



Two of the topics addressed in this month's newsletter  
Pictured below:  
Express/Managed Lanes and BRT (Bus Rapid Transit)

Photo courtesy of FDOT District 6





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

Last week Josh, Donna and I had the opportunity to visit with the District Three ITS staff consisting of Lee Smith, Kenny Shiver, Amy DiRusso and Mark Nallick. The purpose of this meeting was to coordinate the interconnection we will have between Districts in a couple of years as well as to provide any lessons learned District Two could share with regard to our Service Patrol, Operations and Maintenance contracts. District Three is completing construction of their Chipley TMC and is currently in the process of selecting vendors for these upcoming contracts, hence they wanted to pick our brains to insure they looked at all angles when choosing a vendor. About 30 minutes into our visit I began to reflect back to the days when we were in their shoes and sought the advice of Districts Five and Six. It seemed like yesterday, yet it's been twelve years since we've been in that position.

Their questions were so fast paced that I had to call a "time-out" to let them catch their breath. Once the break was over we shared our thoughts with the group. First bit of advice we shared was that everyone makes mistakes so don't beat yourself in the head trying to nail it. That's the reason you have penalties and opt out clauses in contracts. Second piece of advice was to pick a vendor that allows them to build partnerships since this would be a five-year relationship. Third thing that we felt makes all contracts a success is to insure that the vendor has a "program" in place for employee retainage and growth. On our end there is nothing worse than having a vendor deal with large turnover rates since it will always impact performance, consistency and confidence levels.

By the time we left I think they understood what we were trying to convey and I hoped that their nerves were a little more settled. It's a pretty big undertaking when you consider that they are entering a legally binding relationship with someone new, having no clue what actually lies ahead. Unfortunately, all of their crew have a limited amount of time in the ITS program, therefore they have not had much opportunity to hear the "war stories" that other Districts have shared over the years. It probably did not help that there is a limited amount of expertise for the ITS industry in Chipley so the vendor staff will either be unfamiliar with the program or unfamiliar with the area if they relocate for the contract. Please keep your fingers crossed for them since they are a great bunch of folks!

The following morning I saw the reason why our TMC operations program was such a success. As I locked my car and headed through the parking lot I noticed one of our operators, Katie, carrying a Bundt cake into the TMC. Most would consider this unusual but the reality is that this is normal for our TMC. Every week we have someone on the team bring in something to brighten everyone else's day. It could be a TMC supervisor, feedback operator, TMC operator, Network staff, Donna, Josh or me who decides "I need to bring a smile to everyone's face today." The TMC setting is one where everybody is expected to do their job and do it well, yet there is a sense of caring for everyone's well-being. We also stress that growth is important and encourage fellow employees to "spread their wings" to reach higher professional levels if they strive to do so. In a sense we are showing that we care and will miss them, but the reality is that they must do what's right for them and their family from a personal growth aspect.



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

A few weeks ago Sherri noted this exact thought when she told us about running into a former TMC employee who now works for another organization. I believe it was during one of her outreach events where this former co-worker came up to say “hi” to her. Sherri’s face was beaming as she related the experience and how neat it was to see a former co-worker move on to bigger and better things. Don’t get me wrong, everything is not always “peachy-keen” with TMC staff. We have had our fair share of poor performing employees that had to be let go because they did not meet performance expectations. When this occurs Ryan still treats the employee with compassion by letting them know this job may not be “their cup of tea” and encouraging them to seek a career that fits their passion.

In a sense, we’ve tried to build our TMC Operation and Maintenance programs off of partnerships, caring and expectations. When I meet with the entire group at the semi-annual meetings I stress that the Department has performance expectations, yet we want to insure that they are provided with every tool necessary to meet these goals. I encourage them to provide feedback on things that could assist them in doing the job better. What our supervisory staff try to do is nurture innovation since these are the folks manning and maintaining our system 24/7, so without their input there is no way for our program to grow and improve.

That leads me to the reasoning I used when envisioning the new RTMC. I took the experiences gained while touring other RTMCs and dispatch centers around the country and tried to capture the best features in each one.

My focus was to make each TMC Operator and FHP Duty Officer’s job as efficient and easy as possible. I was very fortunate where by FHP Captain Keith Gaston felt the same way in focusing the design around the key component, our operations personnel. Because of that many of you will notice that the facility will not have the traditional “linear” fashioned work areas for each agency. This is where each agency situates staff in one row of the TMC floor and communicates with partnering agencies via interoffice telephone or walking to an adjacent work area.

In our case, each “pod” will have four work stations in a square configuration. Partnering agencies will be assigned an area of roadway coverage that will be dealt with in the “pod” and will work together to resolve roadway issues. In all there will be eight “pods” that consist of Evans consoles with state of the art capabilities. The work space for these consoles can be raised or lowered, depending on the desire of the operator. Each also has individual climate controls based on the preference of the operator. The seats are made by Herman-Miller with a focus on ergonomics and 24/7 operations. These seats are so well designed that they have a lifetime guarantee for parts.

Each “pod” will also have its own wall mounted 42” monitors to utilize during routine events. When the situation becomes major, like a road closure, the larger sized video wall could be used since it’s likely that more than one “pod” will be impacted. This video wall will be approximately 24 feet wide by 8 feet tall, with the opportunity for future expansion if needed. As mentioned previously, this concept isn’t something new but a combination of lessons





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

learned in Austin, Minneapolis, Miami, Tampa and other parts of the country. The only difference is that we placed our staff first when making each and every decision with the hope that this will lead to improved performance and employee retainage.

Penny, Donna and I have been very fortunate to see a great bunch of TMC personnel grow within our program. When Ryan and Jason began with us they were single men who were eager to learn. Now they are both seasoned veterans having statewide notoriety with two kids apiece.

Sherri has taken the 511 outreach program to a new level with multiple partnerships and expanding audience while raising two great girls that make her face light up every time she talks about them. I could continue with our personal knowledge about the rest of the operations staff like David, Jessica, Adrienne and Ed (to name a few more) but I think you get the point. When I think about it, many of these folks have spent the last ten years with us not only as partners but also as key components to our success.

When we move to the new RTMC joining the Department will be an operations staff with several hundred years of combined experience. I don't think you will find this type of expertise in any TMC around the country. Our contracted supervisory staff alone has over 50 years of combined experience so I can comfortably say I think they've seen it all during their tenure with the Department. I am encouraged and eager to take this next step in the program as we finally put all the pieces of the puzzle together.

Pete Vega, District 2  
TSM&O Manager



**NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS  
ENGINEER**

By now, everyone has heard of the impending "Express Lanes". They come by many names: "managed lanes", "Lexus lanes", and more, and are well on their way to becoming a part of our transportation lives. Although many people don't like them ("why on earth are they going to charge me to drive on the interstate?!"), they are a necessity as we deal with a way to bridge the funding gap for our transportation infrastructure based on the outdated gas tax index, increasingly fuel-efficient cars, and changing driving habits.

Managed lanes will surely mark a new era in the ITS office. The very concept of these optional tolled lanes can be considered intelligent transportation. These lanes, which will be added in phases to I-295 before eventually including other roads, will have tolling gantries installed which will charge a price for usage of the lanes.

This is where ITS comes in: the price will be somewhat based upon demand. The more people that use the lanes, the higher the price goes. We will use a software that employs our detector data and some algorithms to suggest pricing for the lanes. A SunGuide operator will then push this price out, where it will first appear on DMSs before actually taking effect moments later. The DMSs will warn the motorists entering the managed lanes of the costs associated with going various distances via the lanes. This entirely new facet of D2 ITS is sure to mix up our operations a bit and give us something new to play with.

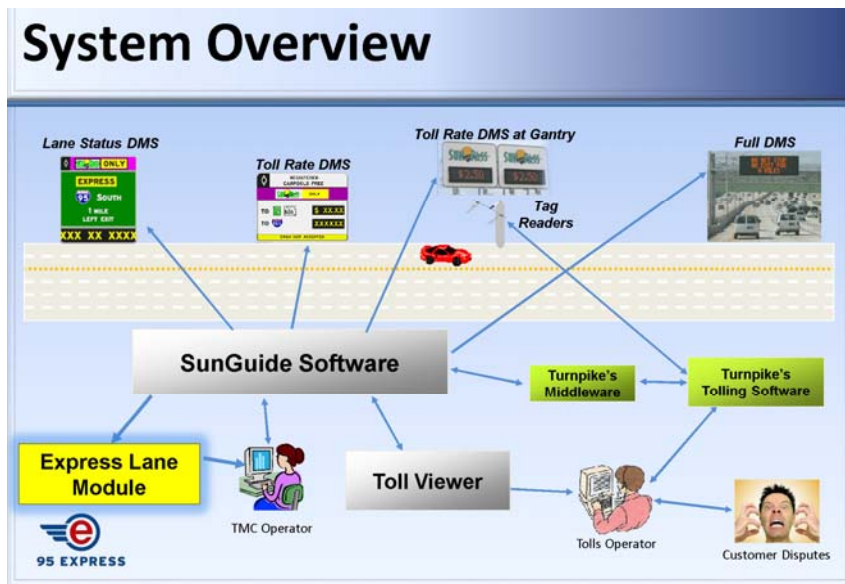
There have been internal questions about how to modify or enhance Road Ranger coverage for the managed lanes. As of now, a solution has not been determined, although it appears that the best option may be to add special managed

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## NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS ENGINEER continued

lane routes if we have the funding necessary to make that happen. One thing that is certain is that, other than the handling of the toll money itself (Turnpike will take care of that), ITS will be the major player behind making the managed lanes a successful venture for both FDOT and the traveling public. Below are two pictures to illustrate how Express Lanes work in Miami and the benefits there.



### Express Lane Comparison – District 6- Miami Fiscal Year 10/11

- **Goal : Maintain Speed > 45 MPH 90% of Time**
- **Average AM Peak Period Speeds (Southbound)**
  - 2008 HOV – 20 MPH; **FY'11 EL – 62 MPH (310% increase)**
  - 2008 GPL – 15 MPH; **FY'11 GPL – 50 MPH (333% increase)**
- **Average PM Peak Period Speeds (Northbound)**
  - 2008 HOV – 20 MPH; **FY'11 EL – 56 MPH (280% increase)**
  - 2008 GPL – 20 MPH; **FY'11 GPL – 41 MPH (205% increase)**

HOV- High Occupancy Vehicle (converted to Express Lanes)  
 GPL- General Purpose Lanes (no cost)  
 EL - Express Lanes (variable pricing)

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Josh Reichert  
ITS/TMC Program Manager



## **NORTH FLORIDA TPO**

Jeff Sheffield is the Director of the North Florida TPO so there's a lot on his plate as he leads one of the best organizations in the country. The interesting part is that he places such a high emphasis on traffic management and ITS. Over the past ten years the North Florida TPO has invested tens of millions of dollars in deployments throughout the north Florida region. It has been culminated with an investment in the new North Florida Regional Transportation Management Center. Many would think "that's it, time to sit back and watch our investment" but not Jeff. I recently received a call from him wanting to schedule a meeting to discuss the next projects needed for the program.

There are a few deployments in St. Johns County that come to mind and now that Nelson has been hired as the City of Jacksonville Traffic Engineer I am sure he will provide some new projects as well. My focus will be on the operation of our existing investments and the beginning of continuous performance monitoring of roadway conditions. When I say continuous I mean on a daily basis and not weekly, monthly or annually. I feel we need to catch the problems early so that we can take advantage of all the technology we've deployed. Leading the way will be the NFTPO System Manager consultant, DRMP, and Department's TSM&O consultant, HNTB. We will rely on these two firms to focus on the performance of roadways within the NFTPO region with a goal of having them provide solutions and future potential projects.

Besides the upgraded traffic controllers, Bluetooth detectors, CCTV cameras and Arterial DMS we also have deployed transit signal priority and traffic signal preemption. Next on our plate are Express Lanes, ramp metering and

toll road 23. The financial support of the NFTPO has also allowed us the opportunity to integrate seaport and airport data into the program. The only thing lacking is rail but I am hoping that Jeff can pull some strings so that we can develop a long lasting partnership with them as well. If this is accomplished I feel we have incorporated all modes of traffic into the TSM&O program thereby leading to a point of data collection, monitoring and improvement.

In the next few months I plan to schedule another North Florida ITS Coalition meeting to discuss our progress and what waits for us in the future. It has been a while since we last met as a group but the timing could not have been better to schedule this meeting since the RTMC should be opening in the next few months. The hope is that we receive final acceptance from our partnering agencies on how we should handle arterial deployments. This means data sharing, transfer of operational capabilities and using economies of scale to get more projects completed at a minimal cost. If we can reach consensus then I anticipate significant improvements in the way we conduct business on a daily basis. Keep in mind that this would have never happened without the contributions of Jeff, Denise and the entire NFTPO staff, as well as Board Members.

Pete Vega  
District 2  
TSM&O Manager



## **CONSTRUCTION**

The contractor for the Phase 9 Project, located on the I-295 East Beltway from Atlantic Boulevard going south to the I-95/I-295 Interchange, continues to install ITS devices and cabinets. The majority of the conduit infrastructure is installed and their subcontractor is installing pull boxes. Between the time the project was designed and when power services were being installed, Jacksonville Electric Authority's rules have changed. This required several meetings and changes to the original design. At this time it seems that the issues have been resolved. The project is on schedule to complete before this year's Thanksgiving holiday.

The construction of the I-95 ITS communications portion of the SR 23 project has stalled with no work currently being done within the project area. The contractor is expected to begin working on conduit installation in the next few months and then follow behind the conduit installation with the installation of pull boxes and splice vaults. The construction of this communications link through St. Johns County is included within the SR 23 project contract which is anticipated for completion early next year.

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 in 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 Payne's Prairie is nearing completion. All of the DMS structures and ITS device poles have been installed, power services have been

constructed and all conduit installation is complete. The contractor is installing the ITS devices and cabinets and fiber optic cable installation will be moving forward. This project is anticipated to be completed by June of this year.

Craig Carnes  
Metric Engineering

## **MAINTENANCE**

Our streak of bad luck with Roadway Construction projects causing damage to our ITS infrastructure continued again this month. A power service line was cut by a contractor digging the foundation for a new sign on I-295 southbound just south of the Dames Point Bridge. The damage caused several devices to be out temporarily when it caused the main breaker at the Jacksonville Electric Authority power service to trip. Once the cause of the power outage was found, our maintenance crews were able to get all but one of the devices operating again.

With lightning and hurricane seasons still a couple months away it has been a relatively slow month for troubleshooting and repair of ITS devices. Maintenance crews have been doing preventative maintenance throughout the system, providing locates for ITS fiber optic cables and power service cables, and troubleshooting devices when needed. So, we are enjoying the calm before the summertime storms while we can.

FDOT and consultant personnel have been attending statewide meetings for the past several months in an attempt to get all of the Districts doing ITS Inventory the same. These meetings involve both ITS Operations and Maintenance as each section has to keep track

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**MAINTENANCE continued**

of their own inventory. It seems as though these requirements have become established and the ITS Maintenance section is in the process of making sure that we meet these requirements. A full count of all of the ITS devices, components, and spare parts is underway and should be completed in early May.

Kevin Jackson  
ITS Field Specialist

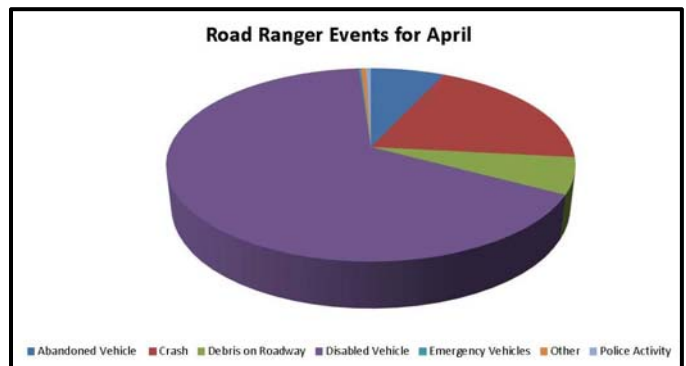
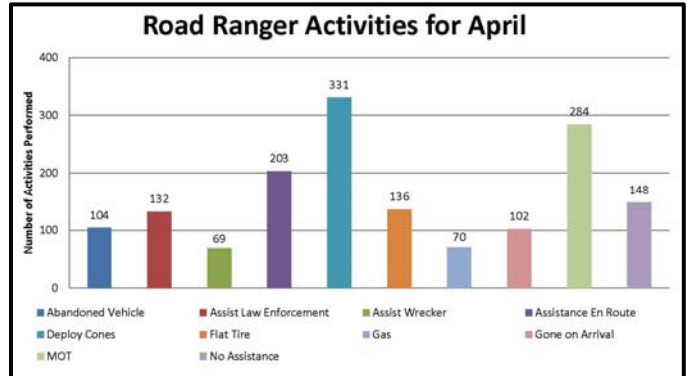
**ROAD RANGER UPDATE**

The Road Rangers held their monthly safety meeting on April 6, 2015 at 11:30 AM at the FDOT Urban Office. Donna Danson welcomed the First Coast Road Rangers and reminded everyone that these meetings are held so that everyone can share their experiences and learn from one another to provide a united front on our roadways. Donna also congratulated the First Coast Road Rangers on 8 years! A certificate of appreciation was presented to the First Coast Road Rangers for their dedication to excellence and their service. It has been such a great partnership and honor to have the Road Rangers on our roadways helping motorists all over District 2. Our Road Rangers have proven themselves to be knowledgeable, professional and informative and FDOT congratulates them on all of their hard work.

The Road Rangers then watched a short video titled "Your Vest Won't Stop This Bullet" which focused on Safety, Maintenance of Traffic, and Approach. The video also provided a strong reminder to the Road Rangers that they should never be complacent on our roadways. Our Road Rangers have assisted with close to 1,100 incidents on our roadways so far in April alone and this video was just a reminder of how diligent they needed to be while assisting motorists.

The First Coast Road Rangers play a crucial role in the incident management team and are utilized to make incident scenes safer for our incident responders and motorists. We would not do such a great job if it was not for their contribution. So far in the month of April they have helped with many different activities from abandoned vehicles to crashes and even one of the most important parts of incident management which is helping disabled vehicles out of the roadways.

The charts below illustrate the event types and activities that the Road Rangers have performed and responded to so far for the month of April through the 18<sup>th</sup>.







**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, 9A, and J. Turner Butler Boulevard.

Fortunately, District 2 has not had any RISC incidents so far in the month of April, but all of our vendors remain vigilant and prepared in case there is an active call. This program greatly assists with our goals set in the Open Roads Policy goal of clearing our interstates in 90 minutes or less.

Donna Danson  
District 2 ITS Program Manager

**ALACHUA BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE**

The Alachua-Bradford TIM Team meeting was held on **April 8, 2015** at the FDOT Gainesville Operations Office, 5301 N.E. 39th Avenue at 10:00 A.M. Donna Danson opened the meeting by welcoming all the attendees. She then stated that the purpose of the meeting was for everyone to work together as a team and learn from each other.

The meeting started off with the Emergency Operations update given by Ed Ward. Ed informed everyone that The Governor's Hurricane conference will be held on May 10<sup>th</sup> through May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015 and that the Statewide Hurricane exercises will be held at the end of May through June. This was followed by the 511

Update where Josh Reichert notified the group that the legislation to change the wording of the Florida statutes regarding 511 has been introduced which will allow 511 to be web and application based and will hopefully provide funding to upgrade 511.

Craig Carnes then transitioned into the ITS Update where he informed the group about several projects occurring in the area. He noted that the RTMC in Jacksonville is coming along well and construction is on schedule. The Construction Project Update was given by Rebecca White where she informed the TIM TEAM of many projects occurring in Alachua and Bradford counties that will affect traffic flow in upcoming months. In the agency reviews Lieutenant Caulk from FHP gave kudos to the SHRP2 training. He stated that the training has really helped with the troopers being safe out on the roadways and he is grateful for the opportunity to attend.

Craig Carnes provided an update on the SHRP2 Incident Management Training Course. There will be a four (4) hour course held at the Emergency Operations Center Training Room in Starke on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015 from 6 PM to 10 PM. This course is open to anyone who would like to attend. If you would like to set up a date for 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 or [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 students.

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.



**ALACHUA BRADFORD TIM TEAM UPDATE**  
**continued**

39th Avenue at 10:00 A.M. Please mark your calendar to attend this meeting. Your attendance is valuable to the success of the Team so that we can provide a unified service to those who need us.



Alachua Bradford TIM Team Meeting

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

The next First Coast TIM Team meeting will be held on **May 19, 2015** at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center, 2198 Edison Avenue at 10:00 A.M. Thank you in advance for your attendance at these meetings. We aim to improve communication between all incident management agencies to produce a successful Traffic Incident Management Team for the future.

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 April was pretty close to the average for the year. However, April had considerably more congestion events than the 52-week average. This increase of approximately 17% per week in congestion events can be attributed to the increase in the amount of crashes and scheduled road work events entered into SunGuide.

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

Our Road Rangers participated in or assisted with close to 2,500 activities for the month of April due to events such as crashes, abandoned and disabled vehicles and MOT on the roadways. The Open Roads Duration, Incident

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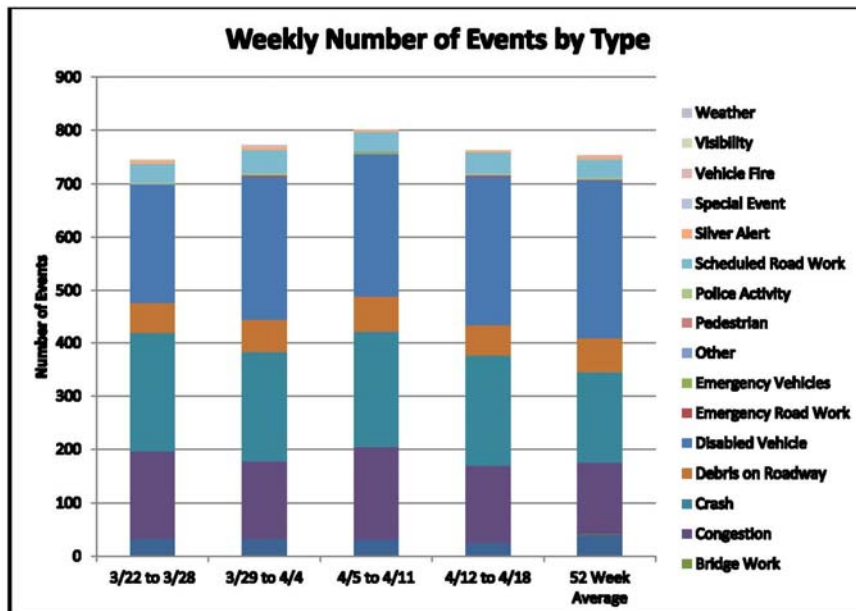
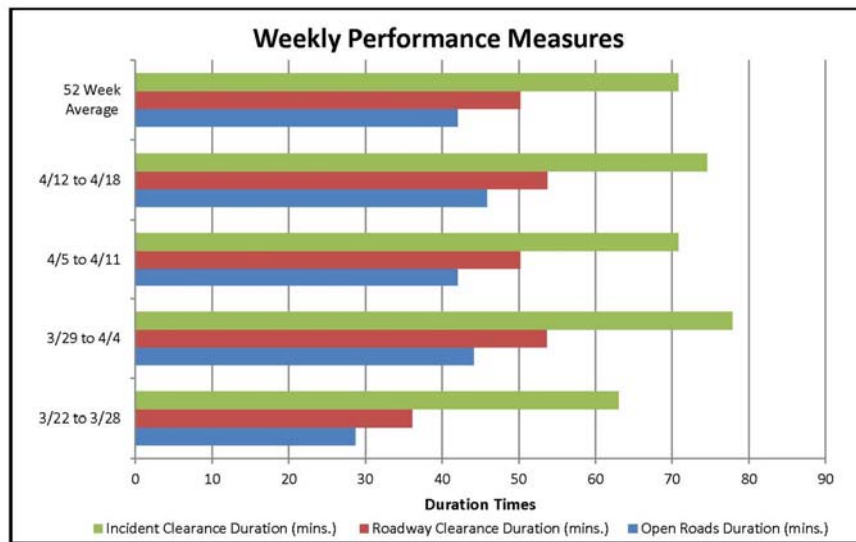


**PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Clearance Duration and our Roadway Clearance duration have been lower in April than in March around this same time.

Looking at the Weekly Performance Measures chart below, we can see that mostly all of the weeks reported have been somewhat consistent and close to the weekly average with two of the four weeks below the average duration times.

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**

On March 24<sup>th</sup> through March 26<sup>th</sup> I had the pleasure to be a part of the North Florida Construction Career Day event. It was a wonderful opportunity to reach out, on behalf of ITS and the TMC, to students in Duval, Columbia, Clay, Nassau and St. Johns County. The event covered all facets of Transportation and Construction, providing participants with a chance to match their interests with possible future career paths.

Over the three days 1,200 students made up groups that walked around and visited various learning labs, demos, vendor booths and hands on activities to gain an understanding and appreciation for what Transportation professionals deal with on a daily basis. The hope is to infuse new talent into transportation related fields by creating a stream of local candidates who have been interested since the early stage of their professional development.

The ITS/ TMC Learning lab was to educate the students on the department that is the new kids on the block relative to most of the companies and departments in the room. ITS has been up and running in North East Florida since 1998. TMC Operations began in 2002 with FDOT personnel manning the helm trying to balance their day to day with operating cameras and DMS that were around town on a dial up connection. Most of the students didn't remember a world with dial up. TMC Operations were put out for a bid in 2004 and I have been here ever since. ITS uses advanced applications and technology to provide innovative services relating to different modes of transportation and traffic management to enable various users to be better informed and make safer, more coordinated, and 'smarter' use of transportation networks. In short, ITS uses technology to maximize current infrastructure and roadway systems to improve travel time reliability and

safety of its users as well as expedite response of TIM Members and promote the Open Roads Policy.



I knew all of the kids that came to my lab weren't there to get out of class but to hear about job opportunities. ITS and TMC Operations has so much to offer. For a generation that is growing up with technology at their fingertips (my dad bought our first computer when I was a junior in high school) the kids before me are the ones who will be paving the way towards connected and autonomous vehicles. Transportation is changing which means the way you get from X to Y to Z is changing too.

You don't need a Civil Engineering degree or a Masters to be a part of it. ITS needs a team of all types to help it move our world forward as technology moves at a breakneck speed. People need to design these projects, be in the field and deploy ITS equipment, people are required for maintaining this equipment by troubleshooting fiber and device issues... we need TMC Operators to man the system, web and App developers to work with 511, radio personalities, marketing specialists and Roadway Service Patrol Operators...and these are just the tip of the ITS Career iceberg. It takes an army of people and if I reached just a handful of people

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**OPERATIONS**

during CCD my job was done. We need these kids to help move us forward. I hate traffic! Bring me my autonomous car!

While I was talking to groups of students the TMC Staff and Road Rangers were hard at work. The TMC event total spiked back up after a short February as we coordinated 3,470 events of which 906 were crashes and 493 had lane blockage. The Road Rangers were equally busy responding to 1,840 events and providing 4,522 activities at those stops (2.6 activities per stop). For March, 61% of the events Road Rangers assisted on were DAVs while another 20% was for crashes. I found it interesting that almost 50% of the events Road Rangers responded to were on Mondays and Tuesdays in March. Talk about starting your week off wrong. To avoid the delays and being in our event counts make sure you are a safe driver and

**“Know Before You Go! Use 511”.**

**Ryan Crist  
TMC Manager**

**MARKETING**

I've found that when you poll people regarding their work commute they're usually in one of two camps; they either love their commute...or they HATE it! There doesn't seem to be any middle ground surrounding this topic. And the ones who hate it are quick to jump on their soapbox, animatedly giving us the play-by-play, "Last week I was stuck on the Buckman. Took me an hour and 45 minutes to get home. Poor Skeeter was all ribs and bones by the time I could get there. Just sittin' by his doggie door, waiting for

his kibble." That's usually about the time one of their wizened co-workers walks by our booth and says, "Oh, 511. I have that app! Used it last week when the Buckman was all backed up. Saved me an hour on my drive home."

When we attend Corporate Safety Fairs at, let's say, CIT Bank or Fidelity National Financial in Riverside we hear quite a few people say their commute is only two blocks. That's because those businesses are within walking/biking distance to residential communities. But when we're at places like the Jacksonville International Airport or Sea Star Line (all places we've either visited recently or plan to visit in the coming months), we're more likely to hear drivers groan when they talk about their daily commute(s). Oftentimes, they're driving in from places like Callahan or even Middleburg to take jobs that aren't readily available in their own neighborhoods.

That's where 511 comes in. If we're going to live and work in an area as spread out as the greater Jacksonville area is, we have to give motorists tools they can utilize on their daily/weekly commutes. And as you know, the best defense is a good offense. That's why it's always better to "Know Before You Go!" Our Dynamic Message Signs are great. But no one wants to be stuck beneath a DMS that reads:

**CRASH I-295 W  
AT BUCKMAN  
ALL LANES BLOCKED**

So in our efforts to arm motorists with this knowledge, we continue to attend Hurricane Awareness Events, Corporate Safety Fairs and Employee Benefits Expos. In addition to these corporate events, we'll also be making a special appearance at Middleburg High School in Clay County next month.

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**MARKETING continued**

We encourage drivers to call 511, visit the website or check the app *before* heading to their next destination. Or if they're already in motion, they can always have a passenger check 511 for updates. Safety first!

So wherever you're headed in the coming months, make sure your trip begins with 511! I think I see a Disney road trip in my future!

You can log onto [www.FL511.com](http://www.FL511.com) or download one of our free 511 Traffic Apps available for your Apple and Android devices. Know Before You Go and Keep Moving!

Sherri Byrd  
Marketing Manager



Above: another captive audience at Construction Career Days;  
Below: A Jacksonville International Airport employee using the barcode reader to install the 511 app.



[www.FL511.com](http://www.FL511.com)





**SPOTLIGHT ON...Lisa Darnall**

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

*I was born and raised in Jacksonville, Florida. I graduated from the University of West Florida with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and then moved north spending time in Virginia and Maryland. My public transportation career began in Baltimore where I spent 15 years with the Maryland Mass Transit Administration in Operations roles. During this time, I earned a Master of Administrative Science degree with an emphasis on management from the Johns Hopkins University before returning to Florida to continue my public transportation career in Orlando. I joined the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA) in 2013 as Vice President of Transit Operations which allowed me to return home to my roots.*



**I understand this was all part of JTA's organizational restructuring back in 2013. What changes have you helped bring about since first stepping into this role and also what are some of the key projects you'll be focusing on for the remainder of 2015?**

*There have been many transformational changes at the JTA beginning with our new Chief Executive Officer, Nathaniel P. Ford, Sr. who joined the agency in December 2012. Upon joining his executive leadership team in March 2013, we immediately began a process of a comprehensive evaluation and overhaul of the JTA's bus fixed route and community shuttle operations. The entire system was completely overhauled for the first time in over 30 years and is referred to as the JTA's Route Optimization Initiative. Service is now more frequent and spans later evening hours. Not only did the JTA restructure the system, but 30 percent of the bus stops were removed to reduce travel time between stops, 128 ADA compliant bus stops were installed, along with over 2,900 new bus stop signs, and a system-wide real-time passenger information system deployed that allows our customers to access real-time information on bus arrival via a smart phone app, text messaging, or by calling the Customer Contact Center.*

*By the end of this year, JTA will begin a 5-year conversion of up to 100 buses to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG). The first 20 CNG buses will be placed into service in December 2015. The deployment will coincide with JTA's new bus rapid transit system titled First Coast Flyer. This premium bus service will operate along some of Jacksonville's busiest corridors in the north, southeast, east and southwest quadrants of the city, with downtown as a connection point. The First Coast Flyer service will feature specially branded CNG buses, increased frequencies with limited stops, dedicated lanes for travel, and prioritized traffic signals in some areas to enable the buses to travel more quickly between destinations.*

*We have also added in Park-n-Ride lots in the Town of Baldwin and Clay County to enhance our regional transportation connections.*



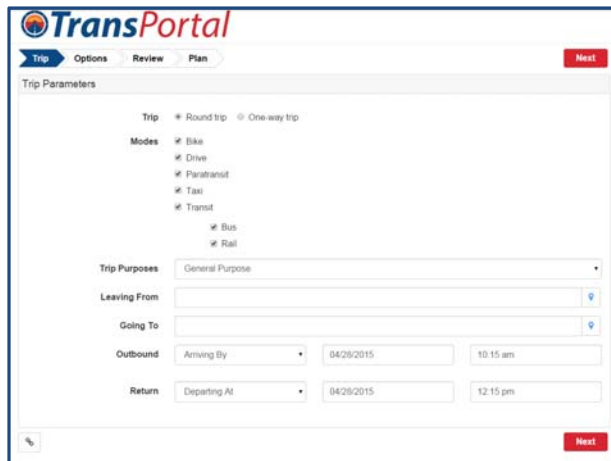
**SPOTLIGHT ON...Lisa Darnall continued**

*Other key JTA initiatives include:*

*JTAMobilityWorks – JTA went to the bond market to access \$100 million in revenue bonds to finance the construction of 27 road projects. Fourteen of the projects are “mobility corridors” that will improve access to transit, bicycle and pedestrian safety and address ADA access needs.*

*TransPortal (One Call, One Click) – JTA has developed an ambitious and far-reaching program for coordinating regional mobility in Northeast Florida. TransPortal is a one-stop Transportation Resource Center that provides information on all potential transportation options in the 13-county Northeast Florida region including traditional transit and paratransit services, car and van pools, volunteer driver program, taxis, long distance/intercity bus service, Amtrak passenger rail, social service and not-for-profit agency transportation services and safe bicycling and walking paths. The primary focus of this system is for Veterans and their families, but is open to anyone who would like to utilize the system.*

*This is just a snapshot of some of the major initiatives going on at the JTA. As you can see, we are making big changes in the region.*



<http://www.transportal.net/en/users/323684/trips/new>

**How did you become interested in Mass Transit?**

*I did not begin my career out of college thinking I wanted to be in public transportation. Right out of college, I began my working career in retail management; however, shortly realized I wanted to do something different. I applied to a very small ad in the Baltimore Sun for a career in public transit. My first position was in Customer/Community relations, which allowed me to get involved with community meetings and customer interactions. Understanding the needs of the customers gives you a different perspective. Almost 33 years later, I can't think of doing anything different. I consider myself a public servant and love what I do each and every day.*

**We'd love to hear about any awards, certificates or special recognition you've received among your peers.**

*In addition to my studies at the University of West Florida and the Johns Hopkins University, I have received several management and leadership certificates including an opportunity to be selected to be part of an International Transit Studies mission to Asia in 2007 to learn and share information with other transportation agencies.*

**What is the most difficult project you've fought for and subsequently won?**

*The passage of the extension of the local option gas tax. The JTA's image prior to new leadership was less than stellar, which created a trust issue. It was critical that the leadership team of the JTA change that image in a short period of time. We accomplished that turnaround by educating the community and being*

Continued on following page



**SPOTLIGHT ON...Lisa Darnall continued**

*better partners. This required winning over stakeholders and elected officials. The vote passed for extension with a 16 - 1 vote.*

**What do you envision for Jacksonville's mass transit system in the next 5 years?**

- *Regionalism*
- *Technology advancements like Mobile Ticketing*
- *Optimum connectivity attracting a growing number of choice riders, one which caters to our younger generations who in many cases prefer not to own a car*
- *Full BRT implementation and Transit Signal Prioritization*



*A conceptual of a BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) Bus*

**What's the most significant change you've witnessed in the past 2 decades as far as Transportation is concerned?**

- *An increased number of females in executive and Board roles*
- *A technology explosion that ranges from Enunciation Systems to Electronic Fare Systems to Mobile Ticketing*
- *System designs that cater to our aging and disabled population*
- *Environmental friendly transit vehicles*



Community Based Trolley Service

**I can imagine that at times the challenges you face make your job seem a bit stressful. How do you like to relax and unwind when you're not at work?**

*I really enjoy spending time with family and friends, reading and traveling. Though working in an environment that is 24/7, makes it difficult at times to relax and unwind when not at work.*

**Tell us a little about your family.**

*I grew up in Jacksonville though currently most of my family is spread between Florida, Georgia and California. All of which are great places to visit and I enjoy spending time with them, whenever possible.*







**Photo Gallery- RTMC Progress**



From the beginning (above) to now (below)



