVENUE- JACKSONVILLE**  
**904-360-5400**

**MAY 21, 2013**  
**JULY 16, 2013**  
**SEPTEMBER 17, 2013**  
**NOVEMBER 19, 2013**

**ALACHUA/BRADFORD TIM TEAM MEETING**  
**FDOT GAINESVILLE OPERATIONS OFFICE**  
**5301 N.E. 39<sup>TH</sup> AVE- GAINESVILLE**  
**352-381-4300**

**JUNE 12, 2013**  
**AUGUST 14, 2013**  
**OCTOBER 9, 2013**  
**DECEMBER 11, 2013**

Donna Danson  
District 2 ITS Program Manager



Alachua-Bradford TIM Team



**PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

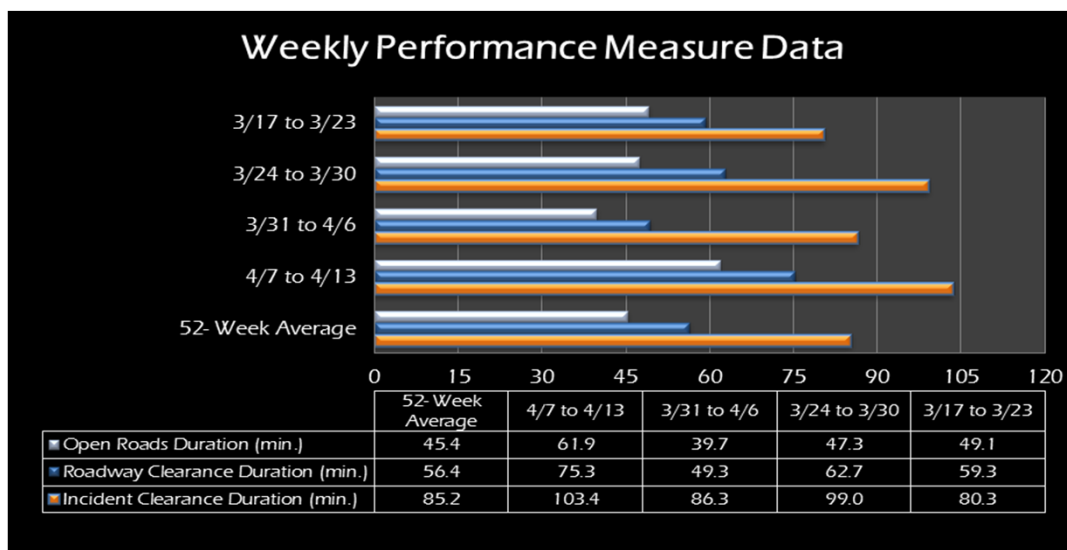
Open Roads duration and Incident Clearance duration for the week starting April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2013 were nearly 20 minutes longer than the average for the year. SunGuide incident reports show there were three major incidents reported on Interstate 75 with durations of well over three and a half hours; thus impacting the performance measures average for that same week. One of those events was a crash that caused a semi-tractor trailer to catch fire near Mile Marker 452 in Hamilton County, which lasted for about four hours. All south bound lanes were blocked for about an hour and twenty minutes, but quickly after that just the right shoulder remained blocked and traffic began flowing on all travel lanes.

The number of events reported for the month of March was pretty close to the average for the year. However, March had considerably more Congestion events than the 52-week average. SunGuide reported 550 Congestion events, whereas the average for the year showed only 476 Congestion events. This increase in Congestion events can not only be attributed to

the greater amount of crashes and vehicle fires, but also to the Scheduled Road Work events entered into SunGuide. The construction of the Overland Bridge project, which will provide easier access to and from Interstate 95 throughout the project area will likely cause traffic congestion throughout the project, thus having a negative impact on the Performance Measures until construction is completed in mid-2016.

Road Ranger activity was greater in the month of March than the average for the year. The most notable increased activity areas were in assisting law enforcement, deploying cones for Maintenance of Traffic, and deploying their variable message board to provide motorist warning messages. This increased activity may be attributed to the combination of Spring Break and the more than three inches of rain reported for the month.

Diana Rivas  
Metric Engineering





**MARKETING**

When the blimp is in town and football season is long gone, it can only mean one thing... The Players Championship! This year, we are honored to be hosting a Media Event in conjunction with representatives from The Players, FHP, St. Johns County Sheriff's Office, First Coast Road Rangers and the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce. Members of the news media will converge on the Traffic Management Center where they'll receive updated information on suggested traffic routes, parking information, travel logistics and other tournament related news. This long anticipated TPC Media Event will be held Tuesday, May 7<sup>th</sup> from 4-10am inside the Traffic Management Center. And on April 24<sup>th</sup>, we made the trip out to Ponte Vedra to participate in *The Players'* media event (their Progressive Press Conference and Cart Tour, held on the beautiful grounds of the TPC Sawgrass Stadium Golf Course at Pub 17). We had a 15 minute window to highlight advancements in our 511 program, as well as extend a personal invitation to the media for our upcoming event that will be held on May 7th.

We also just returned from our 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year as participants in the Bishop Kenny Healthy

Lifestyle Fair. This year we spoke to almost 600 students throughout the school day, where our "flash light" key chains were a big hit among student drivers. Next month, we'll be making stops at Landstar and Blue Cross Blue Shield for their annual Health and Safety Fairs. And then it's on to Gainesville, where we'll participate in the Sweet Dreams Touch a Truck event for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row.

Whether you're headed to The Players Championship or a fun family day at the zoo, make sure your trip begins with a call to 511. You can also log onto [www.FL511.com](http://www.FL511.com) or download our free 511 Traffic App. It's available for use with iPhone, iPad or iPod devices. Simply go to the iTunes store and search "Florida 511." As always, we welcome your comments, thoughts and suggestions.

***Know before you go and keep moving!***

Sherri Byrd  
Marketing Manager



The Young lady on the left is downloading our 511 iPhone App!



Bishop Kenny's Sweet Frog uses 511 and so should you!



**OPERATIONS**

Far off in exotic locales such as Kansas City, Missouri and Mountain View, California lies the future of Florida’s roadway travel. There, engineers are developing the latest in driverless technology. Vehicles driven and operated by technology. Yes it is probably the beginning of Skynet but there are so many other applications for the motorist of the future.

Much like everything else in life, this story starts off at Google. There researchers have been testing specially configured Toyota Prius hybrids mounted with "machine vision" camera systems. If you are now thinking of the Ford Explorers from Jurassic Park then you are correct. Through over 300,000 miles of testing, Google (supported by nearly every auto manufacturer) has recorded an amazing success rate. As it stands, logging only two accidents, one of which occurred while switching back to human control and the other occurring when a Google car was rear ended at a stop light.

“So what other ways are driverless cars possible outside of Google and their cameras and sensors?” you might ask. Well I’m glad you brought that up. The answer lies in pavement. Researchers in Kansas City are now looking at ways to enhance current road sensors to guide traffic and alert authorities when accidents occur or when road conditions change. These sensors, place in prefabricate road segments would steer vehicles along and adjust for traffic, hazards, etc. The ultimate goal being the disappearance of traffic signals with no confusion for the motorist.

Seem too close to the Jetsons? Well, Florida (accompanied by California and Nevada) has already passed legislation allowing driverless vehicles. States such as Michigan and New Jersey have similar legislation on the docket. Some experts put the end of human operators as close as 2025. The future is now!

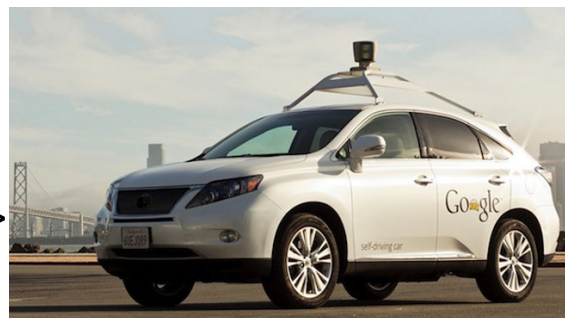
Without ITS devices outside of Jacksonville (and parts of Jacksonville) the TMC depends on FDOT and FHP personnel to give us traffic information reports. You can reach our 24/7 line at (904) 359-6842 or our work day line at (904) 360-5465. You can now also leave feedback on the Next Generation 511 system about road conditions and bugs you may find in the system that is relayed to our operators in real time. The 511 iPhone App is currently available and please feel free to contact me if you would like to Beta test the Android 511 App. Remember the story above and

**“Know Before You Go! Dial 511”.**

**Jesse Gilmour  
TMC Supervisor**



<- Then  
and now ->





## **FEATURE SPOTLIGHT**

### **James Speed, TMC Supervisor**

This month our feature spotlight falls on James Speed. And while he's not new to the Traffic Management Center, his role as TMC Supervisor is one he's just starting to embrace. But it's a role he's clearly comfortable in, since he came to us with an IT supervisory background. When Speed first came to the DOT, he did a Road Ranger ride along as part of his training. His eyes were opened to some of the challenges he would later face when his first stop put him face to face with a disabled semi carrying a truck load of live chickens! I'd call that a proper welcome to the DOT.

When Speed is not busy watching over Jacksonville's roadways, he and wife Nicole, who works as a cake decorator at Publix, are busy watching after their two little ones. "Molly (4) is bossy and strong-willed, but has a great personality," says James. "She's an extrovert who loves to dance, watch cartoons and play with her cousins. Amelia (3 ½ months) is starting to get that baby double chin. She even laughed for the first time last week." Here, the proud papa talks about life, work, and all the fun things in between.

#### **Talk about your upbringing – where were you born / raised?**

I'm a Jacksonville native, but I spent 2 years in Orlando for college (UCF).

#### **Early Career and/or brief job history:**

I worked in restaurants through high school. Then in college, I got into Retail Management (RadioShack), IT (Help Desk, Procurement).

#### **How long have you been at your current job?**

Mid February as Supervisor, since June 2011 at TMC.

#### **What's the best advice anyone's ever given you?**

Attitude is everything. I'd rather be in a bad situation with good people, than a good situation with bad people.

#### **Do you have a favorite quote? Something that inspires you?**

If you think you can't, you're right. If you think you can, you're halfway there.

#### **Describe a 'defining moment' in your career or personal life.**

Overcoming a layoff in 2010, where I realized I needed more focus and direction. I couldn't just make the best out of where I was at, but had to have a plan.

#### **Best job ever / worst job ever... or both?**

Best Job – I've had several good jobs. I like the TMC because every day is different, so you don't get in a rut. I enjoyed being an IT Purchasing Agent as I got to learn a lot of information about IT infrastructure, licensing and desktop environments.

Worst Job – being a dishwasher at Longhorn Steakhouse during High School. Busy, Hot, Wet, Greasy, Nasty. Just overall unpleasant.

#### **Do you have any hobbies?**

Netflix, Computers, board games, playing with my kids.

#### **Favorite vacation spot?**

We have season passes to Disney. Molly has already been twice. We plan to take the little one soon.



**FEATURE SPOTLIGHT**

**James Speed, TMC Supervisor**

continued

**Anything else you'd like to add...**

You never get anywhere in life without the help of other people, so be positive and friendly to everybody.



The Speed Family at Easter



The Gaylord Grand Ole Opry Hotel and Convention Center, above and below, during the flood of 2010

**PHOTO GALLERY**



Our own Sherri Byrd, with Christie Hyde of Global 5, representing 511 at the kick-off media event for the Player's Championship. Also pictured, "The Coveted Trophy".





## **PHOTO GALLERY continued**

*There were only 20 spots for the tour of the TDOT TMC, and they went quickly. Lucky for us that John Hall, our good friend from TDOT, gave us a private tour!*



The arrow shows the high water line from the floods of 2010. TDOT was within five minutes of evacuating when a nearby quarry wall failed and drained all the water away.



Inside the TDOT TMC Control Room (one of four TMCs Statewide)



One of the TDOT Operators shows us their configurable workstations. The arrow shows the hydraulics, with cable chase, that allows the workstation to go from conventional desk height to a height to accommodate a standing Operator. Great for long shifts!



**PHOTO GALLERY continued**



Our own Pete Vega, District 2 ITS Engineer, presenting on the fog events in Gainesville in 2012.



TDOT presenting on the devastating floods of 2010



FDOT District 6 ITS Program Manager, Rory Santana and former FDOT District 4, now Georgia State Road & Tollway Authority, Steve Corbin on panel discussing Managed/HOT/Express Lanes.



ITSA 2013 Student Essay award winners - sponsored by the Southwest Research Institute. Pictured R-L: Josh Johnson, SwRI, Edward Offei (3rd), Daniel J. Fagnant (1st), and Sayanan Sivaraman (2nd)





**PHOTO GALLERY continued**

ITSA was wall-to-wall meetings/session every day from 8 am to 6pm, but there was still a bit of time to explore the beautiful City of Nashville



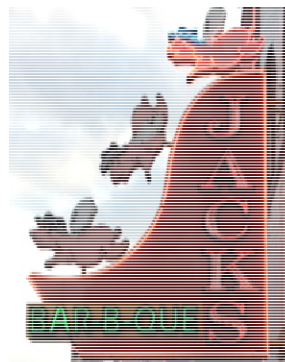
Big girls & little girls love cowgirl boots!



Boys are more into the cowboy hats



Chuy's Mexican...WOW!  
(and there's a location in Gainesville!)



Neely's BBQ vs. Jack's BBQ... Which was first?  
Split decision, both amazingly good!  
(Editor's choice-Neely's!)



**PHOTO GALLERY continued**

A random stroll down the streets of Broadway (Nashville style)



The Wildhorse Saloon



Doubt these sell well in Vols/Commodore Land!





# DISTRICT TWO ITS NEWSLETTER



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## FDOT DISTRICT 2 ITS STAFF

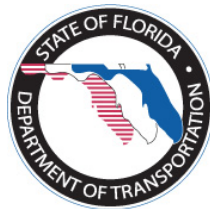
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