



# Tropical Depression 9

From local to the National Weather Service to the Spaghetti Model (7am Update)

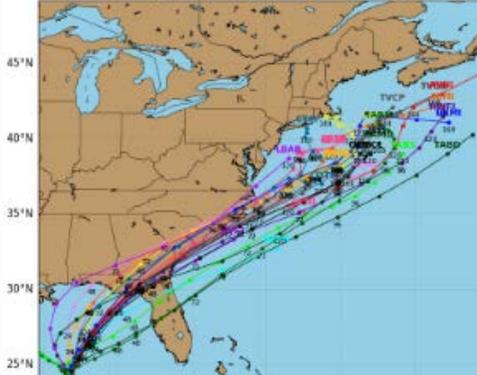
Know that the NEFL RTMC is ready, from Jacksonville to Pensacola & everywhere in between!

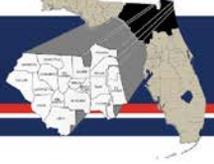


**Tropical Depression 09L Model Track Guidance**

Initialized at 06z Aug 31 2016

Levi Cowan - tropicafidelity.com





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

For those of you that may not have heard, Josh Reichert submitted his letter of resignation effective September 9<sup>th</sup>. After two years our young butterfly decided to spread his wings and head to the private side of the ITS industry. The loss of his skills and abilities will have a significant effect on our daily operations, however our District Two ITS team is very strong, so we will survive. I think the biggest loss was his ability to think outside the box while bringing a fresh perspective to RTMC Operations and ITS Maintenance. Likewise, his ability to cheer up staff during those rough stretches will also be missed since he had a way of making the worst not seem so bad.

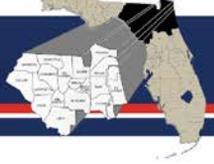
Even though this loss will generate some challenges the addition of Dee Dee Johnson and Matt Harbert will somewhat soften the blow. Over the past few months I have deciphered that these two have the ability to learn things very quickly while absorbing an enormous amount of information in a short period of time. The fact that they inherited a contractor staff that's adjusted to their management style pretty quickly is a testament to their talent. Each is about six-months ahead of my anticipated learning curve, hence they should be able to keep us afloat until Josh's replacement arrives. Needless to say, much of the kudos has to go to the excellent support staff they have available contractually.

I will begin by discussing Mr. Ryan Crist, the RTMC/511 Contract Manager, who in my opinion is the best at this position in the entire Statewide ITS program. I count my blessings each and every day knowing that RTMC operations are in the hands of such a great

leader. Ryan has the talent to bring out the best in his staff while handling the tough task of dealing with poor performers. He is a straight shooter who sets their expectations and gives his staff every opportunity to achieve our goals. When they do not cut the mustard he deals with these individuals with a very stern approach, up to and including termination.

Of course, Ryan can't handle this all alone so he relies on Jake "the snake" Wilson and Jason "yes I'm over 21" Evans who are the RTMC supervisors. Both individuals have acclimated to the nuances and expectations of Ryan, thereby making his job of managing the RTMC much easier. Over the past year I've seen both individuals grow into their jobs to the point that I can now sleep much easier at night. There are those certain occasions when I must step in to provide some guidance or recommendations, however these are those rare moments when some unique event occurs that they'd never encountered.

The one thing that many of you may not realize is that Ryan, Jake and Jason are constantly at it by providing 24/7 supervision at the RTMC. For instance, over the past year we were required to e-mail an Executive Notification report to upper level management when major events occur, like a road closure or fatality. These type of events have no schedule and usually occur in the wee hours of the morning or on the weekend. When such events happen one of these three are up (usually around 2 AM) generating the report that needs to be sent to upper level management. This is one



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

of the “perks” of being a supervisor at the RTMC yet not a peep or complaint from any of them.

Supporting these three individuals is Mr. Jason Summerfield, our ITS Network Administrator, and Ms. Tanesha Sibley, who is Jason’s assistant. I can honestly say that we would never survive without the skill set of these two individuals. They are the glue that keeps things together and the ITS network purring along the way. When I get bored I’ll usually come up with some outrageous suggestion that I often think could never happen. A day or two later these two always come back to me with a solution and it’s like “damn” now we HAVE to give it a try. The most impressive thing is that I know they are swamped yet they can find the time to take on these new challenges that I present to the team.

On occasion I will spend some time in the RTMC admiring the performance of our staff and in the back of my mind I’m always thinking “damn, I’m lucky.” Even with the high performance staff mentioned previously it would never work without an extraordinary RTMC operations staff. During the development of the original RTMC operations contract I wanted to develop a program that retained staff for a few years. I was trying to avoid the revolving door scenario that frequently occurs in other RTMCs throughout the Department. The determining factor was selecting a firm that could inspire, motivate and retain staff for approximately three years with the knowledge that they’d find a better job along the way.

I can’t mention all the RTMC operations staff individually but I can state with certainty that we’ve exceeded my greatest expectations.

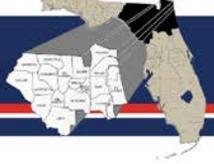
Several of these individuals have been with us for over five years, with some cracking the ten-year anniversary. Sometimes I just have to ask them “why?” and the response is often “because we like working here!” When we hire a new employee, Ryan can tell if they are long term or just treating this as a job. From this assessment he nourishes those who are the “keepers” with the hope that they remain in our program long-term. We currently have a great crop of newcomers that should help our RTMC operations reach new heights for years to come.

Matt Harbert is also very fortunate in that he has a strong ITS maintenance contract staff to support him. Dave Nagessar and Jeff Virtuoso have been with our program for a number of years and do not appear to be going anywhere for a while. These two individuals supervise a growing staff that help us maintain nearly 200 miles of ITS deployment throughout District Two.

On a number of occasions I see David tinkering with a device so I have to ask him what he’s doing. Oftentimes he tells me he’s just trying to learn how the device works and always assures me “it’s on his time so he will not be charging us.” One would never expect that response from a contractor that strives on billable hours to make a profit.

So, the departure of Josh will be a hard one to swallow but I am confident that our team can pick up the slack. When he was first hired I knew that there was a risk of losing him to the private industry once he gained some knowledge and experience. That’s just the nature of the ITS industry due to limited

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

resources and a growing program. I too receive offers on a monthly basis but must decline due to my tenure within the Department. Financially, staying with the program is my best option but it always feels good to be wanted. It could have been a different story if I didn't have such a dedicated support staff who make my job easier.

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

**NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS  
ENGINEER**

Many of you already know the big news, and to some it may come as a surprise. To be perfectly honest, I have even surprised myself. This will be my last article as the ITS Operations Program Manager. It has been a little over two years since I started working with our ITS division, a period that simultaneously seems short yet such a long, action-packed time. I have started the hard conversation of telling all of my work friends and associates that I am leaving. I'm not going too far, but making a move that I feel confident will allow me to grow my career.

It is almost an awkward time to do this. As you know, we now have two new employees reporting to me. They are quite capable, and are a pleasure to have working for me. It will be a terrible thing to give such great employees and such an outstanding support staff up. In a sense, things are really starting to move along with the operational side of ITS things, although we still have a lot to do, and for me, a lot of things to tie up—mainly the advertisement of a new Road Ranger contract. I feel more confident as time

goes by that these tasks will be in good hands even in the absence of someone in my position. We are making positive changes to the way we have been doing things, such as our TIM Team improvements that I mentioned in my last article. Our partnerships are growing, and I will unfortunately miss the big day when City of Jacksonville traffic and the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office join us in the RTMC.

I have already found many things I will miss about our daily work life. The "TMC coffee" that I found to be entirely too strong when I first came on board is one thing. I've come to rely on two cups of it, black, to get me through the day. I undoubtedly will miss Pete's asides and many colorful stories about the history of the ITS program. I have a stash of Jason Summerfield network sketches hidden away that I believe I will now donate to a worthy cause—possibly an abstract art exhibit at the Cummer—for I will not be able to collect enough drawings to build my own book of them like I had always planned. I will no longer get to laugh when I catch Ryan spontaneously breaking out into song or Arnold Schwarzenegger impressions. And I know I will have to come back into the RTMC to trade jokes with the FWC officers and make sure that they still "got my back" when I'm out fishing on the boat.

With all of the good things to look back upon, my resignation has been bittersweet. There is also quite a bit of excitement though. I have felt lately as if working for the FDOT has been much like being inside of a house. In there, you are safe, protected from the elements and storms (think recessions) that sometimes pass by outside. It is comfortable in that house. You have all that you



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

need to get by happily, but not much changes inside the house. You look out the window and wonder what is out there. Bigger risks for sure, but bigger adventures, and room to run.

My decision was partially based on the premise that I could still have involvement with FDOT ITS, traffic operations, and the same overall groups after I left. This would allow me to still work with the same people whose professional relationships with myself I appreciate so much. That being said, I sincerely hope that I will see you around. It has been a pleasure being a part of the team that strives every day to keep us on the forefront in innovation and excellence to give us the best road infrastructure in the nation. I have always been very proud of that and still want to have an active role in it.

Finally, I have to thank Bob Kosoy for teaching me about a new form of punctuation that I was previously unaware of—the em dash, used right here in this very sentence. I promised Bob that I would employ this newfound literary tool in my article and have done so a couple of times above. As Bob explained (and as his son explained it to him), the em dash is a very powerful and versatile punctuation mark. It reminds me of the tight end on the football field. It can be used in place of parentheses, commas, or even a colon. Not to be mistaken for an en dash or a hyphen, it is slightly longer. I have snuck it in this article in place of commas and colons. Thanks Bob!

**Josh Reichert  
ITS/TMC Program Manager**

**NORTH FLORIDA TPO**

The North Florida TPO staff are keeping me on my toes this summer. Between the RTMC tours, planning for the future and just the daily interaction I've got to take a few seconds to keep my head from spinning off. The latest effort is development of a Smart Cities Master plan with their consultant, HNTB. This effort will be the blue print we follow for the projects in the near future. The thought is that we have to look beyond CCTV cameras, Dynamic Message Signs, Bluetooth sensors and Vehicle detectors. We must now try to incorporate bike/pedestrian technology, transit, social networking and connected/automated vehicles into the program.

Oftentimes, the NFTPPO staff ask me for suggestions and I tend to draw a blank. The reason is that all of this is new technology that has yet to reach maturity, yet I have to anticipate what will be available and if it will be of use. I don't know what your experience is with sales people but just about all the individuals that I speak to about new technology promise the moon and then deliver a *Pet Rock*™. I've gotten pretty wise to their sales pitch to the point that I'm beginning to enjoy frustrating these sales people. My "go to" response is "prove it and put your money where your mouth is." My intent is to have them make an investment by putting their product out in the field for our analysis. If it works then we'll try it, but if not no investment has been lost.

Marci Larson and Denise Bunnewith often think outside the box whereby they present challenges that stretch my limits. Marci currently has an event scheduled for September 16<sup>th</sup> at the RTMC where Electric and Automated vehicles will be on site. The goal is to increase public knowledge of this technology to the point where it will eventually become mainstream.

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**NORTH FLORIDA TPO continued**

Likewise, Denise is coordinating the Smart Cities effort and will have a session at the Women of Transportation System event being held on September 13<sup>th</sup>. I feel my job is to assist with the assurance that what we talk about is useful and achievable for our region.

For me, I've realized the most unique thing lately is that this arrangement at the new facility has expanded the ITS program's ability to help with transportation issues in the region. We've gone from the typical to something beyond, thus pushing us forward to a true TSM&O program. The greatest challenge is having enough experienced staff to pull this off since many of our support personnel are in their late twenties and early thirties. They are still learning the art of the transportation industry so putting this new technology in front of them is somewhat overwhelming.

Even with these challenges I can't complain. It beats the hell out of dealing with the sewage and door problems I had to deal with when we first moved into the building. Prior to ending I want to remind everyone about the ITS Florida/ITE Florida section Transpo conference being held in West Palm Beach the week of November 13<sup>th</sup>.

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

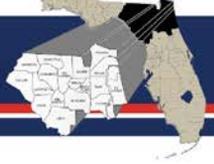


**MAINTENANCE**

The ITS Maintenance Group continued their hectic pace this month by performing daily maintenance activities and working on special projects. The special projects involved the installation of fiber on Beach Boulevard, Philips Highway, and I-295 from J Turner Butler Boulevard to UNF Drive. The Beach Boulevard and Philips Highway installations filled in gaps in fiber optic communications for the City of Jacksonville signal network. These connections will allow for better signal timing and coordination within the two corridors. The I-295 installation provided a direct connection between UNF and the ITS Master Hub at the JTB Interchange. This connection will be used by UNF to pull large amounts of data from the ITS Network to enable faculty and staff to perform data analysis and other functions as they relate to the large amount of data provided by the ITS system.

Aside from the normal maintenance activities, Traffic Control Devices has been trimming trees which are impacting the sight lines of CCTV cameras. Construction projects often need to trim trees when installing the cameras to provide sufficient CCTV camera coverage of the roadway. Over time the tree limbs grow back out and obscure the view requiring our maintenance crews to trim them.

FDOT personnel have been working closely with the I-95 and SR 16 Projects in St. Johns County this past month. FDOT has been coordinating power service installations for the I-95 Project, which is installing ITS devices from north of CR 210 going south to the Flagler County Line. The SR 16 Project is installing fiber optic cable along SR 16 and US 1 to connect St. Johns County and the City of St. Augustine to the ITS Network.



## MAINTENANCE continued

There are a large number of utilities throughout this project area and FDOT personnel have been assisting with utility coordination with private companies as well as St. Johns County and the City of St. Augustine.

TCD also installed a test site at the RTMC this month. This test site will be used to test new equipment in a controlled environment prior to installing equipment in the field. It can also be used to train maintenance personnel on new equipment. As you can see, several devices can be installed on the pole at the same time, similar to actual field sites.



Additional work this month included the following:

### FDOT

- Creating and tracking work orders
- Reviewing billing
- Oversight of FDOT purchasing and inventory
- Continued coordination with FLIR and TERL regarding issues with FLIR CCTV cameras

### TCD (Contractor)

- Installation of Cyberlocks in all Master Hubs
- Installation of power wires for new network switch at the RTMC
- Maintenance of the bridge wind sensors
- Testing and repairing grounding at all device sites throughout the system

### Metric (Consultant)

- Inputting new items into the ITS Maintenance Inventory system
- Creating FDOT Property Management Report forms for new equipment/inventory

Additional work this month included:

- Several work orders were written to address lingering items which have been on the action item list for a while.
- Receipt of equipment from end of year purchase orders.
- Continued coordination with FLIR regarding issues with the FLIR cameras deployed on I-75 and US 441 in Gainesville.



**MAINTENANCE continued**

- Began testing grounding at all ITS device sites to ensure that grounding is adequate. As issues are discovered they will be addressed.
- Began tree trimming for correction of line of sight issues with CCTV cameras.
- Preventive Maintenance on Phases 7 and 8 as well as Master Hubs system wide.
- Normal maintenance and utility locates
- Installed Stop signs on the secured entrance/exit gates for the RTMC

**Matt Harbert**  
**ITS Maintenance Manager**

**CONSTRUCTION**

The contractor has installed 95% of the conduit and all of the pull boxes on the I-95 St. Johns County ITS Project. They have also installed all of the fiber optic cable drops on the project and are currently working on fiber splicing. All DMS structures and signs have been installed along with the majority of CCTV cameras and MVDS. FDOT, the CEI, and the contractor have coordinated with FPL and JEA throughout the month for construction of power services. This project is scheduled for completion early next year.

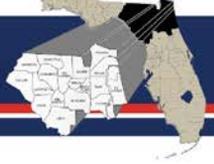
Construction activities have slowed on the I-75 Fiber Optic Installation Project. This project is installing fiber optic backbone cable and infrastructure on I-75 from SR 24 in Gainesville going north to the Georgia State Line. This project is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2016.

The Pre-Construction Meeting for the I-75 ITS Device Project was held on August 16<sup>th</sup>. This project will install ITS devices within the project limits of the fiber optic installation project detailed above and will use the fiber optic cable to communicate back to the Gainesville Smartraffic TMC. TMC operations personnel will control the devices and view CCTV camera images from both the Smartraffic TMC and the North Florida RTMC. Construction is anticipated to begin on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The Pre-Construction Meeting for the I-10 Fiber Optic Installation Project was held on August 17<sup>th</sup>. This project is installing fiber optic backbone cable and infrastructure on I-10 between Jacksonville and Tallahassee. Construction is anticipated to begin November 12<sup>th</sup>.

The SR 16/US 1 fiber optic cable installation project began construction on July 24<sup>th</sup>. The contractor has been installing pull boxes and splice vaults as well as fiber optic conduit via trenching and directional bore methods throughout the project limits. The fiber optic cable being installed by this project will be used to connect St. Johns County and City of St. Augustine's traffic departments to the ITS fiber network and their local signals.

**Kevin Jackson**  
**ITS Construction Liaison**



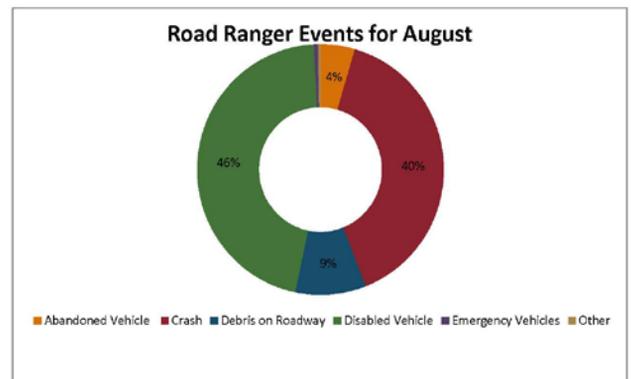
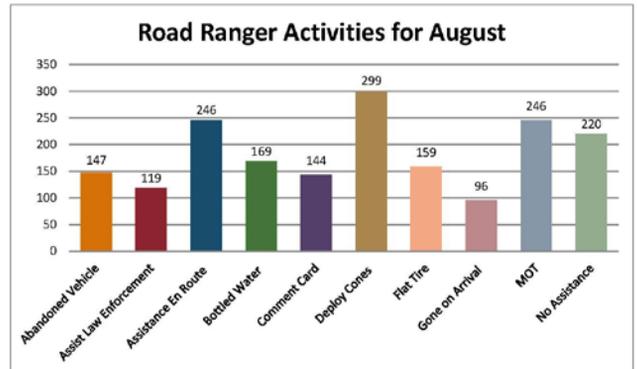
**ROAD RANGER UPDATE**

The Road Ranger Mission is to provide free highway assistance services during incidents to reduce delay and improve safety for the motoring public and responders.

The Road Rangers held their monthly safety meeting at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center at 11:30 A.M. on August 3, 2016. Mr. Cody Parham opened the meeting by welcoming all of the Road Rangers and introducing some new Road Rangers to the TEAM. He also informed the group that these meetings are held every month to help all of the Road Rangers by reviewing lessons learned as well as safety procedures. The Road Ranger TEAM has had several near misses with the motoring public recently while out on the interstates.

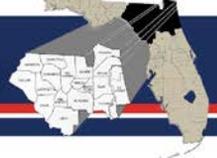
Unfortunately, this is the harsh and sobering reality of their everyday lives and stresses the importance of safety even more while assisting out on the roadways.

can see, the Road Rangers play an important role in incident management and are a significant part of the TEAM. All of the activities in the month of August have significantly increased by an average of 35% in all categories in some cases reaching a 75% increase. This jump has kept the Rangers extremely busy as they have been working overtime to attend to all of the incidents on the roadway.



In the activities chart following, the most common Road Ranger event types for the month of August are highlighted to show the variety of services that they provide as well as the different kinds of reported events. As we

**Dee Dee Johnson**  
**District 2 ITS Operations**  
**Project Manager**



## RISC – RAPID INCIDENT SCENE CLEARANCE - UPDATE

The Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) program supports the Florida's Open Roads Policy in establishing a 90-minute goal for the clearance of motor vehicle incidents on Florida's roadways. RISC is an essential platform to help secure and restore interstates for public use and is a major component of Florida's Traffic Incident Management strategy. RISC has proven itself crucial in the month of August, as it was utilized four times since the beginning of the month.

The first RISC incident was activated on **Monday, August 1, 2016**, involving two charter buses on I-75 northbound just south of Williston Road (MM 381). A bus driver traveling northbound prepared to exit for the rest area when a vehicle exited the interstate into the northbound rest area and at the last minute cut back onto the interstate. The crashes were reported at 2:56 A.M. and all northbound lanes were shut down. Shelby's Towing and Recovery was called to the scene and arrived at approximately 4:28 A.M. Within 21 minutes, all travel lanes were cleared and the road was reopened to the motoring public at approximately 4:59 A.M. Overall the incident lasted approximately 4 hours. The table below indicates the responding agencies and their approximate on-scene time.

**I-75 NB at MM 381/Williston Road**

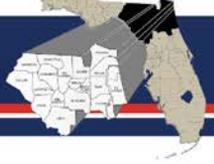
| Agency         | Arrival | Departure | On Scene Time |
|----------------|---------|-----------|---------------|
| FHP            | 3:01 AM | 7:01 AM   | 4:00:00       |
| Wrecker Driver | 4:08 AM | 6:07 AM   | 1:59:00       |
| RISC           | 4:28 AM | 6:07 AM   | 1:39:00       |

The second and third RISC events for the month of August took place on **Monday, August 8, 2016** at approximately 2:56 P.M and 3:11 P.M. consecutively. The first event on that day occurred on I-75 NB at MM 388 in Alachua County due to a jack-knifed semi-truck with reported injuries. RISC declaration and Wrecker Notification times occurred at approximately 3:24 P.M. and Dave's Hi-Way Towing arrived on scene at 3:42 P.M. This RISC event occurred just south of a construction zone which had an effect on the incident clearance duration time and TEAM members noted that there was a lot of rain during the incident which made roadway clearance more difficult than a typical RISC event scene. Thankfully, there were only minor injuries reported and the northbound traffic lanes were reopened at approximately 6:50 P.M.



**Figure 1: I-75 NB at MM 388**

The second RISC event on Monday, August 8, 2016 took place on I-75 NB at MM 384/Archer Road in Alachua County. RISC was activated due to a crash involving three semis and four vehicles. This incident occurred approximately 15 minutes after the initial incident on I-75 and was located within several miles away in the same direction from the first incident. RISC was



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

confirmed and requested by FHP at approximately 3:37 P.M. and Shelby's Towing and Recovery was on scene in no less than 38 minutes. It was reported that approximately 50 gallons of fuel leaked onto the roadway during the incident which posed a concern for environmental cleanup and even though Shelby's Towing was on scene they were not given notice to proceed until the area was deemed safe. The fuel leak caused a delay with the incident management, but all travel lanes were cleared within the Open Roads duration goal limits and all lanes were opened at 6:46 P.M.

The crashes occurred when a semi-truck lost control and collided with another semi-truck. After the initial collision, the first semi-truck continued on I-295 and crashed into a third semi-truck and about a dozen cars. A woman and two children were transported to the hospital with minor injuries. Luckily, there were no fatalities. Southern Wrecker Service responded to the incident and all lanes reopened close to 8:00 P.M.

The last RISC incident in August occurred on Thursday, August 18, 2016 at 12:39 P.M. when a semi-truck travelling southbound on I-95, just north of Edgewood Avenue, attempted to cross the Trout River Bridge and overturned blocking all southbound lanes and the two left northbound lanes. The semi-truck then started leaking fuel onto the interstate as clean up began. Troopers said a northbound car made an illegal lane charge, struck the big rig and spun in front of it, causing the semi to overturn onto the concrete median. This incident led to the closure of I-95 in both directions Thursday afternoon as debris from the initial crash and the concrete wall went flying into the southbound lanes, causing traffic to swerve, causing additional, minor accidents. Six vehicles were involved in the crash and there was only one minor injury reported.



**Figure 2: I-75 NB at MM 384/Archer Road**

Both incidents took approximately four hours to clear and we can see, from the tables below, the responding agencies and their approximate on-scene times.

**I-75 NB at MM 388**

| Agency | Arrival | Departure | On Scene Time |
|--------|---------|-----------|---------------|
| FHP    | 2:56 PM | 6:49 PM   | 3:53:00       |
| RISC   | 3:42 PM | 6:49 PM   | 3:07:00       |

**I-75 NB at MM 384/Archer Road**

| Agency | Arrival | Departure | On Scene Time |
|--------|---------|-----------|---------------|
| FHP    | 3:32 PM | 7:11 PM   | 3:39:00       |
| RISC   | 4:15 PM | 6:52 PM   | 2:37:00       |
| HAZMAT | 5:15 PM | 7:11 PM   | 1:56:00       |



**Figure 3: I-95 at Trout River Bridge**

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

RISC was activated at approximately 1:00 P.M. and Southern Wrecker arrived within 34 minutes of the call. Jacksonville Fire-Rescue hazmat crews assisted in the cleanup of the diesel spill, and the JSO assisted with the crash. Just after 3:30 p.m., two northbound lanes reopened, but all southbound lanes remained closed until 7:30 P.M. Southbound traffic was slowly turned around one lane at a time as drivers were directed back to Heckscher Drive and toward U.S. 17 (Main Street). After about an hour, one northbound lane was temporarily opened to allow blocked traffic to pass to clear the highway. All travel lanes were reopened at approximately 3:41 P.M. See chart below for responding agencies and their on scene times.

**I-95 SB at Trout River Bridge**

| Agency                 | Arrival  | Departure | On Scene Time |
|------------------------|----------|-----------|---------------|
| JSO                    | 12:39 PM | 3:41 PM   | 3:02:00       |
| EMS                    | 12:45 PM | 2:34 PM   | 1:49:00       |
| Fire Department        | 12:45 PM | 2:34 PM   | 1:49:00       |
| FHP                    | 12:47 PM | 3:41 PM   | 2:54:00       |
| Road Rangers           | 12:58 PM | 1:18 PM   | 0:20:00       |
| Maintenance Asset Mgr. | 1:00 PM  | 3:41 PM   | 2:41:00       |
| RISC                   | 1:36 PM  | 3:41 PM   | 2:05:00       |

### **PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

As we enter into the school season and the end of summer draws near, I am extremely thankful for our incident management TEAM. I must say that we have an excellent, well-rounded TEAM here in District 2 and I am extremely proud of all of the work they have done, especially in the month of August. As hot as this summer has been they have proven to be resilient and have taken on the challenge of the season.

From the charts following, we can see that there has been a large increase in event types especially within the past two weeks as school started back. There of course has been an increase in the number of congestion and crash events by an average of 14 percent and 8 percent respectively when compared to prior weeks. In addition, with all this heat on the ground and moisture in the air we have seen a significant increase in the average number of fog and visibility events by almost 80%. Fog tends to form whenever there is a temperature difference between the ground and the air.

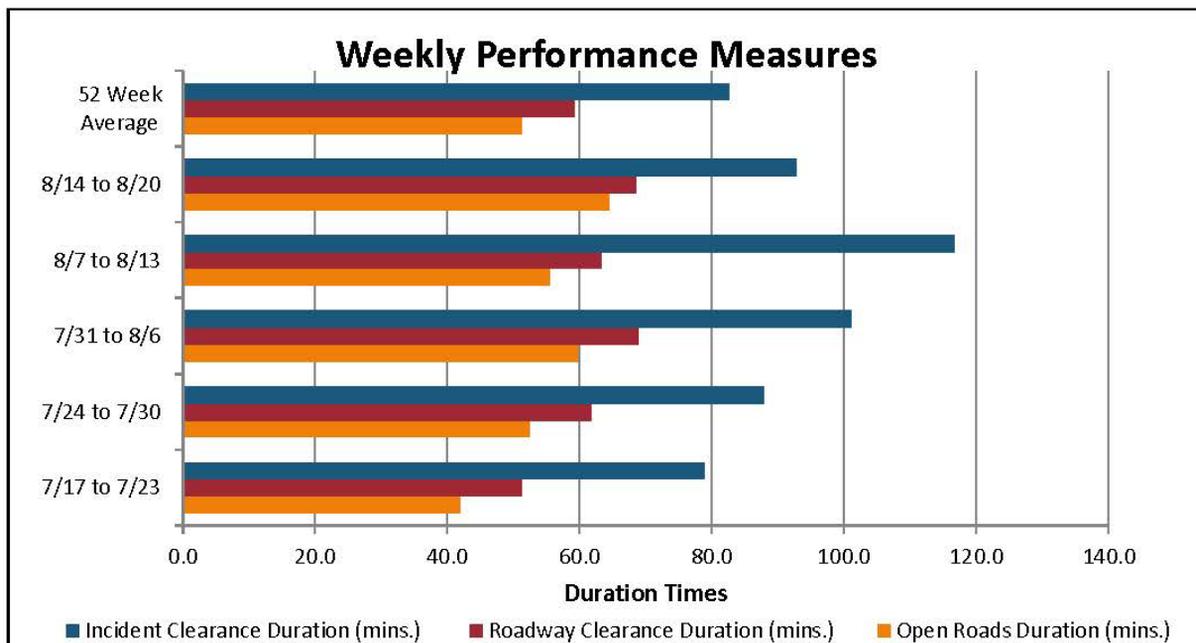
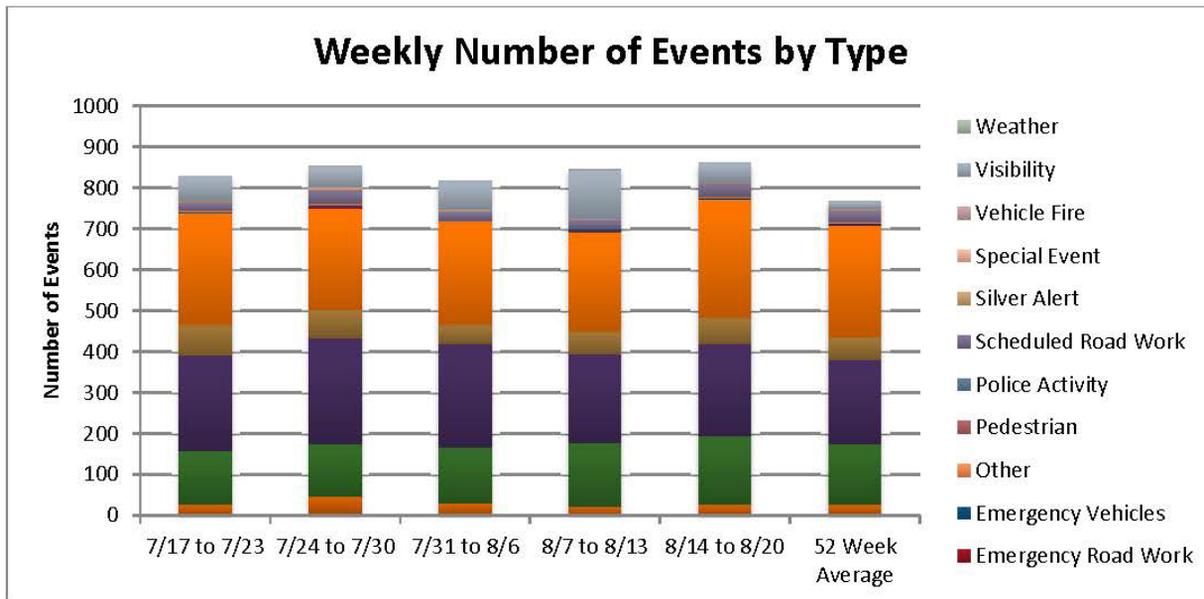
Our incident duration times have been severely affected this month due to four major RISC events which occurred in the month of August. Amongst all the jack-knifed semis, charter bus incidents and fuel leaks, it has been a crazy month here in District 2. We are very fortunate to have an amazing RISC program, which helped us out tremendously with clearing our interstates in a timely and safe manner.

The average clearance duration times for the past twelve months has stayed well under the goal duration times as we can see in the charts below. District 2 has averaged approximately 51 minutes for our Open Roads Duration time in the month of August as compared to the open roads goal of 90 minutes. Our incident clearance duration average has increased slightly to approximately 83 minutes, but we are staying well within our expected limits.

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



## PERFORMANCE MEASURES continued



**Sherrell Lall**  
Metric Engineering



**ALACHUA BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE**

The Alachua-Bradford Traffic Incident Management Team meeting held its bi-monthly meeting at the FDOT Gainesville Operations Office – 5301 N.E. 39th Ave., Gainesville on August 8, 2016 at 10:00 A.M. Mr. Josh Reichert of the Florida Department of Transportation led this meeting and welcomed all of the TIM members. He reminded the group that these bi-weekly meetings are held to give all incident management agencies the platform to come together and assist each other in keeping our roadways as clear as possible. Mr. Reichert also had the honor of officially introducing Ms. Dee Dee Johnson as she has been doing a phenomenal job of leading the TIM teams over the past several months.

The TEAM then jumped right in to the Emergency Operations Center Update as Mr. Ed Ward informed the TEAM that we are not out of the woods in terms of hurricane season as of yet. Mr. Ward warned the incident management TEAM not to be complacent as the peak of hurricane season does not occur until the middle of September and encouraged the TEAM to enjoy the sun while it lasts!

FDOT was proud to announce that the new 511 app will be rolled out over Labor Day weekend and everything from the phone app to the voice and IVR system will be updated. The new app will include arterials and app reliability will be improved upon. Users will have to download the new app, but the old app will prompt the user to re-download the app again. The TEAM then moved forward to discuss several Construction and ITS projects that can potentially affect travel over the next several months and Bianca Speights cautioned all TIM members to be aware

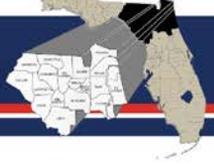
of the numerous construction jobs occurring all over the District. It was also noted that the amount of rainfall has been a major issue for construction and has held back some of the resurfacing projects in the area.

The meeting ended with Mr. Reichert announcing that we are currently in the process of updating the TIM Team meeting process and strongly encouraged all TIM members to send in suggestions for agency topics to be discussed during the meeting. All ideas are welcomed and can be sent to [DeeDee.Johnson@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:DeeDee.Johnson@dot.state.fl.us).

**FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE**

The next First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team meeting will be held on **September 20, 2016** at the North Florida Regional Transportation Management Center (NFRTMC), 980 N. Jefferson St at 10:00 A.M. Please mark your calendars to attend this meeting as we value your agency's participation. If you are unable to attend, please feel free to send someone else who could represent your agency. We look forward to seeing you there!

**PLEASE NOTE: 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 is available to work with any agencies' schedule; including nights & weekends to make sure the course is available for groups of 10 or more trainees.**



### 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.*

**Dee Dee Johnson**  
**District 2 ITS Operations**  
**Project Manager**

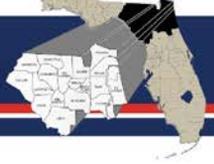
## OPERATIONS

### **THE REICHERT LEGACY**

As many of you are now aware (all of you should be if you read this newsletter), Joshua Reichert will be leaving FDOT come September 8<sup>th</sup>. Josh came over to ITS from Safety 2+ years ago. He came here a bright eyed, energetic Engineer with loads of talent and a contagious positive spirit. His announcement came bittersweet as I am saddened by the loss of a fantastic engineer for our program but also excited to see what he can do in the big world. Josh left his mark on the District 2 RTMC and the people who work here. Let's take a look back!

Have you ever driven 95 northbound from Daytona and before getting to Jacksonville saw a freight parking sign and wonder...what a great idea, how did that come about? Well that came about early in Josh's ITS career when District 2 was tasked to come up with a Freight Parking Project for that rest area. The catch you ask? 30 days and next to no money. How does Josh respond? By delivering. Fast forward to today, the Freight Parking initiative is a Statewide push giving truck drivers options to make sound, safe, decisions during their travels. Similar signs and freight information should be on 511 and local signs statewide soon.





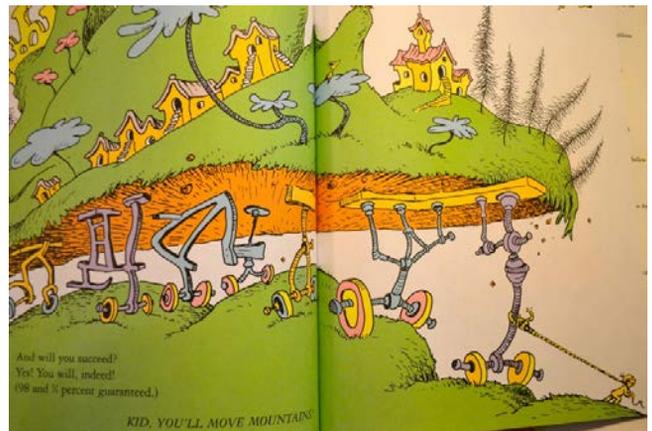
## OPERATIONS continued

Next up was the several year old stale jax511.com site. We are talking so stale it was growing legs and moving about in the pantry. Jax511.com *USED* to be just a face for the TIM and Road Ranger Site. A site you visit to link to things, if at all. With Josh’s leadership the site has spiked to new heights. It gives a local flare and is updated weekly to give visitors the latest and greatest in District 2 Traffic and ITS. The pictures are gorgeous and leaves open the option for future growth while tying in together all of the District 2 partners. Jax511.com is useful once more, not just a line item going to waste.

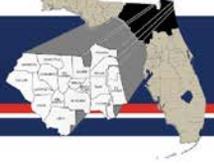


Fast forward to the last months leading up to Josh departing and his biggest accomplishment is in the works. A state deploying Color and Graphic DMS is the new norm and Jacksonville was at the forefront. Phase 9, southeast quadrant of I-295 brought new signs with new capabilities. But being trendsetters comes at a price.. No procedures? Policies? Guidance? Josh created a task team to evaluate everything from fonts, graphic sizes, colors, styles and templates. After in-house testing and field testing Josh sent District 2’s findings to Central office for approval, paving new ITS Roads. Some were approved, others, left for the rest of us to make a case for. We will have PINK! Optimism and dedication.

With two children headed back to school our household stuck to our rituals of getting them ready to transition from summer to studies. One of those rituals is reading Dr. Seuss’s “Oh! The Places You’ll Go” to get them eager to learn, maybe. Looking back, it also applies to Josh. I never thought I would be sitting in the District 2 RTMC twelve years later, but here I am. Josh sees the bigger world out there and is following his mind, and heart, to find out where it takes him, even if greatness is only 98 and a quarter percent guaranteed. Go move mountains, Mr. Reichert.



**Ryan Crist**  
**RTMC Manager**



**MARKETING**

I had to laugh when I recently heard one of our local Meteorologists say, “After three consecutive days of temperatures soaring to 97 degrees, we’ll finally get some relief from this heat. Today’s high will only be 95.” It’s all relative, I suppose. But try telling that to the seven hundred teachers who stood in line for upwards of five hours to get free supplies at the Teacher Supply Depot’s Back to School Extravaganza earlier this month. Some of the teachers arrived as early as 4am to secure their spot in line at this “first come, first serve” event. One of the teachers got super creative by wearing a mini umbrella hat to ward off the heat.



All in all, it was a very successful outreach. Many of the teachers in attendance downloaded our free 511 traffic app, which I’m sure they put to good use their first week back in school as we witnessed a surge in traffic congestion, particularly for the week of August 15<sup>th</sup>. There was a staggered start to the school year as various school districts, as well as public and private schools, convened on different days. By August 29<sup>th</sup> everyone was back in the classroom, with Jacksonville University students being the last ones to reconvene for the fall term.

We’re starting our fall term as well, with major events scheduled for both September and October. It’s hard to even wrap my head around the fact that fall is looming on the horizon, but the fig tree in my back yard seems to tell a different story. Already, its leaves are beginning to drop one by one. Nevermind that the thermometer is still hovering somewhere in the mid-90’s. Nature has an internal calendar that can’t be bested. To that effect, we’ll follow along and transition into the fall season as well. In September, we’ll set up shop inside the lobby of Everbank’s Bay Street location. Then in October, we’ll visit Steinmart at their Riverplace Boulevard employee complex. Both of these fall health and wellness fairs are usually very well attended. We’re looking forward to attending these events as well so we can introduce motorists to our new 511 system. We’ll be fresh off the heels of our projected Statewide 511 Launch, where the new and improved 511 system will boast a freshly revamped phone system, new interactive web features and a state-of-the-art user friendly app.

With all the changes taking place, I’m tempted to run out and freshen up my wardrobe with a wide array of fall leggings and sweaters. But alas, this is Florida after all. And I know better. So instead, I’ll keep my bathing suit at the ready and a full tank of gas in the car for all those last minute summer road trips I still plan on taking.

If you’re of this same school of thought, remember to take 511 along with you. You can dial 5-1-1, visit [www.FL511.com](http://www.FL511.com) or download one of our free 511 Traffic Apps available for Apple and Android. Know Before You Go and Keep Moving!

**Sherri Byrd**  
**Marketing Manager**



**SPOTLIGHT ON...DEE DEE JOHNSON**

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

I was born in Jacksonville, Florida at St. Luke's Hospital to two of the most wonderful parents anyone could ask for. They had been wanting a child for many years and adopted me when I was 3 days old and brought me straight home from the hospital. I grew up an only child which meant I was always dragging along a cousin or friend on family vacations. My childhood was filled with happiness. My parents always found a way to get me what I needed and wanted. My children say I was spoiled. I lived in Macclenny, Florida until my sophomore year of high school then moved to Tennessee for six years, but the Florida sunshine kept calling me back. I moved back in 1990 and have been a resident of Macclenny ever since.

**Where did you go to college and what did you study?**

After high school, I attended Middle Tennessee State University for three semesters but I was sidetracked by marriage and children. In 2012, I earned my Associate of Arts from Florida State College of Jacksonville. I am currently enrolled in the Public Administration Degree Program at Flagler College. I work full-time and go to school full-time. Every Tuesday and Thursday night and two Saturdays a month, I go to class in St. Augustine. So if you see me looking frazzled for the next 8 months you will know why. Graduation date is April 29, 2017 at 4:00p.m. at Lewis Auditorium if anyone wants to come. Yes, I am counting it down.

**Describe the positions you've held leading up to where you are now.**

I started out as an Administrative Assistant many years ago helping everyone with everything and anything from purchasing to personnel. Then I moved on to the Community Traffic

Safety Program Assistant position for 14 ½ years. The Community Traffic Safety Program works with agencies on traffic safety programs such as Click It or Ticket, Driver Sober or Get Pulled Over and Alert Today, Alive Tomorrow. My new position in TSM&O is District 2 ITS Operations Project Manager. I manage the Traffic Management Center, Road Rangers and Rapid Incident Scene Clearance Contracts.



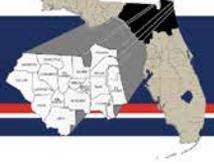
Dee Dee & fiancé, Arnold.

**How many years have you been with the Florida Department of Transportation?**

I have worked with the FDOT for 17 ½ years and all of them have been in Traffic Operations.

**What challenges have you faced since taking on your new role with FDOT?**

There is so much to learn and acronyms, ITS (Intelligent Transportation Systems) is the world of acronyms. Everyone here talks in letters. On a daily basis I know I ask someone at least several times "And what do those letters stand for?"

**SPOTLIGHT ON...DEE DEE JOHNSON**  
**continued****What has been the easiest thing to embrace since transitioning from FDOT's Urban Office to your new home at the Regional Transportation Management Center?**

EVERYTHING...I love it at the Regional Transportation Management Center. Everyone has been so welcoming and helpful. The days go by so fast. I get to work at 6:30a.m and the next thing I know it is almost the end of the day.

**What do you envision for our First Coast Road Ranger program in the next 5 years?**

Our Road Ranger program needs additional funding for expansion of routes. Hopefully in the coming years we will be able to expand further in St. Johns County, into Nassau County and start covering some of the arterial city streets in Jacksonville. A very long term goal would be to have a Road Ranger program in the Western part of our district in the Gainesville area.

**Do you have any funny stories relating to the job? I'm sure you've witnessed your share of traffic debacles and safety snafus.**

When I was originally interview and hired in Traffic Operations 17 ½ years ago, it was for a senior clerk position in ITS. There were some personnel issues going on so I ended up being the assistant for the District Traffic Operations Engineer. Who knew years later I would end up in ITS...maybe it was fate or meant to be that I am finally at the right place.

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

A defining moment would be getting this new position in ITS. I think I had become complacent in my old position and just wasn't challenged. I think stepping out into the

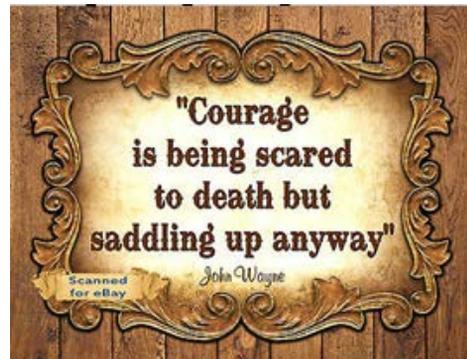
unknown has really sparked my brain and opened up my mind. I needed the new environment and the new challenges to help me bring out my best attributes and abilities I have been hiding away. I find myself using some of the knowledge I have acquired in the Public Administration Program at Flagler College.

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

I love being on the river. Every summer me and my fiancé, Arnold, take our camper to Welaka and leave it there for 3 months. We go every weekend and take our vacation during this time. We love to fish, go out on the water, park at the sandbar, grill with our friends and family and just take time to relax and enjoy nature. Arnold and my children always come down and spend time with us at the river. There is nothing like seeing your kids and grandkids having fun.

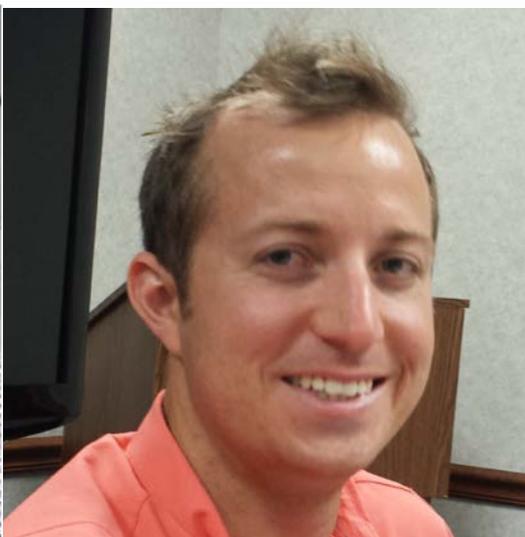
**Do you have a favorite quote? Something that inspires you?**

Below is one of my favorite quotes. My dad loved John Wayne and had an extensive collection of his memorabilia. After his death 3 years ago this quote helped me get through things and go on with life.



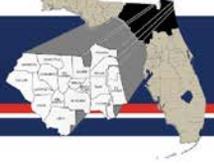


### Photo Gallery



**The many faces of Josh Reichert— ARGHHH**





Traffic Incident Management  
2016 Meeting Schedule

**First Coast TIM Team**

FDOT Urban Office Training Center  
2198 Edison Avenue, Jacksonville  
904.360.5400

September 20, 2016      November 17, 2016

**Alachua/Bradford TIM Team**

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

October 12, 2016      December 14, 2016



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**FDOT DISTRICT 2 ITS STAFF**



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**Kevin Jackson**  
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