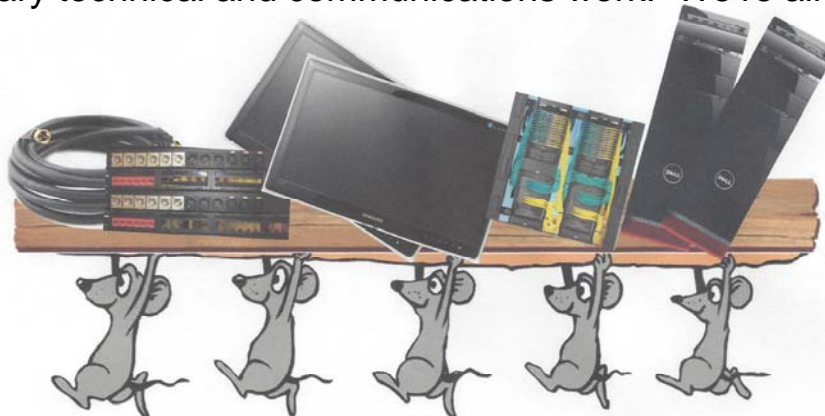




Above:

Building ✓ , Landscaping ✓ , Sprinkler System ✓ , Parking lot ✓

Behind the scenes the teams of mice are working double-time with all of the necessary technical and communications work. We're almost there!!!





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

Over the past year it's been a very challenging point in my life as I've dealt with the passing of several loved ones while dealing with critical challenges at work. My last vacation was in January prior to the coming storm of assignments that kept me snowed under for the past ten months.

Back in April there was a misconception that everything would slow down once we've moved into the new RTMC and I'd be able to take a little break in September for vacation. At the time, little did I know that the RTMC contractor would fall behind schedule with the building and the move-in date would fall to mid-October. Here I was with over 600 hours of annual leave on the books and a limited amount of time to take it due to all that was going on.

Fortunately for me my wife's niece had sent an invitation for her wedding in mid-October, hence I finally had a chance to take a little time off. Bonnie was getting married in Austin, Texas, which is one of my favorite cities in the country. So, I decided to make it an extended trip by visiting in-laws in Dallas. I figured it would give me the opportunity to catch my breath while comparing our main ITS rival's infrastructure. If you were not aware, the Florida and Texas ITS programs are very similar, starting with the use of the same software platform and ending with decentralized offices.

As I made my way through the city of Dallas there were a few things that I noticed. First, I did not see much in the way of arterial CCTV cameras or dynamic message signs. There was a vast deployment on limited access corridors but not much anywhere else. As I drove the interstate corridors within the city I could see

some similarities to Florida within their ITS program but vast differences with their traffic efforts as well. Some of the things I noticed were that they do not have fencing adjacent to the interstate to keep pedestrians and animals from getting on the interstate. They also keep their Express Lanes totally separate from their general use lanes by utilizing barricades or elevated bridges to bypass congestion. The one area that jumped out at me was they had little to no landscaping throughout their limited access corridors. I mainly saw concrete/asphalt from right-of-way line to right-of-way line with a bunch of parallel frontage roads adjacent to the mainline.

The trip to Austin took three hours and really opened up my eyes to the differences between both States. First thing I noticed was that they used fencing every once in a while outside the Urban limits. This fence was about 4 feet tall so my assumption was that the intent was to keep farm animals and smaller critters off the corridor. I also noticed that the minimum speed was 75 MPH throughout my trip. There was no ITS evident between Austin and Dallas but they did have frontage roads throughout. As we passed bigger municipalities like Waco the ITS deployments reappeared but quickly ended outside the City limits.

It appeared that they also had a large Work Program because there was construction throughout our journey. Lots of new bridge structures were being constructed as well as some additional lanes. When we passed Waco my brother-in-law, Ed, pointed out the six new Tesla recharging stations that were ironic to him because their State Legislative bodies had recently passed some bills with the sole intent of

Continued on following page



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

preventing Tesla from gaining a foot-hold on vehicle sales. Apparently, the relationships between the existing dealership lobbying group and Legislators was so strong that Tesla had to find a work around to get these recharging stations installed by partnering with private enterprises like hotels and/or restaurants.

When we arrived in the progressive city Austin my excitement grew since this area was growing exponentially with similar roadway features to Jacksonville. Unfortunately, I was somewhat disappointed when I noticed that the ITS deployment was very similar to the Dallas area.

Their Express Lanes were separated as well but many of these systems were elevated for longer distances to look like actual express corridors. Traffic was awful on the weekend with five-mile back-ups on the downtown area. The locals told me this weekend traffic was normal for their area as motorists came for “get-away” weekends to enjoy Austin’s food, music, beer and water activities. I did not know it at the time but the Colorado River splits Austin in half, thereby making it the central gathering place for many outdoor enthusiasts.

I had to run an errand during the weekend to get a rental car and felt it would be best to have a cab take me to the location. I felt this would give me a chance to enjoy the scenery while getting some local info from the driver. That weekend I’d learned that if you wanted to know anything about the city all you had to do was get a “cabbie” since they were all well-trained on giving tourists information. The problem was that their drivers are much worse than in Florida so I was watching out for traffic as we made our way towards downtown Austin. We got cut-off three times, almost side-swiped twice and nearly

rear-ended once in my six-mile journey. Once he dropped me off at Hertz there was this uncertainty of trying to navigate this area on my own. Let’s just say that I drove like Florida’s “Canadian Geese” as I made my way back to the hotel.

One similarity that I noticed were all the dynamic message signs posted travel times similar to what we do in Florida. It gave me some semblance of comfort knowing that there were some similarities which could validate our program may be doing something right. The problem was that even though the speed limit was 75 MPH it was still too slow for existing traffic. My best guess is that traffic was moving around 90 during my travels through Austin and I was getting in the way of progress. Even with these roadway challenges that were encountered, I whole-heartedly loved the city. I had a chance to swing by the Capitol, the river and the mountains while I was there and each site was very worthwhile.

During my visit to Texas there was the mandatory trip to the mall to see if there were any local souvenirs that piqued my interest. The only thing I found was a Tesla “dealership” near the entrance. If you recall what I said earlier, Tesla could not open a dealership but could provide information in a storefront about their car. At this location you could pull up whatever model you desired, change the colors, modify the software package, select the interior and submit an e-mail for a price. There was an “agent” at the store who would help you at the computer but they were not allowed to try and sell the vehicle. They could only provide information on the estimated price based on what you were looking for in a Tesla.



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

Once I completed designing my Tesla Model S the discussion began with the “agent” on additional features. Of course, I asked about the autonomous features and he said a software modification of \$3,000 was the normal fee. I asked about the different distance options and that could be upgraded for an additional fee as well of up to \$3,000. By the end of the discussion he estimated that the car I was considering would be around \$105,000. Dead silence. Of course, not one to be scared away so easily I had to ask “what’s the deal with the batteries.” This “agent” explained that the batteries were fully warranted for 8-years with the potential of lasting ten. I asked him what would happen after they ran dry and he said for about \$20,000 I could get them replaced.

Of course his comeback was that Tesla was building a battery plant in Nevada that “could” help reduce these costs in the future. My retort was that “I’ll wait and see until then since this is currently not a wise investment!”



Tesla battery platform



Tesla Model S with home charging station

On my return to Jacksonville there was some reflection on how well we have it in the great state of Florida. I know Texas does everything big but it wasn’t to my liking. Great place to visit but poor location to live. It’s too bad that in a few years Austin will more than likely become another Metropolis that will end up ruining its uniqueness and beauty.

Once this conversation ended he asked if I was interested. Gulp! I ended up giving this agent a piece of my mind about the raw deal this would be since the resale value after about six years would be nearly nothing since no sane person would pay for a car that required another investment of \$20k after two years of ownership.

**Pete Vega, District 2
TSM&O Manager**





NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS ENGINEER

Oftentimes conditions at work become hectic and it's important to be able to find a release from the grind of the work week tension. There are many getaways that could satisfy me, but the one most applicable to my current lifestyle was luckily only a short walk from my front door. That's where I found myself after a long, exhausting day of being stuck inside a windowless cell, answering emails, phone calls, and trying to put out fires.

The sound of my footsteps became hollow as I stepped off of the concrete and onto the worn wood of the main pier. I sucked in a deep breath of sweet, fresh salty air as the northeast breeze ran across the channel to embrace me upon my return to the water's edge. That initial feeling of the tension melting away never gets old. I looked down at the water four feet below me out of habit. An incoming tide this night, whisking in a world of fresh new water and life.

The wake of a long past boat was gently lapping at the seawalls behind me as I walked out further onto the dock. The sun, at this point, was low to my left, leaving a beautiful painted sky filled with multiple shades of orange, purple and red against a cerulean canvas to my right. I scanned the distant shoreline, taking in all the sights. The river homes already had their lights on, wonderful and formal, yet casting fascinating reflections that danced majestically across the water below. The red and green beacons from the channel markers blinked in random succession into the horizon, beckoning one to adventure into the fading light.

I turned left and began walking past the docked boats of all shapes, sizes and character. I pondered the stories that each might tell as I

sipped on my "dock drink", a large Tervis filled to the brim with a whiskey and water stiff and deep enough to last me as long as I needed to be out there. There was no rush at this point; I had already lost track of time since I had stepped out of reality and over the mysterious waters of the river. The only way to tell how long I had been out there was by the lingering light, which was now nothing more than a deep navy blue to the west.

The masts of the sailboats stood tall and proud in the glow emanating from the dock lights below them. The rigging slapped softly against the masts as the boats slowly rocked to the beat of the chop on the water. The fishing boats were not outdone themselves: long, sleek outriggers were tucked neatly back from the centers of these boats, angled back and extending aft of their transoms. They were all tipped with small flags representative of their owners, a few American flags, a Jolly Roger, collegiate flags, and a "No Shoes Nation" square flickered in the wind.

As I neared the end of the dock I could hear the soft hums of car tires negotiating the concrete sections of a bridge across the river. The world was suddenly much bigger, but more relaxing. I felt alive, yet calm. I inhaled deeply again the cooling air as I looked up across the vast dark sky streaked by contrails that were still lit up by what was left of the sunset miles above my head.

Everything was back to beautiful, back to the sights, smells and sounds that worked together to fix the chips that the work week had made on me. "This is what it's all about," I thought to



NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS ENGINEER continued

myself as I gained perspective out of this comfortable, welcoming environment that I had run to time and time again. I leaned against a dock pile, listening to the tireless expanse of water and the calls of seagulls and pelicans looking to turn in for the evening. Things were already better, much better, as I glanced down at my glass and took cheerful notice of my almost-full beverage. It had been a long week, but at this moment, it was all worth it, as I basked in the early midst of a perfect evening.

Josh Reichert
ITS/TMC Program Manager

NORTH FLORIDA TPO

On October 26th the ITS program was told that the Department would begin to implement a Real Time System Management Information Program that would provide traffic information on major arterial roads in Florida's largest municipalities. By November 2016 District Two will have to report traffic information on construction events, incidents and travel times within 5 minutes of occurrence, maintain a level of accuracy no less than 85 percent and operate the infrastructure at a level no less than 90 percent. What this means is that we are now in the business of arterial management!

The criteria created were for routes of significance in major cities that would need ITS infrastructure, connectivity to interstates, regional connectivity, severe/frequent congestion, involve major evacuation routes, economic activity, higher than desired crash rates and an AADT (annual average daily traffic) of over 50,000 cars per day. I am proud to say that due to the

financial support of the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (NFTPO) we have no problem with participating in this effort. This organization had a vision well in advance and has been supporting the growth of ITS on arterial roads for over ten years, hence much of what was required is in place at the current moment.

The objective is to have the RTMC monitor, report and respond to major traffic impacts on arterial corridors by the 2016 deadline. The only component that's been missing was the multi-agency Regional Transportation Management Center that would allow us to address any roadway issues within an abbreviated amount of time. As of October 29th I can assure you that we will not have any problems since partnering agencies have begun the move to our new facility.

Amazingly, it looks like every one of the 32 available spots will be filled by the time this deadline arrives and it's a testament to the effort the NFTPO has put forth with the growth of the ITS deployments on arterial roadways.

We have CCTV cameras and BlueTooth on most (if not all) of the roadways that fall within the criteria. We also have Arterial Dynamic Message Signs near the Interstate interchanges on many of these corridors. Staying one step ahead, the NFTPO also participated in funding the installation of advanced traffic signal controllers on all of these corridors. My feelings are the only thing lacking is a completely redundant fiber optic communication system that will insure reliability each and every day. Guess what!?!



NORTH FLORIDA TPO continued

This fiscal year the NFTPPO provided funding for an ITS Push Button contract that would allow us to tie-up the loose ends within the network, thereby allowing us to improve operational efficiency ten-fold.

As the next few years come around the only thing I fear is the advent of Connected Vehicles. When this moment arrives I am not certain if the multi-mode fiber optic deployment within our network can handle the high demand. This is where the push button contract will benefit us for the time being since we may be able to build enough redundancy to handle all the additional data traffic.

Several years ago I asked the Director of the NFTPPO to be patient with our team's ITS program vision. My assurance was that when the RTMC is completed and partner agencies move in he will see the ultimate plan and its benefits. Well folks, in about a month we will be able to determine if we hit the nail on the head or if I'll be job hunting at McDonalds.

As an FYI, the North Florida Regional Transportation Management Center's ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for November 12th. If you are interested in attending please let me know prior to November 10th so that I can pass along the information to the organization committee.

**Pete Vega, District 2
TSM&O Manager**



CONSTRUCTION

The contractor is completing conduit installation on the Phase 9 Project on I-295 from Atlantic Boulevard to the southern I-295/I-95 Interchange. They have also started installing the fiber optic cable on the south end of the project and completed the stand-alone testing of the DMS and Arterial DMS this month. Due to the daily rainstorms we saw throughout the summer, the contractor has received extra weather days for the contract, which has pushed the completion date out until late December.

The I-95 St. Johns County Fiber Optic Installation Project was also impacted by the numerous days of rains over the past few months. The rain has reduced production enough that the project has been set back several weeks. The contractor is hopeful that the work will be completed by the end of November.

Final integration and testing has begun on the ITS Project on I-75 and US 441 in the area of Paynes Prairie. All of the MVDS have been calibrated and passed testing. Integration and testing of the CCTVs, DMS and communications network will begin in early November and should take about two weeks to complete. If all goes well, the project will be ready in time to provide motorists with traffic information prior to the Thanksgiving Holiday weekend.

The contractor has started work on the I-75 Fiber Optic Infrastructure project with project limits from SR 24 in Gainesville extending north to the Georgia state line. The contractor has three crews working on the installation of conduit. This project is 87 miles in length and has a contract duration exceeding one year. Once the contractor has completed installation of the fiber optic infrastructure, a second project will install the ITS devices and associated power

Continued on following page



CONSTRUCTION continued

services. These projects will be operated out of both the Gainesville SmartTraffic TMC and the North Florida RTMC in Jacksonville.

Kevin Jackson
ITS Construction Liaison

MAINTENANCE

The ITS Maintenance Contractor is wrapping up their work at the new RTMC. As detailed in previous newsletters, they have been working at the RTMC for the last few months helping get everything ready for the Grand Opening. Contractor personnel have installed miles of Cat 6 communications cables to the offices and TMC consoles, several runs of fiber optic cables of various lengths, and completed several other tasks. Their work effort has not only benefited ITS, but all of the agencies who will be working in the RTMC. Without their hard work and long hours, the RTMC would not have been ready for the various agencies to move into the building this month.

Besides the work at the RTMC, maintenance personnel have been attending to the daily device outages on the ITS System. Luckily, the summer storms have subsided and the number of device failures has decreased along with the number of storms. This has enabled the contractor to keep up with their workload on both the RTMC and the ITS System.

Craig Carnes
Metric Engineering

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

My, my, my... What amazing weather we have been having here in District 2. The holidays are in the air and I love it! From the cooler weather to the holiday decorations and smell of pumpkin; I must say that I am enjoying the feel of October so far. It appears our motorists are feeling the same way because we have had a significant decrease in incidents or could it just be that all of the rain is gone?

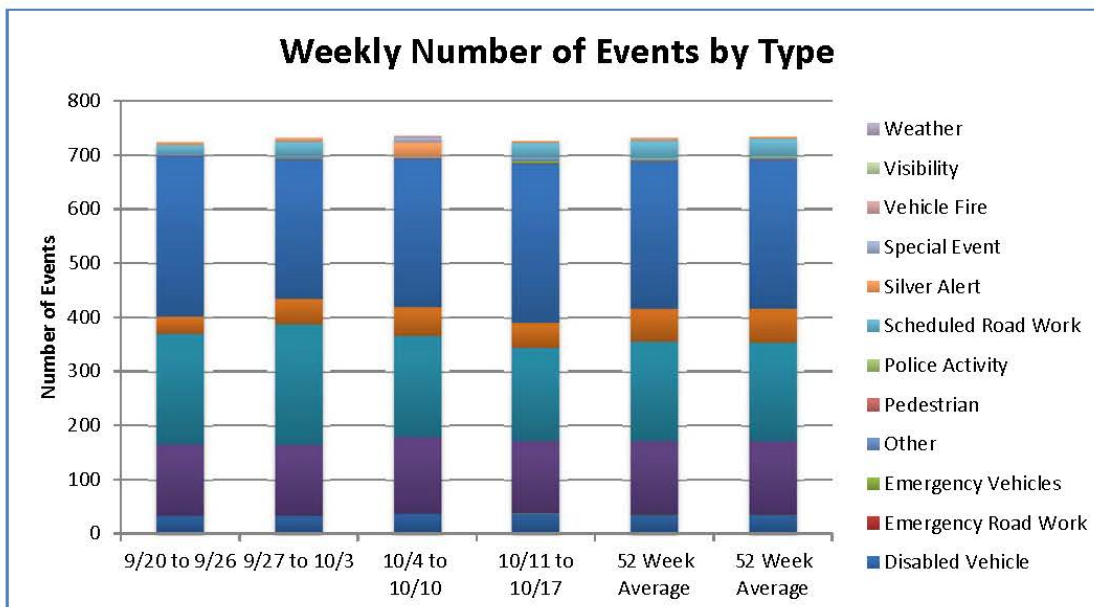
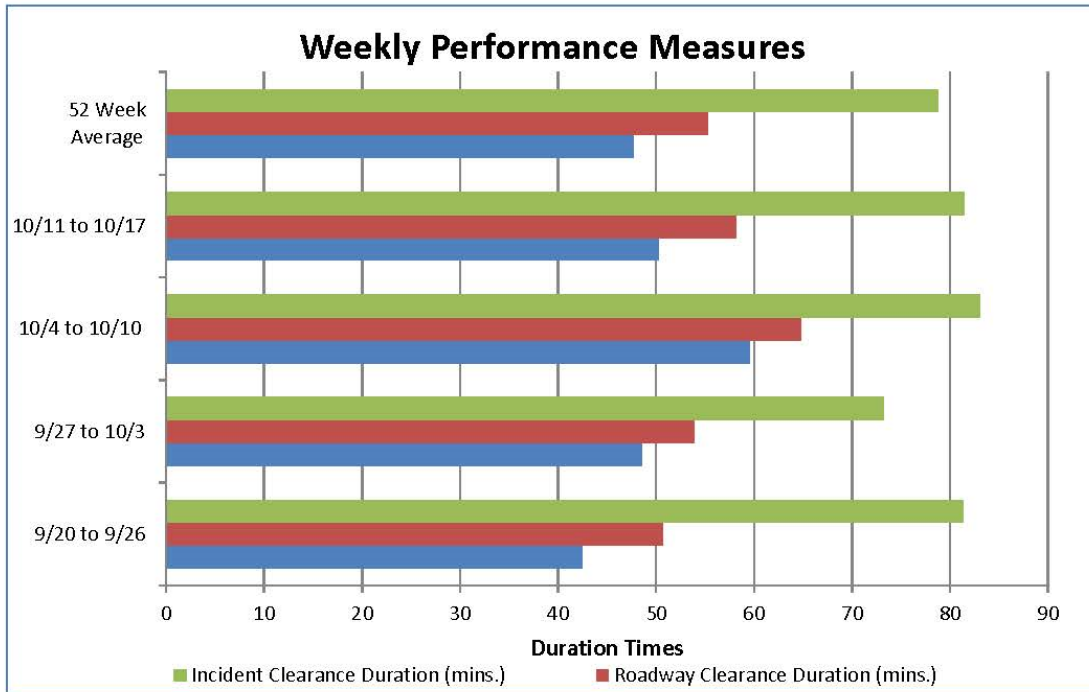
The past few weeks show that there has been a 31% decrease in crashes compared to September 2015 around this same time. There has also been a decrease in the number of disabled vehicles and debris on our interstates. Of course, with there being a decrease in incidents, we also see the effect it has had on the Road Rangers and their activities as we note a decrease in the number of activities that they have responded to so far for October compared to September.

The charts on the following page show the Performance Measures for the Open Roads, Roadway Clearance, Incident Clearance durations and events for the past four weeks.

As we can see from the charts on the following page, we are still well under our Open Roads duration goals and even though there was a decrease in activities, there were still a lot of events for the Road Rangers to respond to in the past month.



PERFORMANCE MEASURES continued



Sherrell Lall
Metric Engineering



ROAD RANGER UPDATE

The First Coast Road Rangers operate a fleet of dedicated vehicles, which play a crucial role in Incident Management here in District 2. They contribute to keeping our highways safe and secure by assisting motorists traveling on our roadways with services such as minor vehicle repairs to disabled vehicles, basic Maintenance of Traffic at accident scenes and any other minor assistance along our interstates. The Road Rangers provide real-time information to the Traffic Management Center (TMC) regarding accidents, congestion, disabled vehicles and road debris. Their routes are shown at bottom of page.

The Road Rangers held their monthly safety meeting on Wednesday, October 7, 2015 at 11:30 AM at the FDOT Urban Office. These meetings allow the Road Rangers to reflect on incidents that occurred on our roadways and use

those incidents as learning experiences while working on their routes. At this particular meeting, several of the Road Rangers were recognized for the great work that they have been doing while on duty. There were several calls to the TMC to give our Road Rangers kudos and we could not be more proud of them.

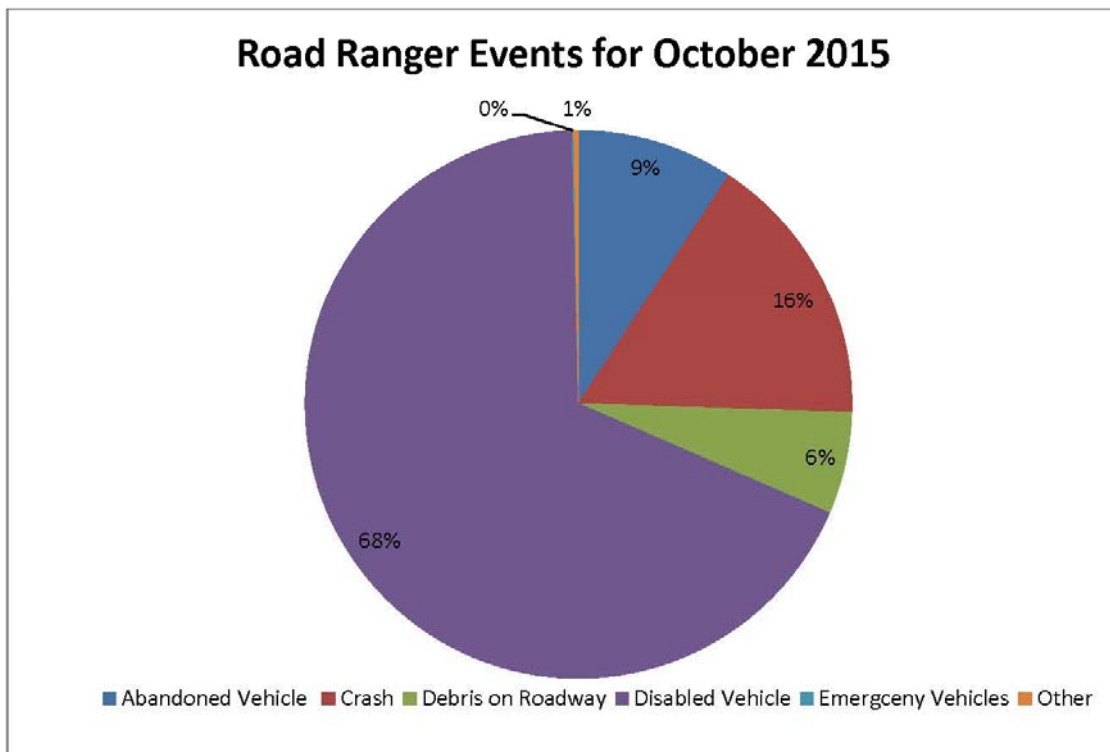
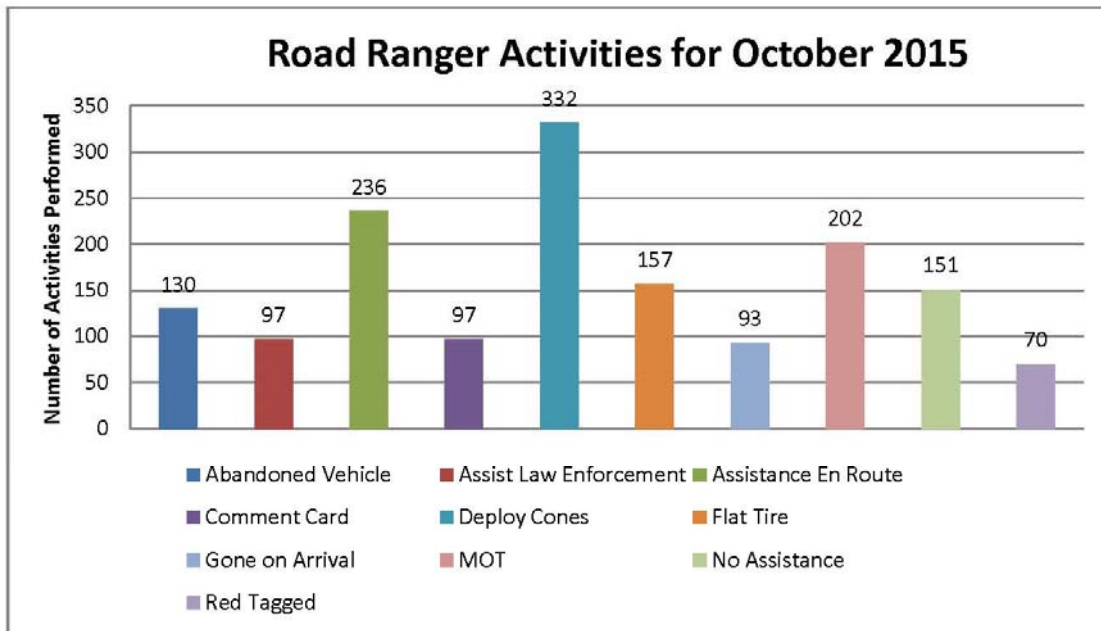
As we can see from the charts on the following page, the Road Rangers have been very busy this past month by responding to close to 2,000 events and activities so far in October through the 21st. Our Road Rangers continue to work extremely hard to help keep our roadways clear and limit the number of incidents. They helped motorists with various activities ranging from assisting law enforcement to helping stranded motorists change a tire. They helped over 730 disabled vehicles and assisted with 175 crashes so far in the month of October.

ROUTE NUMBER	ROUTE
201	I-10 from San Marco Blvd to SR 200 (US 301)
202	I-295 East Beltway from San Jose Blvd to I-295 West Beltway at Normandy Blvd
203	I-295 West Beltway from Normandy Blvd to Main St
204	I-95 from Pecan Park Rd to San Marco Blvd
205	I-95 from Stockton St to Old St Augustine Rd
206	JTB from Philips Highway to AIA
207	I-295 East Beltway from Duval Road to JTB
208	I-295 East Beltway from JTB to US 17 (across Buckman Bridge)

**Road Rangers on I-10, I-95 and I-295 are riding extended routes at the end of AM and PM shifts at the request of St. Johns County Police Department to make sure there are no stranded motorists.



ROAD RANGER UPDATE continued





RISC – RAPID INCIDENT SCENE CLEARANCE - UPDATE

The Florida Department of Transportation in conjunction with the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) implemented an “Open Roads Policy” for quick clearance, safety, and mobility to make travel in Florida safer and more efficient. The Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) program supports Florida’s Open Roads Policy, which establishes a 90-minute goal for clearance of a motor vehicle incident on Florida’s roadways.

The purpose of the RISC program is to safely and quickly restore highway facilities for public use and is a major component of Florida’s traffic incident management strategy. Fortunately, there has not been a need for RISC so far in the month of October. Here in District 2 our RISC program comprises nine counties and covers major incidents along our interstates. These interstates include I-75, I-10, I-95, I-295, SR 9A and J. Turner Butler Boulevard. Currently, we do not have any RISC vendors in Alachua County but we are hoping to have one back on contract soon.

ALACHUA BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The Alachua-Bradford TIM Team held its bi-monthly meeting on **October 14, 2015** at the FDOT Gainesville Operations Office – 5301 N.E. 39th Ave., Gainesville at 10:00 A.M. The TIM Team kicked off the meeting by reminding everyone that we hold the TIM meetings to help each other and create cohesiveness while working together on our roadways.

The TEAM then jumped right into the Emergency Operations Management Update where Ed Ward stated that there have not been any emergency management activities in the area but he did inform the group that a significant amount of

trainings are currently being held for Emergency Operations. The TEAM also discussed several of the ongoing ITS/511 projects in the area that could potentially affect congestion in District 2 especially the SR 24 project to the FL-Georgia line. This project is approximately 87 miles long and includes the installation of fiber throughout the entire segment.

Ms. Donna Danson also discussed the TIM Team’s FHWA Assessment. Overall, the TEAM scored 81.9%, which was about 10 points lower than last year but was still on the higher end of the scale. She also noted that the questions and grading have drastically changed from last year so that was a factor in the change of the score. The TEAM also reviewed a presentation given by Ms. Holly Walker on Using Diversion Routes. A mock traffic incident scenario was identified which provided an opportunity for discussion on incident management and the opportunities for utilizing the Diversion Maps.

The TIM Team would like to thank Captain Fincher from FHP for his dedicated service to the team. He will be retiring next month and we wish him all the best in his retirement.

Ms. Donna Danson would like the TEAM’s input in reviewing the current TIM Team Mission and Vision statements. If you have any suggestions or comments that you would like to provide, please email Donna at Donna.Danson@dot.state.fl.us. We will be going over all of your suggestions at the next TIM meeting.

If anyone is interested in the SHRP2 Incident Management Training Course, please contact Craig Carnes at ccarnes@metriceng.com or Misha Gonzales at melder@metriceng.com /904-260-1567. Craig is open to meeting your



ALACHUA BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE *continued*

needs by being available to work with any agencies' schedule; including nights and weekends to make sure the course is available for groups of ten or more trainees.

The next Alachua-Bradford Traffic Incident Management Team meeting will be held on **December 9, 2015** at the FDOT Gainesville Operations Office – 5301 N.E. 39th Ave., Gainesville at 10:00 A.M. Please mark your calendars to attend this meeting. Your presence helps the TEAM build together and become stronger as a unit.

FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The First Coast TIM Team will hold its next bi-monthly meeting on **November 17, 2015** at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center, 2198 Edison Avenue at 10:00 A.M. Please mark your calendar to attend this meeting and we look forward to seeing you there!

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.

TEAM VISION:

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

Donna Danson
District 2 ITS Program Manager

OPERATIONS

It has been a busy month for the District 2 Transportation Management Center (TMC). As Bob Dylan sang, "The times, they are a-changing." The move to the new facility was set into motion this month and a new chapter in the life of the TMC is about to begin. The Statewide Florida 511 contract was also put out for advertisement while our new Jax511.com website went live. Be sure the check out the new site at www.jax511.com. The RISC Program is back in full swing so things are picking up!

The new District 2 RTMC will be housed on North Jefferson Street across the parking lot from the now vacated Jacksonville Regional Communication Center (JRCC). The facility will house the North Florida TPO, FHP, TMC, FWC, and the FDOT ITS Office. Representatives include (or could include) personnel from JSO, Fire/ Rescue and City of Jacksonville Signals Department. Improvement in communication and sharing a space will lead to expedited response, promote quick clearance, reduction of secondary crashes, improve safety and improve travel time reliability. A win win for each agency as well as the motorists in North Florida.

The initial move included moving the District 2 Road Ranger Dispatcher and the District 3-JAX Operator from the old JRCC to the new building. Jason Summerfield, Tanesha Sibley and TCD were able to have enough prep work done to make it easy on our staff. Andres Gomez (pictured on following page) was transitioned over around 3PM on Tuesday, October 20th, as the first person to work in the new RTMC. He settled in and completed his shift until 9PM that night. Around 10PM FHP started to transition over. Jason Evans was able to collect his things and just walk over to the new building. He sat down in the spot Andres left empty and boom,

Continued on following page



OPERATIONS continued

we were done. The next day the Dispatch workstation was completed and the Road Ranger dispatch is now in business.

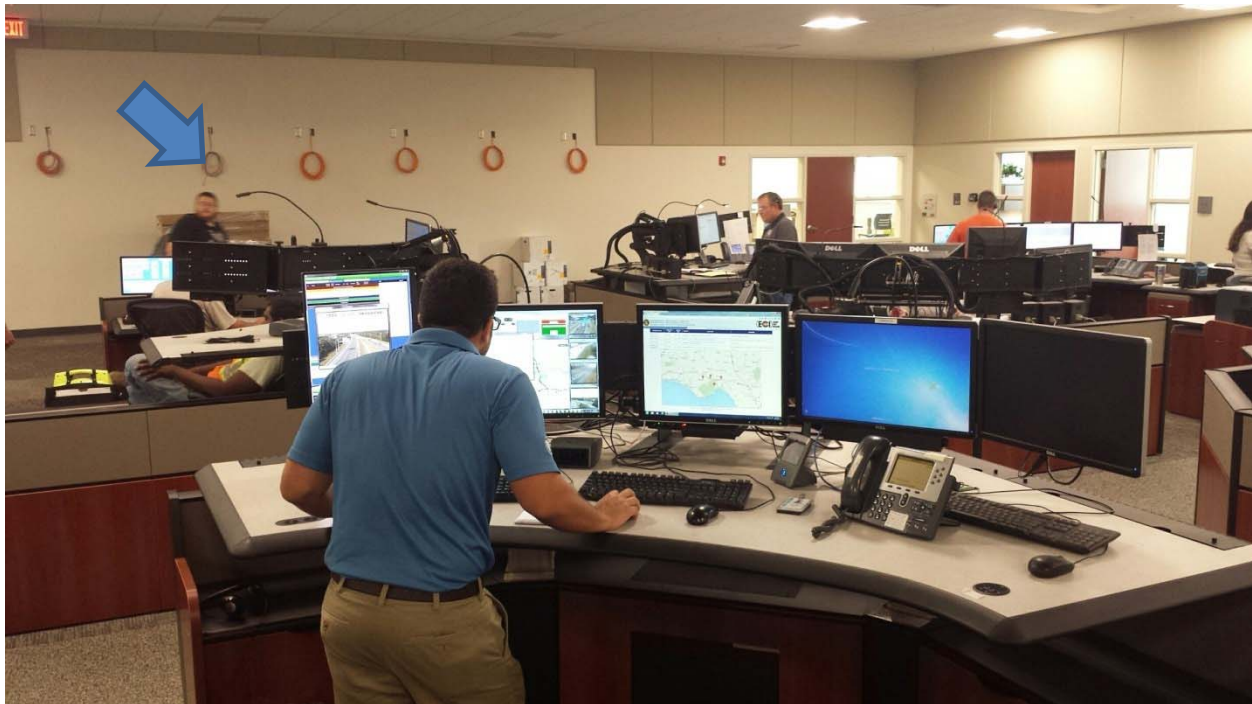
With all of the moving parts the entire team did a fantastic job of creating zero downtime and knocking out the minor issues quickly. Despite roadblocks a plenty the team was able to take it in stride and bring our operations online seamlessly. I am very proud of our entire staff as we all had to remain fluid and hit a moving target. Job well done!

The Urban Office Operations personnel will be moving over once the FDOT Network is in place in early November. Activu arrived this past week and went to work installing the video wall.

The official ribbon cutting will take place on November 12th! Time flies. To come full circle and wrap up what is happening at the TMC Springsteen sang, "These are better days, these better days shining through."

As excited as we are about the new RTMC, similar excitement remains with the return of RISC Contractors to assist FHP Troops G and B. On top of that our FL511 system is working towards a much needed facelift that I look forward to updating you on in future newsletters. Needless to say, a busy TMC is only going to get busier.

Ryan Crist
RTMC Manager



Andres Gomez, busy at work following the migration to the new facility. The blue arrow denotes where the Activu Video wall will attach to all of those carefully placed cables.



MARKETING

October has blown in (and back out again) like the recent Nor'easter that left our Beaches scrambling to recover from erosion. This month has certainly flown by! But not without us making significant headway in our effort to keep 511 first and foremost in the minds of our motorists. Before the calendar pages flutter away in the wind, let's retrace our footsteps.

On October 2nd, we visited our friends at Deutsche Bank on Jacksonville's southside. Each year we participate in their Employee Health and Vendor Fair, and this year we spoke to over 200 people! We picked out some familiar faces in the crowd, but we spotted a few new ones as well.

On October 14th, we met with Trish Johnson, former race car driver turned highway ambassador. As the owner of Apex Resource Center she works with new drivers (mostly teens, but all age groups are welcome) to help keep our roadways safe. Trish uses a simulator she personally designed to create life-like situations that help motorists improve their driving skills as well as their reaction times. This alternative to traditional driver education utilizes state-of-the-art crash avoidance technology. After each session, Trish uses software to analyze each driver's performance. Her Apex Virtual Vehicle strives to be on the cutting edge of highway safety by putting drivers in a "low stress environment" before they're introduced to more dangerous roadway conditions. For more information visit her website at <http://www.apexresourcecenter.com/> (see picture at right)

On October 16th, we loaded our 511 car and headed over to the Hyatt Regency Riverfront where the hotel management treated its staff to a five-star lunch and vendor fair. We were fortunate enough to again receive an invitation to

this coveted event. Armed with 511 goodies, we set up our booth and spent the better part of the day chatting with hotel staff. They had such an incredible turnout... everyone from sous chefs to sales managers came out in support of the vendor fair, and we were happy to let the spotlight shine on 511!

Rounding out the month, we rubbed elbows with the lunch crowd at Hemming Plaza's Trick or Treat on the Street event. Thanks to a prime spot (next to Vagabond coffee) we were able to attract quite a bit of foot traffic. Caffeinated people are always happy people! At the end of the day when all those caffeinated "zombies" jockeyed for position in the exit lane of the parking garage, they were equipped with their newfound knowledge of 511!

It's our hope that, you too, will "Know before You Go!" Call 5-1-1, visit www.FL511.com or download one of our free 511 Traffic Apps available for Apple and Android. When it comes to the most up-to-date traffic information, we've got you covered!

Sherri Byrd Marketing Manager





SPOTLIGHT ON...ASHLEY ZIRKLE

*This month's spotlight falls on a familiar face, Ashley Zirkle. You may remember her from an earlier edition of our newsletter. But that was before her story took a turn (one that led her away from us) and another turn (one that ultimately brought her back to us). Here, Ashley outlines those "missing chapters" for us. Plus we get a sneak peek into the next chapter of Ashley's exciting journey.

I heard you recently moved to Orlando, and then back to Jacksonville. What prompted the initial move? And then, what brought you back to this area?

The original move to Orlando came from a desire to finish my college education and to do so in the classroom setting. School is also expensive when you have to pay for it out of pocket, so I'm back to save some money [thank you Mom and Dad!] while I can to finish up.

Are you currently in school, and if so, what are you studying? I'm still in school. I'm currently a double major. My primary degree is in Human Communication with a minor in Intelligence & National Security, and Aerospace Engineering is my second major.

Since this is your second time around working as an Operator in the Transportation Management Center, have you noticed any major changes since you've been away?

There are some new faces around the TMC. There are some old faces in new roles. There are some handy SunGuide tweaks I appreciate – I'm looking at you Terminate Response Plan button. There's also our new facility that we're moving into. Last time I was here, we were just breaking ground on that, so it's neat to return and see it come to completion.

What was your reaction when you walked back into the TMC and spotted some familiar faces? As well as a few new ones?

I'm excited at how welcoming everyone has been. Familiar faces treat me as if I never left, so transitioning back into the Op role was seamless. To the new faces, who I don't know yet, I'm sure we'll see each other around the office or chat :)

What single piece of advice would you give to new Operators at the TMC? Pay attention to the here and now. Things lag behind the most when full attention isn't given to what we're meant to be doing.

Tell us a little about your other favorite role, being Mom to the sweetest (and cutest) little girl on the planet.

Tinsley is a hoot and a half. She's keeping me on my toes quite a bit lately since she's started kindergarten this year. I love watching her learn so much so fast and that she's excited to be doing so. Helping her with her homework is more fun than any assignment I've ever had... why can't my math homework involve coloring?!

Describe for us, if you would, a 'defining moment' in your career or personal life.

A recent defining moment is the day I realized I could accomplish things I set out to do even when they're difficult. I completed a half marathon last winter, and that's something I never imagined I'd ever do as someone who so adamantly hated running for so long. Crossing the finish line reminded me that persistence and patience will help me to see my goals through – both personally and career wise.



SPOTLIGHT ON...ASHLEY ZIRKLE
continued

What short term or long term goals have you set for yourself (let's say, in the next 5 years)? Long term, I'd like to be starting graduate school. I'm set on earning a Master's degree. But first I need to get through the last couple years of undergrad. Short term (I know I'm going to get a bunch of flack from all the meat-itarians in here) but I've set a goal for transitioning back to vegetarianism. I couldn't resist when my mom made chicken and dumplings one day last year, and just got lazy with sticking to the no meat thing. Ultimately, I felt healthier as a Veggie, so I'd like to get back to that.

You have just been handed a gift... 12 glorious hours of uninterrupted freedom. What do you do with it?

Go hiking and paddle boarding, or to the beach. Basically, I'd do anything that lets me enjoy fresh air, sunshine, and get my fill of outside time. There's something about nature that's extremely calming and beautiful to take in.

If you could travel anywhere in the world, all expenses paid, where would you go? And why?

Hands down, Australia. There's so much to explore outdoors.

Any other exciting news for you on the horizon? I'm hoping to complete a second half-marathon over on the West Coast that's a bit off into next year. Even so, I'm still excited for it.



The two sides of Ashley Zirkle. Above, the adventurer and below, the Glam Ashley on the red carpet

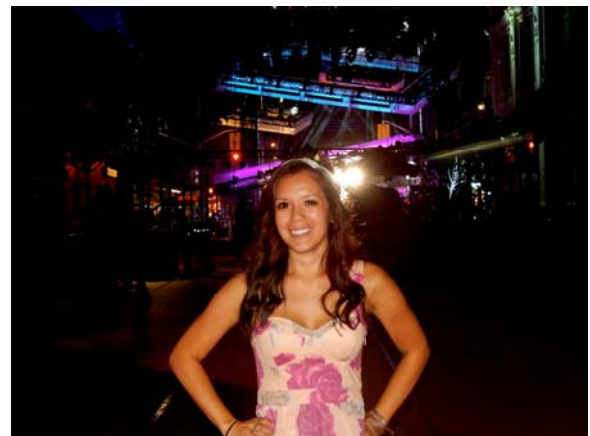




Photo Gallery



Above: One last reminder of how far we've come since the groundbreaking for the new RTMC. Below, 511 at the Hyatt Career fair and our own Sherri Byrd, Marketing Manager teaching all who will listen about the benefits of 511.





Traffic Incident Management 2015/2016 Meeting Schedule

First Coast TIM Team

FDOT Urban Office Training Center
2198 Edison Avenue, Jacksonville
904.360.5400

November 17, 2015

January 19, 2016 March 15, 2016
May 17, 2016 July 19, 2016
September 20, 2016 November 17, 2016

Alachua/Bradford TIM Team

FDOT Gainesville Operations Office
5301 NE 39th Avenue, Gainesville
352.381.4300

December 9, 2015

February 9, 2016 April 12, 2016
June 8, 2016 August 10, 2016
October 12, 2016 December 14, 2016

FDOT DISTRICT 2 ITS STAFF



Peter Vega, District 2
Transportation System Management & Operations
Program Manager
904.360.5463

Peter.Vega@dot.state.fl.us



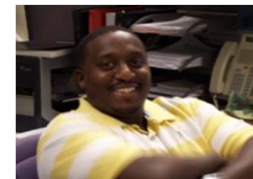
www.fl511.com



Josh Reichert
ITS/TMC Program Manager
904.360.5642
Joshua.Reichert@dot.state.fl.us



Donna Danson
ITS Operations Project Manager
904.360.5635
Donna.Danson@dot.state.fl.us



Kevin Jackson
ITS Construction Liaison
904.360.5454
Kevin.Jackson@dot.state.fl.us