

# CINCO DE MAYO

## TMC OPEN HOUSE





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

Each and every day the ITS staff deal with technology issues that can drive us crazy at times. It comes with the territory, however we sometimes forget that we are the culprit of our troubles because if not used properly it can lead to a very long day. A good example is my business laptop's scheduled software scan that determines if it has caught a virus during the past week and if any files have been corrupted.

Now, I know what day of the week it's scheduled (Friday) and how long it should take (1.5 hours), so do you think I plan accordingly? Of course not, so I am given a challenge that was the result of my own stupidity! Unfortunately, this past week the process kicked in on one of my busiest Fridays that involved important deadlines to meet but do you think I factored this into my workday? I should know by now that my laptop works at a snail's pace when this scan occurs and I can only get one-fifth of my work done while it's running. So, to say the least, it was a LONG Friday with tons of frustration.

As I sat at my desk watching the little circle go "round and round" I began thinking of how fortunate the District Two ITS program has been over the years. Yes, there were times when we rolled the dice with technology and lost, but on most occasions we've been very fortunate with our choices. I could begin with the decision to abandon all senses by going away from the Department's existing video wall technology that involved BARCO in 2005 so that we could try something cheaper but just as effective. We decided to go with plasma and LCD screens instead of rear projection video. This required us to work with the Southwest Research Institute in the development of a basic video wall driver

for this new approach. If successful, the cost savings were phenomenal (over \$450,000 in capital costs) while the annual maintenance costs would be reduced from around \$50,000 per year to almost nothing. Many naysayers scoffed at our attempt by saying the plasmas will continuously go bad due to burn-in and the quality of the video would be poor. I am happy to say that over the past ten years we've proved them wrong and to this day still have most of the plasma screens performing the same as they did on day one.

Over the past few years we felt that an upgrade was needed to this basic video wall driver so we began our research and found that Activu had the best product on the market. The Activu technology is a software approach that provides the basic features of a video wall driver but also added the ability to enlarge or reduce image sizes on the video wall. It also gave us the capability for video wall feeds to mobile devices, a feature that would allow us to share what's seen in the TMC with our TIM partner smart phones and laptops in the field. I had budgeted for the cost of a typical BARCO video wall driver but was pleasantly surprised when the Activu came in at just over half the cost. We are still in the process of configuring this driver into SunGuide, however it appears that every District ITS office has decided to follow our lead with this technology.

Still waiting on the circle to stop so I thought about the bridge wind sensor deployment we so casually developed on a blank sheet of paper with no historical projects to reference. Mount them on a bridge with only solar power? You're nuts! Try to communicate with a NOAA satellite up in the stratosphere? Never going to work! Expect them to survive abuse and vandalism?



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

Well, the naysayers were right on that one but it was due to a drunken student attending the Florida/Georgia game. They bent the post that the Main Street Bridge equipment was mounted on but luckily there was no damage to the actual equipment. It's been about four years since this deployment so I count ourselves lucky to pull this off with only a minor hitch. What turned out as an experiment has turned into a huge benefit for our area as the local EOC has adopted it as their method to track bridge wind conditions and utilized it to deploy their resources more effectively.

Looking at my computer I thought "yeah, a cup of coffee sounds good about now." As I walked over to the TMC it hit me that we were actually pretty lucky in the things we have tried. While most Districts spent thousands of dollars on each tough book given to a Road Ranger operator we decided to keep up with the times by utilizing the existing smart phones they already had in place. User applications were just getting started but we figured if we could develop an app that allowed us to track, communicate and assign Road Ranger Operators with a dispatch call then we'd save thousands of dollars, reduce equipment in the vehicle and improve our performance exponentially. The idea was shared among our ITS staff at mid-week and a trial app was in our hands the following week. Of course, we had to incorporate the new app into SunGuide and that took about three months but the overall benefit was a savings of \$50,000 in capital costs and around \$20,000 annually for software maintenance.

This use of the latest technology was a gamble since we were asking Road Ranger operators with limited technical ability to switch from hand-

held radios to a software program. At first there was resistance but over a few months this new tool won them over. It allowed them to respond to incidents quicker while freeing them up to do their job more efficiently. Instead of having to fill out paperwork for each staff they could use the drop down menus on the app to complete their reports. This was a time savings of at least five minutes per event, thereby allowing them to accomplish more throughout the day. The only lesson learned was that with each operating system or software upgrade comes a glitch, so there is still some debugging involved to address minor issues.

Over the 13 years that I've been in ITS there have been a LOT of changes in technology. I never thought I'd be trying to learn Layer-3 networking, how to develop redundant network paths or even figuring out what the hell a GBIC is to me (still don't know, so please don't ask me). I do know that the first deployment I was involved in had analog CCTV cameras that required encoder and decoder technology to communicate with the TMC. We were one of the first Districts to transition to digital CCTV cameras after sharing lessons learned with our City of Gainesville partners. The benefits of this transition was that we no longer needed an extra piece of equipment (encoder at \$1,500 a pop) to transmit the video streams. We also benefited from the reduced bandwidth required with digital cameras, thus allowing us more capacity on our network. Transitioning to these digital cameras allowed us greater flexibility while saving tons of money, thereby making it a win-win situation.

I mention the digital cameras because we've transitioned over the past few years as this technology changed. In most instances a CCTV camera goes from color to black and white

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

images during the night because of limited lighting on the roadway system. This situation was due to the technology available at the time of deployment. We have recently decided to switch to the Bosch 1080 because of its ambient light capabilities. This camera will provide full color images at night when there is limited amount of ambient lighting in the area (stars, moonlight, street lighting, etc.). It also provides enhanced imaging during fog/smoke conditions which is a very important feature for the North Florida region. The benefit is that we now gain these additional features with no change in cost. As a matter of fact, there is a Bosch 780 camera that will be available in the coming weeks that offers similar capabilities at only 85% of the existing price we pay.

I've probably bored you by now but am happy to say my scan is finally complete! Ironically, later in the afternoon the IT Department asked if they could swap me out for a new laptop since I've had the old one for over 8 years. Excitedly, I said "yes" until the bad news came. I'd have to give them my old laptop so that they could download my files to the new one. They said it should take about an hour but once they saw the amount of files I had they revised their estimated time to four hours. So, my plans of Friday were a wash and I was stuck working from home on the Memorial Day weekend but this new laptop is AWESOME so I guess I should keep my complaining to a minimum. As I've always told our staff "everything happens for a reason."

One final note on technology is the news this past month that Nevada has approved the use of autonomous trucks on their roadway system. These trucks are capable of maintaining their position in lanes, stopping/accelerating on their own and changing lanes when necessary. The

one requirement is that each autonomous truck must have a "pilot" on board overseeing the performance of the vehicle. I know it's kind of scary to hear but at least you now know that if you're in the Reno/Vegas area and see a "pilot" kicked back reading a book it's most likely that he is in one of these vehicles. The Department is hosting the annual Autonomous Vehicle Summit here in Jacksonville this December so you may get to see video of this technology in real-life action. Please contact me if you want more information or want to volunteer to assist at this summit.

Pete Vega, District 2  
TSM&O Manager



**NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS  
ENGINEER**

Sadly, organizations like FDOT are often set up in a way that encourages their employees to work in silos. This means that one department, or one subset of a department, goes about their business with little effect to what the guys in the next cubicles down are doing. In many instances, this rings true. However, it doesn't take long to realize what great deals many of our departments in D2 Traffic Ops have in common. Luckily, we like to converse back and forth, and understand and help with each other's issues. This is the case with Safety Engineering and ITS.

It may not appear like much of a marriage on the surface, but ITS deployments can have a great positive impact on the safety of roadways if implemented in the proper manner. Take signal timing for instance. Without even getting into the possible safety advantages with systems such

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

as adaptive signal timing and the Halo system, simple retiming can have a large impact on intersection safety. Various studies have found that retiming can reduce crashes by 10% or more.

The state safety office shows a crash reduction of 14%. When you apply this to multiple coordinated signals within a heavily traveled corridor, the benefits add up. This is why we have a signal retiming contract, managed by Glenn English, that is funded by federal safety dollars. Glenn's requirement is that he shows that the benefits outweigh the costs and that the signalized intersections are within high crash locations.

There is also another ITS project that is funded by safety money: the ITS deployment on I-75 in Alachua County. Luckily, the ITS department came across the need for the project at about the same time that the Safety office had additional available funding. The nice thing about arterial and interstate deployments is that they capture a very wide audience. Although the crash reduction for the installation of ITS equipment, most notably DMSs, is relatively low, once you multiply that crash reduction over a length of roadway with hundreds of crashes you begin to see results. Again, due to funding requirements that the Safety Engineering office must adhere to, a benefit to cost analysis was performed. This analysis showed that the cost of the system paled in comparison to the monetized benefits of the crash reductions.

These are only two examples of countless ways that ITS can improve the safety of roadways. From small deployments, such as Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons for pedestrians (yes, these can be considered "intelligent"), to system-wide deployments of signs, detectors,

video and more, ITS inherently helps safety by getting more information to the motorist, which allows them to make more timely, knowledgeable decisions on the roadway.

Josh Reichert  
ITS/TMC Program Manager

**NORTH FLORIDA TPO**

The North Florida TPO is anxiously awaiting the moment when they can relocate to the new RTMC facility in late summer. They have committed funds to the furnishings, audio/visual and Board Room equipment. They have also met with the Department to iron out their IT needs for staff. The only thing to do now is sit and wait for the City to give us a Certificate of Occupancy. During these final months of construction there are always things that pop up which were missed during the initial design. One such item was the NFTPO's desire to have a parking spot dedicated to a charging station for vehicles. It was funny to see the reaction of the Construction team since this involved something out of their skill set. There was panic and concern until we told them "just put in a conduit from the dedicated parking spot to the mechanical room and we'll do the rest."

The NFTPO is a very progressive organization that looks into the future when deciding transportation needs for our area. That's the reason they've supported ITS so heavily for the past several years. Likewise, they pushed the need for Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) stations in the region and I believe have at least two projects in the works. They are also a huge



## **NORTH FLORIDA TPO continued**

supporter of tolled Express Lanes that will allow additional capacity on the region's Interstate system. Jeff and his staff are always looking for the opportunity to take advantage of what's available and examining the risk/reward to such efforts. They do not stop with just the roadway system but also address the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists. In hindsight, they are truly focused on making Jacksonville a multi-modal city that provides many options to the traveling public.

I guess that's good news since it was recently announced that Jacksonville was the fastest growing city in Florida and one of the fastest growing regions in the country on a per capita basis. There is a lot to offer in our area and the steps taken by the NFTPO over these past few years will allow us to handle the increased number of transportation users coming our way. Fortunately, unlike most organizations they approach it from a regional perspective thereby avoiding biasness when deciding the best options. They incorporate the needs of all their members, whether it's Nassau, Duval, St. Johns or Clay County. They also look at the different modes that include pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, freight, rail, transit and paratransit. This is very important to us since a growing region needs to address all of these if they expect to provide a higher quality of life to their citizens.

My hope is that once we become neighbors the RTMC can provide additional tools that will help them make their decisions. With the amount of Interstate and Arterial data available they can analyze the benefit to cost of their analysis much better while being able to confirm the data using the CCTV cameras. It's one thing to crunch numbers but another to be able to compare it to real-life images of what's occurring. Having this

capability in the near future will allow the NFTPO staff to get more bang for their buck when determining the needs of the region, thereby stretching our tax dollars a little more.

Pete Vega  
District 2  
TSM&O Manager



## **CONSTRUCTION**

The contractor for the Phase 9 Project, on the I-295 East Beltway from Atlantic Boulevard going south to the I-95/I-295 Interchange, has installed a majority of the device poles and DMS structure uprights. All nine of the large interstate DMSs have been delivered and the eleven Arterial DMSs will be delivered over the next several weeks. This means that we should be seeing DMSs being installed over I-295, JTB and the adjacent arterial roadways throughout the month of June. The contractor is also installing power services, splice vaults and pull boxes and will begin installing the fiber optic cable once all of the pull boxes and splice vaults have been installed. This project is scheduled to be operational by the end of the year.

The construction of the I-95 ITS communications portion of the SR 23 project is finally making some progress. Crews have been out along I-95 installing conduit and pull boxes for the past several weeks. With that being said, there is still a significant amount of work to be completed. The construction of this communications link through St. Johns County is anticipated for completion early next year.

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### **CONSTRUCTION continued**

The contract to install ITS devices on I-95 throughout St. Johns County and the contract to install fiber optic cable and conduit infrastructure on I-75 from SR 24 going north to the Georgia line will both be Let within the next few months. Construction should begin on the I-75 contract in early fall of this year, while construction of the I-95 contract will begin in early 2016.

The project to install ITS devices and infrastructure on I-75 and US 441 in the area of Paynes Prairie is close to the integration and testing phases. The majority of the ITS device cabinets have been installed, the fiber optic cable is being installed, and the majority of the power services are complete. Integration and testing should begin in June and the project is expected to be completed in late June or July.

Craig Carnes  
Metric Engineering

### **MAINTENANCE**

Inventory requirements for ITS field devices are in the process of being changed. Previously, all field equipment was required to be inventoried on an internal tracking system, but now these devices are being required to be tracked the same as all FDOT property. So all of our items in the field valued at over \$1,000 will need to be tracked via the Property Management System and have an HW number affixed. Anything valued under \$1,000 will still be tracked by the internal tracking system. In order to ensure that we have all of the information required to obtain all of the HW numbers, the ITS Maintenance Contractor has been going to each of the device sites and recording all of the pertinent information from all of the devices within the cabinets as well as the information from the field devices mounted on the structures. This has been quite a task with the several hundred

cabinets and thousands of devices and communications equipment out in the field. Once all of the information is gathered, there will be a lot of paperwork to be filled out in order to get the HW tags, then more field work to affix the tags to the appropriate devices and equipment. There is now talk that Central Office may change the tracking requirement to any devices over \$5,000, which we hope will happen for obvious reasons.

Other than the field work to get the information for the HW tags, the ITS Maintenance Contractor has been performing their normal maintenance activities. Luckily, since the last ITS Newsletter, the ITS system has not received any damage from the many large construction projects along our interstates. There are some upcoming planned outages on the I-295 Express Lanes Project from the Buckman Bridge to I-95. The contractor will be bringing down the fiber backbone to perform a full splice of the cable which will take about a day to complete. They are also going to relocate a power service which will take down a couple of devices for several hours.

Kevin Jackson  
ITS Field Specialist

At right:  
Example of interior of  
cabinet for inventory





**ROAD RANGER UPDATE**

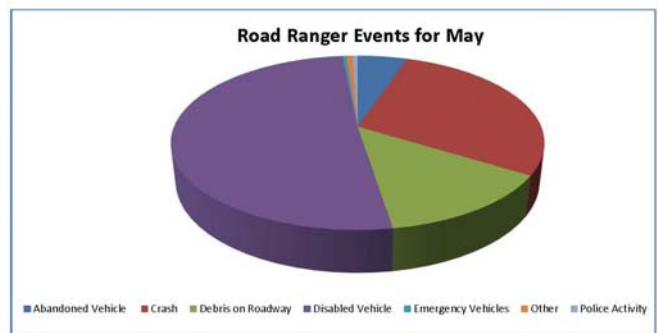
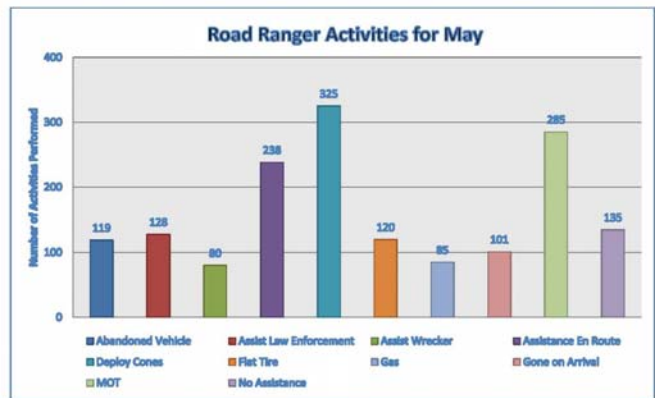
The Road Rangers held their monthly safety meeting on Monday May 11, 2015 at 11:30 AM at the FDOT Urban Office. Donna Danson welcomed the First Coast Road Rangers and then handed over the meeting to Mr. Marshall Adkison for him to give a brief presentation. Mr. Adkison spoke to the Road Rangers about the reasons that the safety meetings are held and gave insight on how to handle scenarios when assisting motorists on the roadways. He also commended the Road Rangers on their excellent MOT practices while at incident scenes and reminded them how important it is to have proper MOT setup.

Mr. Adkison then handed the meeting back over to Ms. Danson who stressed the importance of the Safe Tow Program. Safe Tow is a free service provided by the Florida Department of Transportation that helps stranded motorists stuck in an unsafe area. A Safe Tow can be issued so that the stranded motorist can be moved to a safe location to address the problem that they are having with their vehicle. This program takes into consideration the safety for the stranded motorist as well as other motorists on the roadway to avoid a secondary incident. Its goal is to provide free highway assistance services to reduce delays and improve safety for the motoring public and responders.

The First Coast Road Rangers play a crucial role in incident management. This program responds to all types of incidents and has become one of the most important elements of the incident management program. The First Coast Road Rangers provide a direct service to motorists by quickly clearing travel lanes of minor incidents and assisting motorists. Services provided also include: providing a limited amount of fuel, assisting with tire changes and other types of minor emergency repairs. These services help get the motorist off of the roadway

to help avoid any incidents with other vehicles which may leave the travel lanes and strike the vehicle or its occupant.

The charts below illustrate the event types and activities that the Road Rangers have performed and responded to so far for the month of May through the 18<sup>th</sup>. We can see that our Road Rangers have been extremely busy this month with activities ranging from assisting abandoned vehicles to providing gas for motorists in need and most importantly assisting at incident scenes. Our Road Rangers are extremely important in providing efficient travel for our motorists.







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

The Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) Program hinges on the ability of how quickly an incident can be cleared to provide safety and mobility for motorists to travel here in Florida. The RISC program is most commonly used during major incidents that cause complete roadway closures on limited-access facilities where it is vital to quickly restore traffic flow. District 2 currently has RISC in 9 counties covering I-10, I-75, I-95, I-295, and J. Turner Butler Boulevard. This program greatly assists with our goals set in the Open Roads Policy of clearing our interstates within 90 minutes.

Recently District 2 had two RISC incidents occur in Alachua County. The first one occurred on May 13, 2015 on I-75 and involved two tractor-trailers. This incident left one rig incinerated and another with heavy rear-end damage to its trailer. At about 1:43 p.m., fire crews from around Alachua County were called to the southbound lanes of I-75 north of Alachua on a report of a FedEx tractor trailer bursting into flames. By 2:04 p.m. there was confirmation that Florida Highway Patrol completely closed the roadway. Troopers on scene determined one tractor trailer was traveling about 30 mph in the right lane and was having difficulties with one of its tires. The FedEx truck came behind the initial incident at normal interstate speeds and swerved to try to avoid the crash but smashed into the trailer of the first rig and then overturned in the median. This incident lasted well over four hours as crews worked to clear the incident scene, clean up the debris and repair the heavily damaged guardrail. Motorists were detoured onto U.S. 441, and by 4:05 p.m. the interstate had only partially reopened. Thankfully there were no fatalities in this incident.



**Figure 1: Pictures from Crash on I-75 in Alachua County on May 13, 2015**

The next incident occurred on May 18, 2015 on I-75 at MM 395 at 11:15 a.m. when an RV slammed into a guardrail due to a separated tire and caught on fire. Florida Highway Patrol determined the RV was headed north when its front left tire separated, causing the driver to lose control and slam into the guardrail. There were no reported fatalities or injuries at this incident. The roadway partially reopened about 1 p.m., as crews were fixing the guardrail that the RV hit and cleaning up the debris. Congestion on northbound I-75 extended for miles well into Monday afternoon. The incident was completely cleared by 4:30 p.m.

(pictures on following page)



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



**Figure 2: Pictures from Crash on I-75 in Alachua County at MM 395 on May 18, 2015**

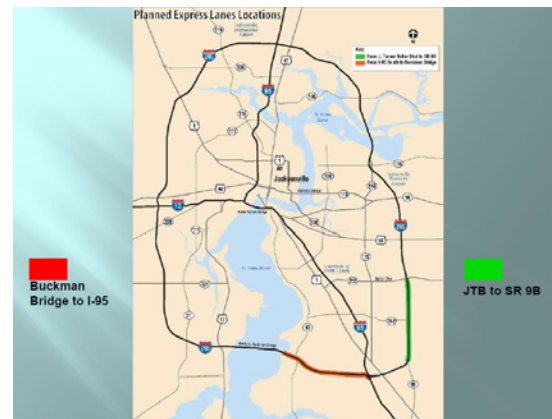
Donna Danson  
District 2 ITS Program Manager

**FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT  
MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE**

The First Coast TIM Team meeting was held on May 19, 2015 at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center, 2198 Edison Avenue at 10:00 A.M. Ms. Donna Danson opened up the meeting and thanked everyone for making the effort to attend the meeting. She also stated that these meetings are very beneficial for the TIM members to learn from each other and learn together.

Mr. Bill Kayes started off by giving everyone an update on the Overland Bridge project. He stated that there will be no planned traffic switches until after July. We then had the Construction Update by Mr. Ron Tittle. Mr. Tittle started off by informing the group of upcoming

projects in the area. He went into depth regarding the I-295 Express Lanes project that is currently ongoing. This project involves the addition of two express lanes which will be using SunPass. The project limits are between the Buckman Bridge (San Jose Area) and I-95 (see Figure 1). The red area in Figure 1 indicates the current ongoing project limits whereas the green area indicates the upcoming project limits. The upcoming express lanes project will start at the end of the year and will include the area between Butler Boulevard and SR 9B.



**I-295 Express Lanes Project**

The TEAM then moved on to the ITS Update given by Mr. Josh Reichert and Mr. Craig Carnes. Mr. Reichert gave the TEAM good news regarding the new RTMC construction. He stated that construction is moving smoothly and we are expected to start occupying the building in September 2015. Mr. Carnes provided updates on all of the ITS related construction projects throughout the region.

Although there were no First Coast Road Ranger personnel present to provide the Road Ranger update, Ron Tittle gave kudos to the First Coast Road Rangers and thanked them for

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

their services. He was grateful to them for allowing the media the opportunity to do a ride-along. He noted how dangerous their job is and praised them for the amazing job that they do on our roadways.

As a TEAM, the members also discussed several incidents which occurred since the last TIM meeting. The members had an open forum to express themselves and to learn from every agency's perspectives in order to strive for an excellent partnership.

Craig Carnes then provided an update on the SHRP2 Incident Management Training Course. If anyone is interested in the SHRP2 Incident Management Training Course please contact Craig Carnes at [ccarnes@metriceng.com](mailto:ccarnes@metriceng.com) or Misha Gonzales at (904) 260-1567/[melder@metriceng.com](mailto:melder@metriceng.com). Craig has a flexible schedule and is willing to work with any agencies' schedules; including nights and weekends to make sure the course is available for groups of ten or more trainees.

The First Coast TIM Team will hold its next bi-monthly meeting on **July 21, 2015** at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center, 2198 Edison Avenue at 10:00 A.M. Please mark your calendar to attend this meeting. Your attendance is important to the continued success of the TEAM.

**ALACHUA BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE**

The Alachua-Bradford TIM Team will hold its next bi-monthly meeting on **June 10, 2015** at the FDOT Gainesville Operations Office, 5301 N.E. 39th Avenue at 10:00 A.M. Since Wildfire Season is fast approaching, we will be having a

presentation from Jamie Rittenhouse with the Florida Forest Service. Please mark your calendar to attend this meeting. Your attendance is valuable to the success of the Team. As always we strive for clear communication between TIM members to provide a well-rounded service for motorists on our roadways.

Donna Danson  
District 2 ITS Program Manager

**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.*

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The number of events reported for the month of May is pretty close to the average for the year so far and we have been noticing an upward trend in the amount of congestion events. This increase of approximately 15% per week in congestion events can be attributed to the increase in the amount of crashes and scheduled road work events entered into SunGuide®. Here in District Two we seem to currently have a construction boom with the amount of projects that are occurring on our interstates. From the Overland Bridge Project to the Express Lanes Project there is always

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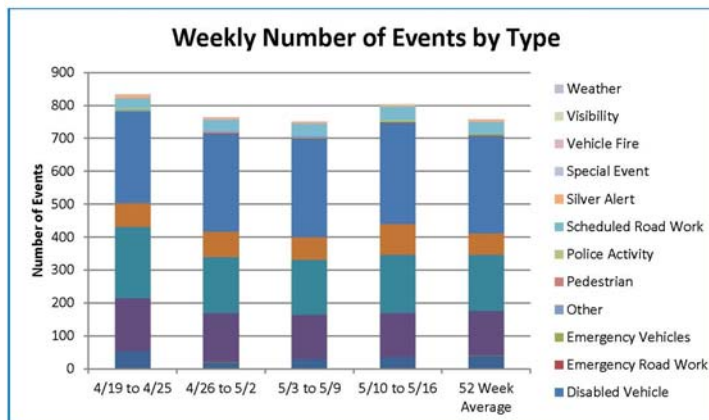
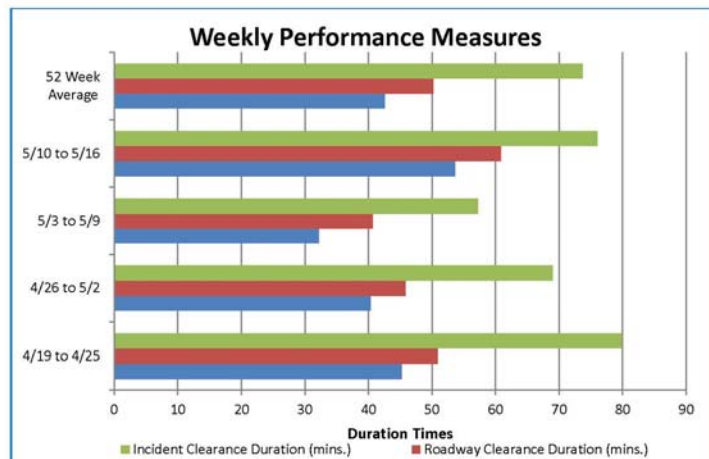
**PERFORMANCE MEASURES continued**

construction on the roadways in our area. This seems to have definitely contributed to the increased amount of crashes that have occurred in the region.

Road Ranger activity has been greater in the month of May so far than the rest of the year. The most notable increased activity areas were in assisting with events such as crashes and congestion as well as clearing debris from the roadways. This increased activity may be attributed to the combination of increase in travel during the month of May. As the summer gets closer we are noticing an upward trend in the amount of travel on our roadways across the sunshine state. Of course, this also leads to more disabled vehicles on our roadways as well.

Our Road Rangers participated in or assisted with close to 3,000 activities for the month of May due to events such as debris, abandoned vehicles and disabled vehicles. The Open Roads Duration, Incident Clearance Duration and our Roadway Clearance duration have all been lower except for the week of May 10, 2015. During this particular week District 2 had a RISC event which could have definitely contributed to the spike in all of the duration times. The RISC event took place in Alachua County on May 13, 2015 and resulted in an enormous amount of debris from the collision.

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



Sherrell Lall  
Metric Engineering



**OPERATIONS**

RISC is back! RISC, Rapid Incident Scene Clearance, is an initiative by FDOT, in conjunction with FHP, to provide monetary incentives for private partners to clear major incidents from Interstates more quickly. The RISC Program is in support of Florida's Open Roads Policy, in an effort to improve safety and roadway efficiency. RISC is most commonly implemented in incidents of complete roadway closures on limited access highways, where typical medium and heavy-duty wreckers are not capable of clearing the incident. Wrecker companies have to meet stringent requirements to ensure they can clear complex traffic incidents within the timeframe required by the contract.

District 2 was without a RISC contractor for a few months but that all changed in the recent weeks. Donna Danson, the FDOT- District 2 Program Manager, has worked hard to bring this highly beneficial program back to our District and it has already paid off with two call outs in Alachua County alone. Shelby's Towing stepped up to the plate and almost instantly rewarded the motorists in the greater Gainesville area on May 13th and May 18th. Both incidents involved tractor-trailers and the RISC Vendor was able to expedite the clearance for these two events that could have dragged on for hours longer.

The May 13<sup>th</sup> event took place at 1:43PM on I-75SB at US-441 and the Interstate was CLOSED shortly after. RISC was activated by FHP at 2:10PM and Shelby's was able to respond through a traffic jam to arrive at 2:50PM. They received their Notice To Proceed at 3:01PM and they had things wrapped up by 4:05PM with only the inside lane in each direction remaining closed for a Law Enforcement Investigation. While traffic was being detoured the TMC was even able to coordinate with the Gainesville Public Works

Signal Office to implement signal timing changes to avoid traffic queues building up. You can see with both RISC events the state of the tractor-trailers and the amount of damage the roadway facility took on.



May 13<sup>th</sup> RISC Event

Less than a week later on May 18<sup>th</sup> I-75NB at mile marker 395 we had a similar looking crash that also led to a complete closure. The event occurred at 11:15AM and RISC was called out at 11:33AM. Shelby's arrived at 12:17PM and was given the Notice To Proceed at 12:38PM. FHP declared the RISC complete at 1:33PM and the left lane remained closed for investigation. Sounds familiar, right? The left lane was finally opened at 4:31PM. Travel lanes were opened quickly, considering the event, and every effort to keep traffic moving was taken.

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**OPERATIONS continued**



**May 18<sup>th</sup> RISC Event**

The benefit of the RISC Program is evident with these two crashes but by no means do we NEED any more RISC events to occur on our roadways. Unfortunately, we know it will be needed again but it is nice to know that resource is back in our toolbox. So that is how May started, how did April wrap up? April was on the high side of normal with the TMC managing over 3,500 events. Of those events, 498 were blocking some type of lane. Duval County led the way accounting for 3,000 of the events that took place in District 2 mainly due to recurring congestion, construction, Road Rangers, ITS Device deployments and higher AADTs leading to more crashes. All of that information and more is being pushed out onto the various 511 platforms so make sure you

**“Know Before You Go! Use 511 and stay safe.”**

**Ryan Crist  
TMC Manager**



**MARKETING**

Talk about setting the bar high. I was recently blown away by a bunch of 13-18 year olds I met while attending a 511 event. Every year, Clay County rotates its annual Health and Safety Fair through each school in its county. Last year, the event was held at Ridgeview High. This year, Middleburg High. I’m always impressed when teenagers make eye contact and address adults with respect. Last year, and again this year, Clay County’s teens went above and beyond, exceeding my expectations. I walked out of these schools with a good feeling about our future. This next generation is sure to impress!

And while I’m on this topic, let me take a minute to brag on their culinary students. The Hawaiian style teriyaki chicken and Cuban spiced green beans (delightfully crisp, not soggy) they served up at lunch had me raving to my husband and kids about the talent these young students possessed. I would pay good money to have that food served to me in a restaurant! Clay County, we congratulate you on another successful Health and Safety Fair. Your students are A+ in my book!



The Middleburg Bronco’s hosting this year’s Clay County Health & Safety Fair

Continued on following page



**MARKETING continued**

Our calendar was overflowing with special events this past month. We kicked things off with a joint media day at FDOT Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup> along with our partners at THE PLAYERS. Matt Rapp, THE PLAYERS Executive Director, and Brian Franco, 2015 Chairman, stopped by to chat with media representatives, using our live streaming video wall inside the Transportation Management Center as their backdrop. Our very own Peter Vega of District Two and Chris Patton of Global 5 also provided valuable transportation information to viewers.



Cinco de Mayo at the TMC Open House



The Players Executive Director, Matt Rapp, being interviewed by FCN's Katie Jeffries.

The very next day, May 5<sup>th</sup>, FDOT held an Open House at its District Two Transportation Management Center's Urban Office. If a picture's worth a thousand words, I'd pay two thousand for the one that caught Donna Danson and Jesus Avila sporting oversized sombreros. Nothing says Cinco de Mayo like a big hat and a pair of fake mustaches!

Rounding out the month, we paid a visit to our new friends at CIT Bank. Over 200 employees came down during their lunch break to chat with us about 511, and of course, grab a free 511 goodie.

School is almost out and summer travel plans are kicking into high gear. Wherever you're headed in the coming months make sure your trip begins with a call to 511. You can also visit [www.FL511.com](http://www.FL511.com) or download one of our free 511 Traffic Apps available for Apple and Android devices. Know Before You Go and Keep Moving!

Sherri Byrd  
Marketing Manager



## **SPOTLIGHT ON...Stephen McCowan**

### **Tell us a little about your background. Where were you born / raised?**

*I was born in San Diego, California and I was the first child for my parents. We only lived there the first two years of my life and my father was relocated to Bath, Maine. We relocated one more time and Jacksonville, Florida was the last stop in a 22 year Navy career, for my dad. My passion growing up in Jacksonville was playing team sports including soccer and basketball.*

### **This month you'll graduate from Florida State College at Jacksonville with a Bachelor of Science degree in their Converged Communications program. What's next?**

*Obtaining a bachelors degree was the stepping stone into all the new possibilities of a career in hopefully Marketing or Advertising. I have considered going to graduate school here at the University of North Florida, but for the time being I think I will enjoy the time away from school and work hard towards a livelihood. I have aspirations of being a communications or social media coordinator for a reputable company on the First Coast.*

### **What excites you most about your new role as Afternoon Traffic Reporter / Marketing Assistant at FDOT's Traffic Management Center?**

*The thing I look forward to every day coming to work is being on the radio for WOKV. This was never anything I thought I could do or be good at, so it's always a surprise and a good feeling to hear myself on the radio every afternoon.*

### **I understand you participated in two internships while at FSCJ. Which departments were you working in and what did you take away from those positions?**

*The two internships I worked for my Bachelor's degree were working closely with a Publicist for*

*the Artist Series here in Jacksonville, and then working with the Marketing and Communications Department for Florida State College at Jacksonville. I took away a great deal of real life experience and work experience in working closely with the Marketing managers for FSCJ. I gained valuable knowledge in EBlasts, maintaining social media accounts, public relations, writing radio scripts and Press releases.*

### **Do you have any funny stories relating to these internships? Any debacles you witnessed while learning the ropes along with your fellow students?**

*The major debacles happened in my second internship with the Marketing department. I learned the hard way that your first submission of something you wrote is going to be met with a red pen. You learn quickly that you will be submitting multiple versions of something you wrote, until you meet your manager's specifications.*

### **Describe a 'defining moment' in your career or personal life up to this point.**

*I went straight from high school into the workforce and was working for a former employer. I had worked my way up just as far as I could in the company without some kind of degree. Watching other employees get positions I was unable to apply for, but wanted so badly, really drove me to go back to school. Wanting more advancement in my career was that defining moment for me.*

### **How do you like to relax and unwind when you're not at work? Any specific hobbies or interests?**

*As I have gotten older a lot of my time is spent with family and close friends. I enjoy being*





**SPOTLIGHT ON...Stephen McCowan**  
**continued**

*outside fishing, and being around the ocean is a huge passion of mine. I enjoy spending time with my son Caden and watching him play competitive sports. I am a huge fan of the movies. When I have free time I love going to a movie or just watching them at home.*



**We'd love to hear more about your family.**

*I am a proud father of my twelve year old son Caden. All my immediate family including my younger brother Greg and my parents Carol and Charlie live here in Jacksonville. I am in an amazing relationship with my girlfriend of four years Teresa and cannot wait to take the next step in our relationship. My father has been retired for a few years now, but my mom has been working in Real Estate on the First Coast for 25 years now. As I have gotten older I realize the most important thing in my life is my relationship with my family and close friends.*

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

*"Any enormous uprooting change in my life has petrified me. Really petrified me. But once I've come through the other side, the reward has been unimaginable." David Letterman*

**EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT**

On Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, at 12:41pm, our TMC family had a new addition!

Ryan & Maria Crist welcomed Bryant Russell Crist, weighing in at 7 pounds 11 ounces, 21 inches in length!



*With the Surgical cap, Ryan doesn't look a lot different from this picture Pete Vega had from five years ago with Lyla & Bennett*





**Photo Gallery- RTMC Progress**



The beginning



March 24, 2015



May 27, 2015



**Traffic Incident Management  
2015 Meeting Schedule**

**First Coast TIM Team**

FDOT Urban Office Training Center  
2198 Edison Avenue, Jacksonville  
904.360.5400

July 21, 2015

September 15, 2015      November 17, 2015

**Alachua/Bradford TIM Team**

FDOT Gainesville Operations Office  
5301 NE 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Gainesville  
352.381.4300

June 10, 2015

August 12, 2015

October 14, 2015

December 9, 2015

**FDOT DISTRICT 2 ITS STAFF**



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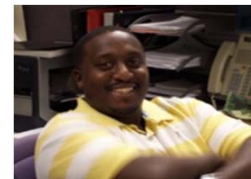
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