



**Some of District 2's Women of Traffic,  
out in the field, taking care of business!**

**From left: Donna Danson, Sherrell Lall,  
Ashley Vargas-Figueroa (Puerto Rico Highways &  
Transportation Authority), Tanesha Sibley.**



July 2014 Issue 80

## **NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS (TSM&O) PROGRAM MANAGER**

This past month was one filled with variety. The first week began with a tour of the new Daktronics LED video display built at Everbank Field, home of the Jacksonville Jaguars. Daktronics is world renowned for their ability to design and build customized units based on a client's needs. In this case, they have built the largest HD LED video display in the world that can be found behind seats at both end zones. They were also given the task of upgrading all the smaller video wall systems found throughout the stadium. If I am not mistaken, the dimensions of the assembly at each end zone was 60 feet tall by 360 feet wide. Pretty impressive when I actually saw it in person and tried to imagine how many of our 10 feet tall by 30 feet wide dynamic message signs would fit in each video wall. My calculations show that about 72 of the roadway DMS would be necessary to match the size of each unit.

Daktronics coordinated this meeting to show us the latest technology that would be used on the DMS we recently ordered for the Phase IX project. It gave us the opportunity to pose questions to one of their experts while seeing what opportunities were available to us in the future. The reality is that if needed in the future we would be able to custom order a sign that could fit across an entire eight lane interstate roadway on a full-truss span. The distance across the roadway would be approximately 100 feet, hence the sign would have to be assembled on-site. I could see such a sign being very useful for several applications including notifying motorists about closed/designated lanes, multiple messages for interchanges headed to different ramps and more detailed Amber/Silver/Leo alerts. Unfortunately it's too late but we had the perfect

opportunity to attempt such a deployment on the Overland Bridge project that will have several lanes in each direction.

The second week of July was even more interesting as we met with local agencies who maintain the traffic signals. This meeting was to discuss the future "Phase II" traffic signal agreement whereby performance measures, increased compensation per intersection and penalty assessments would be incorporated within these local agency agreements. The group had a mix of excitement, anticipation and fear since we were headed into uncharted waters that still has no answers. It seemed that the larger municipalities were "gung-ho" to give it a shot while the smaller agencies took a more cautious approach. I could understand their fear since a penalty for a large municipality with several hundred thousand dollars in the agreement would have less of an impact than a smaller municipality agreeing to less than \$20,000. The Department is taking a guided approach to this proposal since there are still a number of hurdles to overcome while trying to have a boiler plate agreement that could deal with varying sized agencies.

The second week ended with a bit of excitement as we joined the RTMC Construction Manager at Risk (CM@Risk) for the opening of bid packages (by trade) for the facility. I felt like I was at a game show as each vendor submittal was opened. We started by looking at the CM@Risk firm's estimate for a particular trade, then opening the vendor bids to see who was the lowest or closest to the estimate. I can tell you that there were several highs and lows during this exercise as some of the bids were 40 percent higher than the estimate while some came in 25 percent lower. We soon realized that some of the packages combined trades, so with a little mathematical magic we quickly learned that the overall sum of the packages for potential vendors was right



### **NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS PROGRAM MANAGER CONTINUED**

on target with the estimated \$9.1 million to construct the facility. Yahoo! Let's start breaking some dirt!!!

By week three I was starting to feel burned out and a little sad since John Kell's retirement party was set for mid-week at the Hibachi Grill. John has been a huge player in the ITS program since its inception so the concern was "who could fill his shoes?" It was a solemn week but we knew we had to stay strong as we said our good-byes. The party was a low key event (just like John wanted) but the turnout was fantastic. I counted thirty attendees who in some way, shape or form owed a lot of their ITS experience to John Kell. I knew it was a success when the old codger continuously thanked us all for making it a very pleasurable moment as he stiffened up to hold back the tears. He even lucked out when I stopped the hostess from hitting the Gong located behind John (remember, this was an Asian restaurant). This would have definitely taken the event over the top and may have given him a heart attack to boot!

Even though this was John's week I still had a plateful of assignments to complete. One task during the week involved working out some details with Central Office on a potential pilot project for freight parking at Rest Areas. An FIU research paper showed that there was a significant need for a notification system that could alert truckers on available parking at Rest Areas. This paper showed that many of the Rest Areas near major interstate interchanges like I-10/I-75 or I-10/I-95 were often at or over capacity most weekday evenings. This can create a problem for truckers since they are limited on the number of hours they can drive each day, hence each minute wasted seeking a place to park overnight is lost productivity for the shippers.

Speaking of freight, I wrap up the month of July with attendance at the Level II Freight Academy hosted by UNF. The Level I course was very informative on the need for transportation experts to consider the needs of freight carriers and their drivers. It addressed the need to improve operational capabilities for many of the Department's Strategic Intermodal Systems (SIS) since these roadways were the lifeline for Florida's economic survival within the market place. The first course addressed multi-modal methods for transport whether by sea, rail, air or roadway. The instructors intertwined these multiple resources since most shipments to Florida use one or many modes of freight transport. The Level II training digs deeper into what the Department can do to assist with improvements that will lead to an increased economic advantage for the State.

On a final note, July 15<sup>th</sup> was a momentous day for the ITS industry as President Obama held a press conference at the Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center in McLean, VA. The President toured the research and testing facility and delivered remarks on the importance of vehicle-to-vehicle (V2V) and vehicle-to-infrastructure (V2I) communication technology for improving safety and mobility and reducing wasted time and fuel on our nation's roads. Introduced by U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx, the President described how connected vehicle technology will prevent crashes from happening in the first place.

This falls in line with the latest news that Nissan will begin selling cars with connected and autonomous vehicle capabilities by 2016. They are just one of many auto manufacturers chomping at the bit to gain a competitive edge over their rivals. This drive to the finish falls nicely in place with the Department's second annual Automated Vehicle Summit being held

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**NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2  
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM  
MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS  
PROGRAM MANAGER CONTINUED**

in December at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort. On day one there will be discussions in conference rooms talking over the newest ideas. Then on day two, they'll be out at Walt Disney World Speedway, showing off connected cars and driverless cars that exist right now with demonstrations and test drives. The Florida DOT says [making our state the center of attention in this technology](#) will save lives, improve lives, and be a huge economic boost to our state. More information on this conference shall be provided in the forthcoming newsletters.

Pete Vega  
District 2  
Transportation System Management &  
Operations (TSM&O) Manager



**NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS/TMC  
PROGRAM MANAGER**

Hey folks. For those of you who don't yet know, I'm pretty new to this gig. The last month has been a whirlwind of meetings, educational sessions, forays into the TMC, acronym explanation sessions, and field trips to associated offices to try and learn the new faces and places. It feels almost like cramming for a big test after not having studied for a whole semester! Pete has promised to give me time to methodically learn the ins and outs of ITS Operations, so please bear with me.

What I have found so far is that ITS Operations is a very dynamic, fast-paced program. It is exciting to say the least. From what I've seen we have a very knowledgeable and capable staff on hand, and I'm very glad to inherit that. I've been involved in writing (and rewriting) hurricane contracts, TIM Team meetings, the response and control of the unfortunate Buckman Bridge accident last week, and more. I've learned a lot about how the program works through these events.

Last week, some of the Operations staff was able to do a field visit and meet Traffic Control Devices at a dynamic message sign on I-295 near Heckscher Drive. In my humble opinion, there is nothing that compares to hands-on experience to help understanding of new things. We got a fun ride up into the sign where we learned about its various components, and were able to look into the accompanying cabinet, pull box and camera to learn how those components worked and fit into the overall ITS infrastructure. Although it was very hot, I thoroughly enjoyed the trip and the amount of knowledge I gained from it.

I look forward to working with all of our ITS peers as we embark on new things (autonomous vehicles!), and sharpen our abilities to more efficiently and safely move people and goods through our state.

Josh Reichert  
ITS/TMC Program Manager



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### **NORTH FLORIDA TPO UPDATE**

The North Florida TPO Director, Mr. Jeff Sheffield, joined us at the CM@Risk bid opening for the RTMC earlier this month. It was an exciting day for many of us but nothing could match the gleam in Jeff's face as he realized the moment is now here to begin constructing the facility. The RTMC has been a goal of the NFTPO Board members and Jeff for nearly a decade as the reality sank in that North Florida could never build its way out of congestion. The realization was that technology, communication and improved operations was the way to go, hence their huge investment in this facility. Jeff's ability to assist in building partnerships will go a long way toward the success of the RTMC as many of our TIM members hop on board with this effort.

To rehash past newsletters, the RTMC will be a little over 20,000 square feet and will be the new home of the FHP Jacksonville Regional Communications Center staff. Likewise, the Department will move all of the ITS staff and TMC Operations consultants to this new facility. Also joining us will be several local agency traffic signal operations staff. We hope that the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and Fire/Rescue Department take up our offer for seats made available for their dispatch crew. For these two agencies it will be dependent on their existing organizational structure and operating budget.

The North Florida TPO staff will be joining us at this facility in a 5,000 square foot space adjacent to the RTMC operations floor. Their section will feature a 2,000 square foot Board Room that will be used for NFTPO monthly meetings, RTMC training and a situation room during major event coordination. In speaking with many of Jeff's staff this will be a momentous occasion for them after spending time in their existing facility that's years past its prime. If any public agency staff deserved better it would be them based on the success they've displayed at a national level for

the past several years. As I have mentioned in many previous newsletters, this group is the benchmark by which all other TPOs and MPOs gauge their success.

I would also like to excitedly share great news on the Bluetooth and Bridge Wind sensor technology. As mentioned previously, our group has placed a focus on these deployments with a goal of wrapping things up in the coming months. We monitor the system daily with the hope that the communication network remains stable enough to produce the much needed data. Well, I am happy to say that during the month of July we saw no hiccups during our morning checks of the websites. This bodes well as we venture and expand the Bluetooth program towards the ports, beaches area and St. Johns County. I was even confident enough to begin discussions with the BlueToad vendor, TrafficCast, on combining databases with New Jersey, Illinois, Georgia, Louisiana, Missouri and North Carolina.

This combining of databases will soon allow us to determine the impacts of tourists and freight that use the Northeast Florida roadway system, thereby producing valuable information that will allow us to target certain regions of the country that could improve our economy in the years to come. If we are successful we intend to seek agreements with States farther up the coast in New England and farther west up to the Pacific Coast. The initial target is to begin sharing data with the aforementioned States by early 2015 and if successful increase our partnerships by including California, Washington and many other States within the next two years. Please keep your fingers crossed for us because if successful it would make this region one of the best users of ITS technology in the World.

Pete Vega  
TSM&O Program Manager



### JOHN KELL

As mentioned earlier, John Kell's retirement party was held July 15<sup>th</sup> and his last day of work was on the 17<sup>th</sup>. During the week John and I had a chance to reflect on the good and bad times within the ITS program. We went back to day one when he was in charge of the first ITS project (Phase I) that involved the deployment of flip-disc signs using extremely expensive T1 lines for communication (i.e. \$3k per month in phone bills!). John said this project taught him a lot and prepared him for what was to come as he stayed by our side through seven more phases of interstate ITS deployments in the North Florida region as well as several much smaller arterial ITS deployments.

I began to kid John about the "fiasco" that we called Phase II. This project was a smaller sized ITS deployment along I-10 that included construction of our existing TMC. I prodded him a little on how everything that could go wrong did on this project. He could never make the video detection pass testing for final acceptance nor get the entire communication system to work right. The TMC itself was two years late until final acceptance was given and even then the traffic management software never really worked well. All things said, this prepared him and me for what was to come in the Phase III and IV projects.

By the time these projects came along John and I had mastered the art of disguise many of the ITS contractors used to cover up their limitations. We offered many tips knowing that the contractor would still screw things up but at the end of the day the Department received the best possible product available at that time. For these projects we knew (from lessons learned) that video detection was not acceptable. We did our research on microwave vehicle detectors and were ready for anything the contractor brought to us as far as excuses go. We'd mastered the art of construction for dynamic

message signs and CCTV but were still winging it on the detectors. I reminded John about the time detector testing was not going well with the Phase III and the frustration he felt when dealing with the contractor and detector vendor. Then with a smile on my face I reminded him how we made them "pay" for the pain and suffering by making the contractor follow our "lessons learned" testing requirements.

How, you might ask? Well, we allowed the vendor to test 10% of the detectors out of the 34 deployed. That meant that 4 locations would be tested and if any did not pass testing then another 4 locations would be added. I still remember the smile on John's face as the frustrated contractor began testing the 24<sup>th</sup> location within the project. By the time we gave final acceptance I think John became the Department's expert on microwave detection systems. Fortunately for me, what John learned in these two Phases carried over into the next two phases as the "New Kids on the Block" (new contractors wet behind the ears) tried to break into the ITS industry.

By the time the Phase V and VI projects got under way John began to really enjoy managing ITS projects for the Department. In some ways he became the "guru" for many of these up and coming firms who are now industry leaders in Florida. I reminded him on how he kept them honest, yet spent the time to teach them the errors of their ways before these projects turned into a fiasco. Mind you, I did let John know he did miss a step during the Phase V when dealing with structural issues for the dynamic message signs but he found a way to overcome this problem while finishing the project on-time and under budget.

By then we thought it was smooth sailing until the Phase VII project came along. The minute we heard which firm won the job and the price

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## JOHN KELL continued

that was bid John jumped into action by begging (or should I say pleading?) me to find a way to reverse the course of the inevitable. I think he truly appreciated my efforts, but in the end the system led to the inevitable. So, John and I had the opportunity to learn how to handle an ITS project that goes into default because an ITS contractor could not perform the work. It was very frustrating for the both of us but we soon learned to take advantage of this experience for educational purposes. We'd never dealt with a Surety Company so "what the heck" let's see where this will take us. All in all things ended up well, albeit that the project was nearly two years late on delivery.

When we started talking about the Phase VIII project that was recently completed I could see the tears well up in John's eyes. That's because this was the last Phase he ever worked and things finally went right throughout the project. All the headaches and issues he encountered from Phase I to VII finally led to a very successful deployment. That is until we waited....and waited....and waited for the As-Built plans to be delivered so that John could close out the project. I had to remind John that nothing works perfectly with an ITS project so we should take what we can get while smelling the roses once in a while.

One of the nice things about the ITS staff is we get to know each other personally as well as professionally since no one tends to leave once they join our team. In John's case I think he appreciated my focus on his family and not the job when he began to consider retirement. In the early planning stages of his retirement he kept saying he did not want to let us down while I kept insisting that he'd be letting me down if he did not place his family first. It took a year but I think he finally got it and is very happy with his decision.

So, Mr. Kell is headed off to the greener pastures of Ohio in the coming months. He'll get to fly airplanes, fish and hunt while spending time with his children and grandchildren. This should be the goal for all of us as we reach our golden years. For John, he's done it all with a job he's loved and now it's time for him to begin his new career as a loving grandfather. As mentioned in the gift we gave him we stated "John, you'll be missed but never forgotten. We love you." The District Two ITS team. (fade to black.....)

Pete Vega



A rare picture of John Kell, and even rarer, no cap!





## **CONSTRUCTION**

The Phase 9 Project was awarded to American Lighting and Signalization. This project, which is located on the southwest quadrant of I-295, will complete the ITS System on the I-295 beltway. A Project Pre-Construction Meeting was held on July 23<sup>rd</sup> and construction is expected near the end of summer. The contractor has started submitting cut sheets for the device poles and several other components. The project is scheduled to be completed before the end of 2015.

The SR 23 Toll Project, which is installing ITS on SR 23, I-10 from I-295 to just west of SR 23, and I-95 through St. Johns County is currently under design. Construction crews are anticipated to begin construction of the fiber optic conduit system through St. Johns County within the next few months. The designer has submitted 100% plans for the ITS to be installed on I-10 and SR 23 as well. The I-10 installation will begin following the completion of the I-95 installation in St. Johns County. The SR 23 ITS portion will be installed later on in the overall project due to the roadway and drainage work that is being done throughout the SR 23 Project corridor.

The I-75 ITS Project in Gainesville from CR 234 to SR 121 continues to progress. The contractor has completed the installation of conduit along I-75 through Paynes Prairie and will begin installing the pull boxes, splice vaults and device poles soon. The DMS structures were delivered to the project site, but the contractor was uncomfortable with some of the welding on the structures and is having the manufacturer correct the issues. The manufacturer will be picking up the structures from the field and taking them back to their facilities to do the repairs and re-galvanize the affected areas. Depending on how quickly this can be done, it may cause a delay in the project schedule. This project is scheduled for completion in the Spring of 2015.

John Kell  
District 2 ITS Construction Project Manager

## **MAINTENANCE**

The ITS Maintenance Section is in the process of replacing device servers and media converters throughout the Phase 3 and 4 Project areas. The Phase 3 and 4 Projects go from the I-95/I-295 South Interchange and go north on I-95 to Airport Road. These projects were completed almost 10 years ago and we have already changed out several types of devices for newer more reliable devices. Upgrading devices on aging project phases helps us keep the ITS system in operation by reducing the number of failures due to device fatigue.

Two ITS device sites were damaged by vehicle accidents this month. One location had a device cabinet and pole taken down by a vehicle which exited the roadway. The Maintenance contractor is awaiting delivery of a replacement device pole to get this location back up and running. The other location had a ground mounted cabinet and an electrical service pole taken down by a vehicle which exited the roadway and traveled quite a distance before impacting the ITS equipment. The Maintenance contractor has installed a new electrical service pole and ground mounted cabinet but are waiting on parts to complete a repair of the electrical meter service site.

Florida State University is doing a research study to try to determine the financial impacts of lightning damage on ITS equipment throughout the state. District Two ITS is currently in the process of going through two years of our maintenance records and contractor timesheets to provide repair information and costs to the researchers. Hopefully this research will result in a good estimate of the cost of lightning damage to our ITS system devices and FDOT can add some money to the ITS Maintenance funding to compensate for these expenditures.

Kevin Jackson  
ITS Field Specialist





**RISC – RAPID INCIDENT SCENE CLEARANCE - UPDATE**

District 2 has not had a RISC incident in the last month, but our RISC Contractors remain ready to respond if needed. The RISC program is now accepting new vendors.

**ROAD RANGER UPDATE**

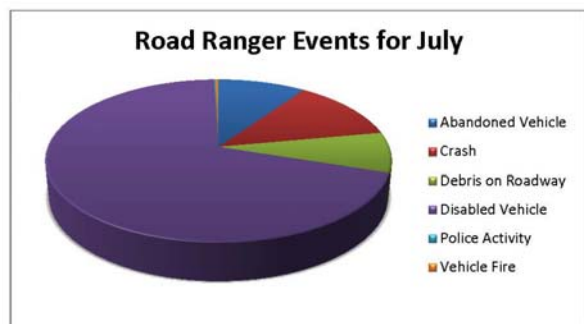
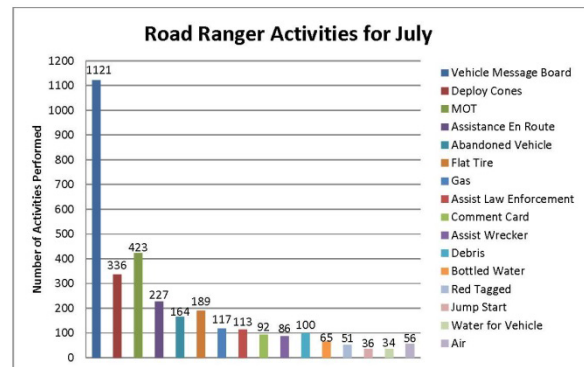
The Road Rangers held their monthly safety meeting on July 9, 2014 at 11:30AM at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center. Mr. Greg Gaylord and Ms. Donna Danson headed the meeting seeing as there was much to discuss since the last Road Ranger meeting. Mr. Gaylord first went over a few incidents to show the Road Rangers how maintenance of traffic can save lives and to reinforce how important the role of safety is when assisting motorists on our roadways. He also noted that the Road Ranger safety meetings were held to ensure that the Road Rangers proceeded with the best practices during their shifts.

The Road Rangers were greatly affected this month as one of their own, Mr. Mitchell Hayes, was struck by a motorist while assisting FHP at an incident on the Fuller Warren Bridge on July 2, 2014. Mr. Hayes followed exact protocol, as determined by standards, and was in the process of setting up his safety cones and other specified instruments in the gore area by the split at San Marco when a driver cut across the incident area and struck Mr. Hayes. The Road Ranger was rushed to the hospital with serious injuries and thankfully will survive the event. He is in good spirits, but will need a lot of time to heal.

The Road Rangers play a critical role in providing safe and clear roads for motorists to travel. It is essential as motorists to keep a keen eye out when we are traveling on the roadways

to prevent further events such as the one that occurred on July 2, 2014. They also play a large part in making incident scenes safer for our incident responders and as we can see from their activities in the chart below they are very much utilized across District 2.

The charts below illustrate the Road Ranger activities for the month of July as well as the different types of reported events. When comparing several past months, we can see that the number of crashes on the roadways have increased in the month of July along with the amount of debris on the roadways most likely due to all of the rain we have had here in District 2.



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### **FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE**

The First Coast TIM Team meeting was held on July 15, 2014 at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center at 9:00 A.M. Ms. Donna Danson kicked off the meeting with introductions and reminded everyone that the purpose of these meetings are for the TEAM members to get together and discuss incidents so that we can learn from one another. Mr. Josh Reichert was also introduced to the First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team as the new District 2 ITS Program Supervisor. Ms. Danson mentioned that he will be taking over some responsibilities from Mr. Pete Vega.

The Team then jumped right into the Construction and ITS updates. Mr. Craig Carnes mentioned some of the ITS projects that will be taking place in the area that may interrupt traffic flow. After the updates were given, Mr. Greg Gaylord then gave the TEAM an overview of an incident that occurred on July 2, 2014 involving Road Ranger Mr. Mitchell Hayes. Mr. Hayes was struck by a motorist while assisting FHP at an incident on the Fuller Warren Bridge. Mr. Gaylord mentioned that the Road Ranger was following safety protocol when a driver cut across the incident scene and struck the Road Ranger. Mr. Hayes sustained head injuries, a fractured eye socket and a broken tibia in one of his legs. The TEAM then discussed the incident in depth going over scenarios and answering questions some had regarding the incident. Mr. Gaylord mentioned that Mr. Hayes will be fine; he just needs to go through the recovery process.

The TIM Team then discussed several other incidents that occurred since the last TIM Team meeting as a learning tool to help bring the TEAM together and benefit each member during incident management. The First Coast TIM Team will hold its next bi-monthly meeting on

September 16, 2014 at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center, 2198 Edison Avenue at 10:00 A.M. Please mark your calendar to attend this meeting. We are looking forward to seeing everyone there.

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

The Alachua-Bradford TIM Team will hold its next bi-monthly meeting on August 13, 2014 at the FDOT Gainesville Operations Office, 5301 N.E. 39th Avenue at 10:00 A.M. Please mark your calendar to attend this meeting.

### **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.*

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Traffic Incident Management Website:  
<http://jax511.com/D2TIMwp/>.

Donna Danson  
District 2 ITS Program Manager



**PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

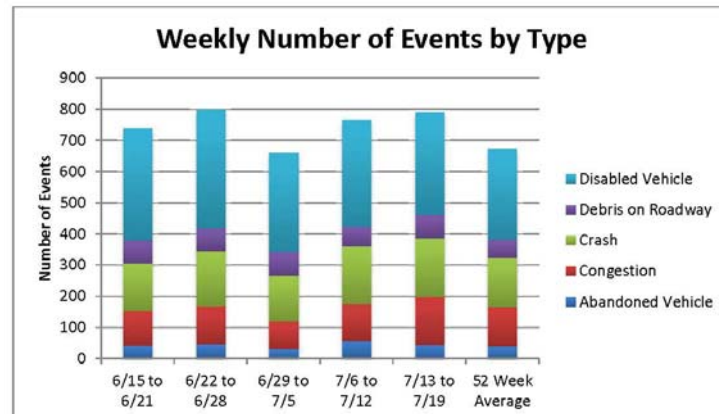
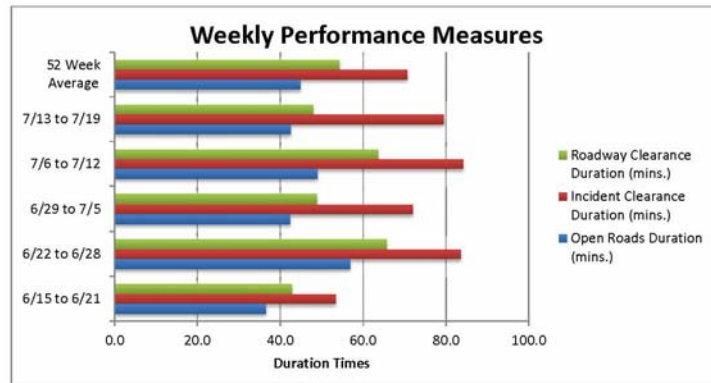
Rain, Rain, Go Away. As we are well into the summer we have seen lots of rainfall here in District 2. High temperatures along with almost 6.5 inches of rain in the past month have had adverse effects on our roadways. There has been a significant increase in the number of crashes by approximately 18 percent as well as an increase in the number of abandoned vehicles by almost 40 percent. The amount of disabled vehicles also exceeded the yearly average by roughly 53 vehicles per week.

Our Incident Clearance Duration time came close to our 90 minute goal a couple of times since our last newsletter due to several incidents that occurred. During the week of June 22, 2014 a semi-truck heading

eastbound on I-10 at the ramp to I-95 SB overturned and its load spilled onto the roadway. This particular incident took over seven hours to clear contributing to the increase in the monthly average incident clearance time of close to 85 minutes. Also, during the week of July 6, 2014 a reported amount of over 3.07 inches of rain, here in Jacksonville, contributed to the occurrence of many incidents that week creating a high Incident Clearance time. On the other hand our Roadway Clearance Duration and Open Roads Duration have been well under the allotted time frames.

The following charts illustrate the Performance Measures data for the past few weeks as well as the different types of events reported.

Sherrell Lall, Metric Engineering





## OPERATIONS

Back in June Pete Vega wrote about our visit from the Puerto Rico DOT contingent and all of the things we covered with them. Pete bragged we did it best and the Puerto Rico Team took him up on that promise! For 2 weeks in July, and another 2 weeks still to come, District 2 was tasked with showing everything ITS/ TMC to Ashley Vargas-Figueroa. The phone call from Dale Cody seemed like a simple task, "TMC and ITS overview." That was followed by the question of "how long do you need?" I thought for a moment and stated that 4 weeks probably wouldn't be enough but we would make it work.

From there it was time to create an agenda. Where to start? Our Software? Road Rangers? Our equipment? Field Devices? TIM? No, let's start with the basics, introductions. That became an ongoing theme, introductions. To make ITS and the TMC go it takes a village of people. I think Ashley headed back to Puerto Rico with a sore right hand! What a fantastic Team we are so fortunate to have: FDOT ITS, TMC Operations, TMC Consultant, the TIM Team, TCD, FHP, First Coast Road Rangers, Network/IT, Central Office, 511 Probe and Marketing and the list can go on and on. Everyone had a chance to show what they bring to the table and how they fit into the ITS/ TMC puzzle.

Ashley displayed an eagerness to learn and an obvious comfort with comprehending information quickly. During the tragedy on the Buckman Bridge that took place on July 16th, Ashley got to see firsthand how all of these pieces of the puzzle fit together. A real-life application of two weeks' worth of training demonstrated how each little role plays an integral part of our Operations.

The CCTVs helped locate the incident to expedite response and assisted with managing the traffic queue. Traffic Detectors and 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Probe data was used to monitor detour routes

and backups. The Network/ IT team is always working to keep everything up and running to share video and screenshots with our Partners. Disseminating information via DMS and 511 to the public to improve safety at the scene and reduce traffic queues. Tracking the event in SunGuide to assist with debriefing the event for lessons learned. The dispatch of Road Rangers to set up Temporary M.O.T. prior to Transfield's arrival. Making continuous calls for notifications and updates about the event to TIM and Media partners. All in all, it was an exhausting event, but one that highlighted what the TMC and ITS can do to keep a horrible situation from getting worse.

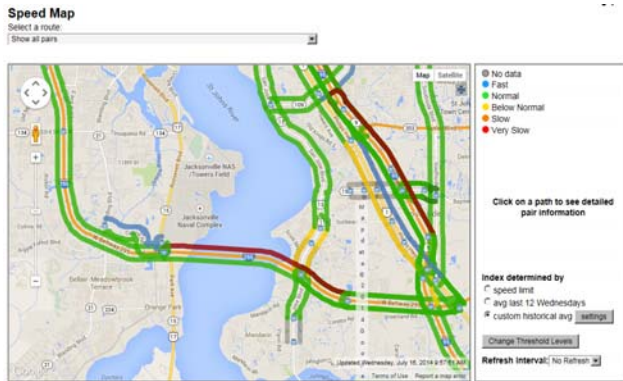


Most of the time you cannot prevent the initial event but the TMC works hard to utilize the tools provided by ITS to improve safety, expedite response, reduce secondary crashes (which most of the time are more severe than the primary), manage traffic queues and enhance coordination. Sadly, in the field of Incident Management there is not always a happy ending but putting good practices to use will help avoid the multiplier effect. Hopefully we didn't overwhelm Ashley too much and she can use our lessons learned and procedures to help improve Incident Management in Puerto Rico. I



**OPERATIONS continued**

look forward to visiting and finding out for myself! Ashley- the price for your time with us...an August Newsletter Spotlight (that is a fair price after your bucket truck ride with Jose!)



Ryan Crist  
TMC Manager



Ashley & Jose heading up, up, up!

Ever notice how effortlessly some runners pass the baton in a 4 X 100 meter relay? And how the execution of this technique can either make or break the entire race? I had an unexpected revelation recently, a gift really, when I found myself in the middle of a retirement ceremony. I was doing an event at Checker Cab when their General Manager, Brad Braddock, interrupted the festivities to present a Lifetime Achievement award to one of their outgoing employees. As I witnessed the baton being passed from one generation to the next, my heart swelled with emotion as, one by one, fellow team members stepped up to the microphone to honor Leonard Williams, a man referred to not as a cab driver but as a “Seasoned Transportation Specialist” by his younger co-workers. This is a man who has certainly earned his stripes, even joking at one point that he has either “outlasted or outlived all of his peers.” As the stories unfolded, you could tell the younger drivers still held him in high regard and were waiting to see what final words of wisdom he would impart.

As one story goes, in the mid-eighties “Mr. Leonard” as he’s affectionately known, was showing a new driver the ropes. He was giving some sage advice regarding fares who had perhaps imbibed a little too much, but were too proud to call for a cab. After passing a police officer, Mr. Leonard pointed, then turned to his recruit and said, “I just tell them they can either ride with him, or they can ride with me. The difference is I charge \$20 and he charges \$10,000.”

Williams has logged over 30 years as a driver for Checker Cab and its affiliates, initially working alongside the family patriarch, Grady Braddock, and most recently working for Grady’s son Brad. Williams says of the company, “It has felt like working for family all these years.” Impeccably dressed in his driving



## **MARKETING continued**

cap and vest, Mr. Leonard looks as though he stepped right out of the pages of The Saturday Evening Post. Ever the gentleman and in the final chapter of his career, he then turned to his wife and said, “And if time would permit, I’d do it all over again. Ask my wife. She’d tell you. I’d turn in my application today.”

And there you have it, the inspiration for this month’s article. We are tasked with a very noble job. One we take seriously. We’re all in different stages of our careers. Some have been running for years, baton in hand, ready to make the coveted handoff. Others are running mid-stride. And some are poised on the starting blocks, waiting to have that coveted baton placed in their hands, so they, too, can run with the best of them!

Of all the miles I’ve logged covering various 511 events, and all the countless hours I’ve spent doing traffic reports, I know with certainty I’d retrace every one of them if it meant saving an additional life. Our mission to reduce secondary accidents weighs heavily on my mind every single day as I witness, time and time again, motorists coming to a screeching halt as they crest a hill or round a corner, completely unaware that traffic has come to a stop 20 yards in front of them. I realize, too, that I still have so much to learn, and I’ll take those nuggets of wisdom wherever I can get them, be it in the hallowed halls of the FDOT Training Facility or in the company break room of a Checker Cab affiliate.

Next month we’ll take our 511 message to the Teacher Supply Depot for their annual Back to School Extravaganza, and as we set up our table and tent, we’ll be thinking of Mr. Leonard...and we’ll be listening, eyes and ears open for those little nuggets of wisdom that may come our way. Baton at the ready!

Which reminds me, school is about to start up again and that means more drivers will be on our roadways. Yes, TEENAGE drivers! (mine included) So as always, wherever you’re headed, 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 available for Apple and Android.

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

Sherri Byrd  
Marketing Manager



Mr. Leonard Williams (R) being honored on his retirement with an award by Mr. Brad Braddock of Checker Cab.



**PHOTO GALLERY**



Ashley Vargas-Figueroa inspecting a DMS



Pictures from "Kell-Palooza" celebrating John Kell's retirement





# DISTRICT TWO ITS NEWSLETTER



July 2014 Issue 80

## TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT 2014 MEETING SCHEDULE

### FIRST COAST TIM TEAM MEETING

FDOT URBAN OFFICE TRAINING CENTER  
2198 EDISON AVENUE- JACKSONVILLE  
904-360-5400

SEPTEMBER 16, 2014      NOVEMBER 18, 2014

### ALACHUA/BRADFORD TIM TEAM MEETING

FDOT GAINESVILLE OPERATIONS OFFICE  
5301 N.E. 39<sup>TH</sup> AVE- GAINESVILLE  
352-381-4300

AUGUST 13, 2014  
OCTOBER 8, 2014      DECEMBER 10, 2014

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