



DISTRICT TWO ITS NEWSLETTER



Fourth Quarter 2023 Issue 136





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

I begin with the hope that all our readers had safe and wonderful holidays over the past several weeks. This time of the year is always joyous for me with some semblance of sadness. I am sure many of us lost loved ones at some point in our lifetime during the months of November and December. This is when the memories kick in as you miss talking to them during last-minute holiday shopping sprees, by the fire or across the dinner table. During this time of the year, I've dealt with the passing of friends, loved ones and colleagues, all of whom had some impact in my life. The 2022 holiday was fortunate for me sans the news that my close friend and colleague, LeAnn Holler, was diagnosed with a terminal illness. I usually take a deep breath at the beginning of December to build the confidence needed to deal with the sad memories through January 1st.

During the holidays, the RTMC is often busy dealing with vehicular crashes throughout District Two. Many of these holiday accidents are due to distracted, aggressive or alcohol/drug related driving. Alex and I get updated daily on all these crashes, whether they involve vehicle passengers, pedestrians or bicyclists. The sad thing is that during the holiday season most are caused by impaired drivers who have no regard for the safety of others. Law Enforcement is doing their best by adding patrol units to combat the issue, however it's difficult when dealing with thousands of miles of roadway within District Two. Once I receive the report, I often say a prayer for the deceased and hope that the

penalty fits the crime for the motorist. I am hoping none of you have experienced such an impact in your life this past holiday.

You may wonder, how can TSM&O technology assist with preventive measures. In all honesty, TSM&O has little to no means of preventing such events when they involve impaired motorists. That solution will need to be developed via technology from the automotive industry (i.e. in car sensors), enhanced laws/enforcement and possible Smartphone technology. Basically, the best solution would be a combination of the four E's (Engineering, Education, Emergency Services and Enforcement), with a little help from the automobile industry. The reality is that an impaired driver usually has lost common sense for their well-being and that of others, so a combination of the four E's is really the only solution when dealing with stupidity.

As for the TSM&O program, I feel we are seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. Kinks in the iTPAS deployment (i.e. truck parking detection) have been addressed and ready for statewide unveiling in February. The rail crossing system deployment is progressing with the hope that we are fully operational by this coming summer. The FL511 addition of Connected Vehicle information should be ready for prime time in the next three months. Likewise, the Smart St. Augustine project overseen by the city has progressed with the selection of the System Manager. Contractual status has not been finalized; therefore, I will hold off on naming the selection until the next newsletter.

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The latter project is exciting in that it will be combining the old with the new from a technological standpoint. The goal is to combine standard (old) CCTV cameras, DMS and vehicle detection with newer equipment like passive pedestrian sensors, connected vehicle technology, rail detection, bridge notification, WiFi communication and truck parking into one holistic system. This will be the most challenging project I've encountered in my TSM&O career due to the volume of traffic, pedestrians and bicyclists encompassed within a small, old, and very constricted community.

I do not foresee much expansion of technology in the near future. One is because FDOT funding will be limited for the next several years. Second is that there is currently a learning curve needed to master use of this technology from an operational perspective. Third is that the latest technology requires some sophisticated software that has an annual cost tagged onto the deployment for it to perform as designed. Four is that from a staffing resource perspective there is an unfilled need that must be met to ensure future success on the use of this technology.

I feel that 2024 will be one heck of an interesting year for everyone as technology immerses itself further into our daily life. Shoot, I just heard that at the CES this year the participants will be demonstrating flying cars, "see through" televisions, home assistance robots for the elderly and much more. Kind of reflects back to a discussion I had with my sister during Christmas whereby I mentioned it seemed like

aspects of the movie "Wall-e" were actually coming true. Makes me worry because all of those animated characters were OBESE! 😊

I will wrap up by saying that 2023 was the "build" year for the TSM&O program and 2024 will be time to deliver the goods! Happy New Year!!!

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



NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS OPERATIONS MANAGER

Welcome to 2024! A new year opens to countless new possibilities and things to look forward to. 2023 was a good year with solid progress in the Department although some budgets were tight, and some changes have to be made but in the post-covid era it felt good to develop those professional relationships in person and continue the expansion of the TSM&O program. The new focus for District 2 is to continue striving to not only lead the State but be a top performer in the country. I was fortunate enough to be given the opportunity to attend the Operations

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NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS OPERATIONS MANAGER continued

Academy back in November. I learned some valuable information and made some life long professional connections. The ability to reach out to my fellow peers and test theories out and technology is an invaluable resource.

The big looming item for this year is the Presidential Election. Every election is always important, but this election could turn out to be an interesting event for sure. I will not be sharing my political affiliation, but the two front runners would both be setting records. Joe Biden already holds the records for oldest president elected and if he won again, he would break his own record. The Republican front runner, Donald Trump, if elected, would be the second individual after Grover Cleveland to be elected to two non-consecutive terms.

I would like to finish off this article by discussing resolutions. I always aim for professional development and leadership growth. I am currently working on a leadership and command program in the military titled Air Command Staff College. The program is about 15 courses, all online and mostly self-paced. There will be five courses that will have a professor, discussions, and most likely a report. I have also agreed to do 75 Hard with my wife. I started on January 1st. I will give you the CliffsNotes from the book. 75 Hard is not a diet plan or lifestyle change. This program is a test of mental fortitude and mental toughness. The Program is 75 days where you stick to any diet of your choice (no cheat meals), you work out twice a day for 45 minutes and one of those workouts has to be outside, you drink a gallon of water, no alcohol, take a progress photo every day, read 6-10 pages of nonfiction self-

development books each day. I am currently reading Extreme Ownership among the countless readings I am required to do for my military course. I look forward to 2024 and making this year the best version of myself so that we can continue to grow this program and lead into the future.

**Alejandro Varela, P.E.
FDOT District 2
ITS Operations Manager**

NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS PROJECT MANAGER

Florida's Move Over Law requires that motorists move over a lane for vehicles stopped on the roadway or if it is unsafe for them to move over a lane they are to reduce their speed to 20 mph below the posted speed limit or slow down to 5 mph if the speed limit is 20 mph or less. This law has been on the books since 2002 in Florida, but did you know that the law has been expanded twice over the past decade to include more vehicle types than just Law Enforcement and Fire Rescue and ambulances? In 2014 utility and sanitation vehicles were included within the vehicle categories within the law and in 2021 road and bridge maintenance and construction vehicles displaying warning lights, to include Road Rangers, were added. Most recently, the law was expanded to

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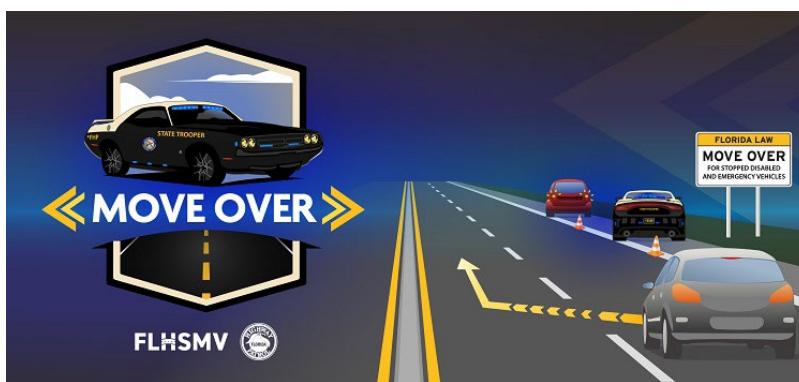
NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS PROJECT MANAGER

include disabled vehicles with warning lights on and people visible near the vehicle. This expansion of the Move Over Law was passed in 2023 and became effective January 1, 2024. Violations of the Move Over Law carry up to a \$158 fine for a noncriminal traffic citation. So make sure you move over or slow down the next time you see any vehicle on the roadside for their safety as well as your own.

In other news, we continue to receive updates on the debris cleanup in the Western portion of the District during our Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Team Meetings. Hurricane Idalia struck Florida's West Coast as a Category 3 Hurricane on August 30, 2023 and made its way across Florida, Georgia and parts of South Carolina and off into the Atlantic Ocean on August 31, 2023. Idalia caused major damage in Florida resulting in billions of dollars in damage and cleanup efforts. FDOT District 2 has had contractors and their staff involved in these cleanup efforts since the "all clear" was given after the Tropical Storm force winds subsided. As an update in our latest TIM Team Meeting, we were told that cleanup work is still taking place in both Taylor and Suwannee Counties, although the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) hopes that this work will be completed soon.

As a reminder District 2 has two TIM Teams (First Coast TIM Team and Alachua/Bradford TIM Team) which hold regularly scheduled meetings with alternating bimonthly schedules. The First Coast TIM Team Meeting is scheduled in January, March, May, July, September and November, while the Alachua/Bradford TIM Team is scheduled in February, April, June, August, October and December. During these meetings we get Construction, PIO, Roadway Maintenance, EOC, and ITS/RTMC updates as well as reviewing incidents occurring since the last meeting that created a full-roadway closure. We also review the Performance Measures for Incident timelines and response and time on-scene for our responders along with doing a "deep dive" into several of the major incidents. These meetings are important for our First Responder Community and their safety as well as motorist safety across the District. We would love to have you or your group participate in our meetings and take part in the discussions. If you would like information about either or both of our TIM Teams, please contact me at your convenience.

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





NORTH FLORIDA TPO

This past year, the TSM&O program has been kept in the loop on some very interesting technology being examined by Mr. Clayton Levins, Executive Director of Smart North Florida (SNF). Note that SNF was the brainchild of the NFTPO Director, Jeff Sheffield, who felt that further extending technology into the transportation arena would be a benefit to his constituents. The benefits Clayton provides with his research involve examination of technologies "outside the box" from what the TSM&O program would normally vet. Our program focuses mainly on safety and mobility.

The first and most successful effort led by SNF involved a company named Modii, a firm that leverages real world data to optimize mobility. If you are not aware, there are a significant number of large trucks that park along the shoulder of US 301 just south of I-10. The desire was to determine the amount of impact these trucks had along this corridor by getting counts, dwell times and movement. All Modii needed was some video to collect the data, so Mr. Levins worked with partnering agencies to provide this tool. Once the data was collected by Modii, they mixed it into their "special sauce" software and provided a report for the NFTPO and District Planning. I was shocked by the "oohs and aahs" received by the group and their desire to expand the use of the Modii technology at other locations within the District. The benefit of this data would be to streamline the truck parking program to areas where it's most needed, thereby allowing us to utilize our constituent's funding more effectively.

The next effort of significance was SNF's presentation of a firm called Navigator. This firm provided a drone device that could assist with the inspection of bridge structures above and below the water. They demonstrated this product's capabilities to District personnel. Again, nothing but "oohs and aahs" from the audience. The benefit of this technology is that it can offset the challenges encountered by the Department due to limited resources. Currently, it's a challenge trying to find divers and inspectors willing to work for the Department due to the competitive nature of this resource. Navigator would allow the Department to offset some of these challenges by having the capabilities that a typical inspector or diver could provide.

My last kudo to SNF was their examination of Blue Vigil, a firm that provides a work zone lighting drone. I had to break the news to Mr. Levins that most of this type of work is performed by contractors, therefore they would be the audience most interested in this tool. However, the thoughts I shared with him would be that this could be very beneficial to their industry since this technology would provide more flexibility for contractors. Instead of having to haul a trailer full of lights from one work area to the next, they could just move the drone to the area where lighting would be needed with the benefit of not having to burden crew members with this task.



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NORTH FLORIDA TPO continued

Our team has truly enjoyed working with Clayton on many of the SNF concepts. At times, our response has been to put the brakes on some recommendations within a few minutes. Other times he brings very intriguing concepts that we often do not have time to examine. This is teamwork at its finest and I am very proud to be partnering with Smart North Florida!

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



ITS CONSTRUCTION

There normally isn't a significant amount of ITS work being done off of the Interstate (limited access) roadways. However, there are currently two roadways in the Jacksonville area that have ITS Projects underway. This quarter's ITS Construction update will provide information on these two projects, which are on SR -105 Zoo Parkway and SR-115 Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Parkway.

The SR-105 ITS Project begins at the I-95 interchange and goes to the east. The contractor has installed the majority of the underground and electrical infrastructure on this project and has submitted all directional bore logs to the CEI and has as-built these installations. The project work will shift to above ground work beginning with the new year. This includes the installation of device

poles for CCTVs and processing units for train detection at 2 locations. The system will use a Connect ITS edge computing device manufactured by MH Corbin. (pictured below)



This is paired with 2 stationary cameras for rail detection. There will be a camera detection zone to the north side of the roadway and a camera focused on the arm/rail signal to have 2 means of notification. Each of those sites will be accompanied by a Pan-Tilt-Zoom CCTV camera for verification of all alerts. Notifications of all train crossings will be sent from the Connect ITS device over the ITS network to the Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC). These notifications will allow RTMC Operators to alert motorists of rail crossing closures via Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) and FL 511. There have been a couple of project issues to date, but the contractor, Engineer of Record, CEI and FDOT are working as a Team to overcome issues as they arise.

The SR-115 ITS Project began on September 8th. The contractor has been submitting specification sheets (cutsheets) for both ITS devices and infrastructure items. They have also been working on items as cutsheets are approved. This project has also encountered some issues but similar to the SR-105 Project everyone is working as a Team to resolve any issues encountered. In addition to the SR-115

ITS Project the I-95/SR-115 Interchange



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ITS CONSTRUCTION continued

Project is underway. The two projects have been coordinating on the fiber optic cable splice work between the two projects and the phasing of this work. The Interchange Project will be installing a new 24 count single-mode fiber optic cable (FOC) running from I-95 east to Boulevard Street. This fiber optic cable is in addition to the existing 24 count FOC and will be installed in the same conduit as the existing. The contractor for the Interchange Project will perform the splice work at I-95/MLK for this new FOC and the ITS contractor will perform the splice work at MLK/Boulevard Street. Before the end of the Interchange Project, the contractor will replace the two 24-FOC with a single 96 count single-mode FOC and will perform all required splice work. Some minor modifications to the splice diagrams are going to be required due to the coordination of efforts and eventual upgrade to the 96 count FOC. These plan modifications are being coordinated with the projects and individual Engineers of Record.

**Craig Carnes, V.P.
Metric Engineering**

ITS MAINTENANCE

Happy Holidays and Happy 2024! I hope everyone had a blessed and splendid holiday vacation. As for me, I went back to my roots and saw my family in Philadelphia. It was great to spend some time with my family and I even had the luxury of eating a genuine Philly's Cheesesteak (Wiz/ Without) from Pat's in south Philadelphia. I do miss my family very much, but I can tell you this... I do not miss the weather.

Being here three years already, my body has become accustomed to the Florida weather.

Now let's get into maintenance. TCD has begun to install conduits for power services along SR 202. After installing power to these devices we can now add additional equipment such as MVDS, Bluetoads, and switches as it will not deplete power from the batteries since it will be utilizing direct power. The grounding project is about to come to an end with a few locations left. Since this work has begun, we have witnessed minimal disruptions to our devices during severe weather. TCD will be working on installing power and fiber optic cable to all wrong way devices that are solar/cellular. This will help the units keep constant power and we will be able to connect devices to our D2 network and Sunguide. This project will be completed before the new fiscal year to not incur new cellular costs.

Finally, most of you have noticed the Device Checklist in the last few months has been the lowest I have seen since I started back in 2020. Our device uptime is about 98% and I would like to take the time to thank my colleagues Jesus Avila and James Smith, both from Metric Engineering. Their due diligence, as well as staying on top of TCD to get these devices back up, were key factors in having minimal devices on the checklist.

See you next quarter!

**Jose Morales
FDOT District 2
ITS Maintenance Manager**



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OPERATIONS

We all know that Hurricane Season starts on June 1st and “ends” on November 30th, but occasionally there are early tropical events, and sometimes, late ones. Since the last Newsletter, we got both! A major storm headed towards District 2 on December 16th. Just like Hurricane season, we went to our Standard Operating Procedures and with Dee Dee’s permission, added an additional staff member to be there to assist with potential flooded roadways, power outages that could take down some of our devices and, of course, crashes due to the weather. It was very busy on Saturday night with events and again on Sunday as we dealt with the damage. Luckily, our great Maintenance and Network Staff quickly restored the devices, and the flooding started to subside. As if that wasn’t enough, as 2024 rolled in, another storm front moved in. Once again, the RTMC staff jumped into storm mode with additional staffing, as needed, January 6th through the 8th. Though District 2 doesn’t experience snow storms like other areas of the country (well, except the Storm of the Century in 1989), we’re always prepared for weather events, whenever they might occur.

Looking back on 2023 it was a very fruitful year. District 2, through all the different teams, is always working on new and better ways to provide motorists with important information (through FL511 and the NFRTMC website), providing more methods for decreasing traffic incidents and finally, data collection methods that provide needed information for all aspects of traffic management. Under the direction of our FDOT boss, Dee Dee Crews, FDOT Staff, a variety of contractors and consultants assist with the Department’s vision for a variety of projects. Just a few of the accomplishments from 2023 include:

RouteBuilder Software- FDOT JoAnna Hand; Justin Dennis and Drew Messer with Urban SDK and A.J. Skillern with SwRI

Development of software that allows users to select a date, time and roadway location to be able to gather data related to speeds, traffic volumes, incidents and/or weather conditions that could have impacted the flow of traffic. Configurable time frames, days, weeks, months, etc. allow for in-depth analyses and the ability to communicate average travel and planning times for the route. Additionally, it is available outside of the FDOT ITS network so that it can be accessed immediately when necessary.

Truck Parking Availability System (TPAS)- FDOT Jose Morales, Alex Varela, Pete Vega; Evarist Ruhazwe with Atkins Realis

Modifying the TPAS system to an iTPAS system (Intelligent Truck Parking system). The initial system utilized “puck” sensors that were drilled and glued into the pavement of Semi-truck parking spots. They were battery operated and had frequent failures resulting in less than optimal data of available parking spots. The new iTPAS relies on Closed Circuit Television cameras that are easier to maintain or replace, plus it only requires a handful of cameras. The accuracy, after only a month, is over 90 percent accuracy and continues to improve.

Wrong Way Driver and Overheight Vehicle Detection- FDOT Jose Morales, Alex Varela, Pete Vega

On the initial deployment of devices, BlinkLink software was utilized to send data back to the



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OPERATIONS continued

RTMC when a wrong way driver was detected, or when an overheight vehicle was approaching an overpass. The information was ingested into the BlinkLink server, then was sent back to the RTMC. Because seconds are critical in avoiding both wrong-way crashes and bridge/overpass damage by overheight vehicles, now the information will be sent directly to the RTMC via SunGuide.

Railroad Detection System- FDOT Jose Morales, Alex Varela, Pete Vega; Adam Storm with Atkins Realis

For decades there has been a need to know when trains are passing through at at-grade railroad crossings on District 2 roadways (especially really long trains). First Responders have a need to know, from a safety perspective, if they need to take another route for real-time emergencies. Additionally, motorists can benefit from knowing about the delays they can encounter in their travels through Dynamic Message Signs and FL511. Currently in development is a method of identifying when railroad crossing arms are in the down position and ways of quantifying the length of the train, which obviously affects what the impact will be on travel. You can read more about this in the ITS Construction Section of this newsletter on page 6.

These are just a few of the new, innovative projects going on in District 2. Why do I have this in my article? Because the RTMC staff, while not developing these projects, has a very important role in assisting with the testing of how these projects are working, or not, or providing

input as to where we see issues, in addition to our primary tasks of providing incident information to motorists, dispatching Road Rangers, providing assistance to first responders or wrecker drivers along with performance measure reporting. You would be amazed at the number of device checks our Operations Staff perform many times a day on hundreds of devices, many that are related to the new projects above.

It takes a TEAM of FDOT, Consultant, and Contractor staff to test, analyze, review, revise, and replace (if needed) all of the programs and systems in the District. At the RTMC, we're proud to be a part of the TEAM!

From October 1st through December 31st, 2023 the District 2 RTMC had 6 RISC (Rapid Incident Scene Clearance) events. The RTMC Staff worked a total of 17,691 events with 9,567 utilizing DMS. Of those events, 3,326 were crashes. There was a total of 12,778 Road Ranger events.

Connect. Know. Go!

**What are you waiting for?
Use FL511!**

**Jason Evans
Metric Engineering
RTMC Manager**



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FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team's last bimonthly meeting of 2023 was held in-person on **November 21st, 2023**, at 10:00 A.M. Facilitating effective communication among all TIM agency partners is crucial for FDOT to enhance incident scene clearance times, alleviate congestion, and improve safety on interstates within District 2. These meetings play a vital role in establishing an open line of communication to achieve these objectives.

The Team started off with the construction project update provided by Nathan Pick, who advised that there was a milling and resurfacing project on I-295 from Morse Avenue to US-90, and there would be continued lane closures for the duration of the project. Lane shifts also occurred on I-10 due to widening.

The Emergency Operations Update and the Maintenance Operations Update were both given by Jason Evans, who stated that debris removal and operations resulting from Hurricane Idalia are to continue through January of 2024, and permanent repair of signs, lighting, and fencing began in December. There was no roadwork allowed on the Interstates, State Roads, and County Roads for both the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

Jason Evans and Craig Carnes both provided the ITS Projects/511/TMC updates. Craig Carnes began by stating there were several smaller ITS projects occurring throughout the eastern side of the District, including: a DMS and CCTV Cameras were being installed along MLK, ongoing work in the Zoo Parkway/Heckscher

Drive area, and continued monitoring of the Buckman Bridge ATMS project due to ongoing issues. Jason Evans continued by stating there were three upcoming widening projects, with two looking to start within the next year: I-95 from International Golf Parkway to CR-210 and I-295 to JTB. The third widening project will occur on Emerson Street to Atlantic Boulevard and will begin construction after the other two. The RTMC is in the process of testing a new Express Lanes software, with the software being brought up to the 2020 standards. Jason Evans advised that the I-10/I-95 project was final accepted as of mid-October, and all the devices were configured within SunGuide®.

Jason Evans concluded the meeting by advising that the State is looking into an enhancement that will allow the RTMC to use the Microwave Vehicle Detection System (MVDS) devices that are currently installed along every mile of the interstates to detect wrong way drivers. The devices that are currently in place have this capability, but SunGuide® does not have a way to ingest the data. The enhancements should be available in Spring 2024.

The next First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team meeting is scheduled to be held in-person on **March 19th, 2024**, at 10:00 A.M. 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!



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ALACHUA BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The Alachua-Bradford Traffic Incident Management Team meeting held its latest bimonthly meeting in person on **Wednesday, December 13th, 2023**, at 10:00 AM. The TIM meeting kicked off with a reminder of the primary objective of our TIM Team meeting, which is to continuously reduce incident scene clearance times to alleviate congestion and enhance safety. The meeting also emphasized the significance of cooperation and communication among TIM members while operating on the roadways to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

The meeting then proceeded with the Emergency Operations Update and the Maintenance Operations Update, both given by Carrie Stanbridge, who began by stating that the Emergency Operations Center continues to pick up debris from Hurricane Idalia across West Florida. To date, 7.2 million cubic yards of debris have been collected and removed. She then continued by stating that there were two bridge locations on the northwest side of the District, near the Florida Georgia line, that experienced washouts, which have since been repaired. Maintenance is currently focused on ditches and reclaiming the fence lines on the interstates. This work is part of regular maintenance activities and is not Hurricane Idalia related.

Jason Evans provided the ITS/511/TMC updates, where he informed the group that there is an ongoing issue with spiders on the RWIS sensors in the Paynes Prairie area, and they are working closely with contractors to spray and

mitigate the spiders in an effort to keep them off of the devices. He then stated that the RTMC has begun testing on an Intelligent Truck Parking Availability System (ITPAS), which uses cameras to detect filled parking spots at Rest Areas. This comes as a result of the in-ground pucks not working as well as previously hoped. The first testing of the ITPAS system was met with 95% accuracy, and they are still making tweaks to improve the reliability of the system. The Columbia/Suwannee Rest Area has not been updated yet and is still utilizing the in-ground pucks. He closed by stating the FL511 App was updated in mid-September, which brought new features such as links to additional 511 resources and updated map interfaces.

Dee Dee Crews concluded the meeting by stating that the RISC Lite truck on I-75 has been replaced with a 24/7 Class B tow truck that can tow up to a box truck. Additionally, the entire Road Ranger fleet across District 2 is now using propane-powered vehicles, making it the only Green Fleet in the State of Florida.

The next Alachua-Bradford Traffic Incident Management Team meeting is scheduled to be held in-person on **February 14th, 2024**, at 10:00 A.M. If any changes are made prior to the next meeting we will send out an email notification to all of our TIM partners. If you are unable to attend, please feel free to send someone else who could represent your agency. We thank you for your participation.



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TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM continued

PLEASE NOTE: If anyone is interested in the SHRP2 Incident Management Training Course, please contact Craig Carnes at ccarnes@metriceng.com or Arianna Franklin at arianna.franklin@metriceng.com or 904-260-1567. Craig is available to work with any agency's schedule; including nights and weekends to make sure the course is available for groups of ten or more trainees.

We continue the process of updating the TIM Team meeting process and strongly encourage all TIM members to send in suggestions for agency topics to be discussed during the meeting. All ideas are welcome and you can send them to Dee Dee Crews at DeeDee.Crews@dot.state.fl.us.

TIM TEAM MEETING SCHEDULES

First Coast TIM Team

Regional Transportation Management Center
980 N. Jefferson St., Jacksonville, FL
904.903.2000
10:00am-12:00pm
March 19, 2024
May 21, 2024 July 16, 2024
September 17, 2024 November 19, 2024

Alachua/Bradford TIM Team

FDOT Gainesville Operations Office
5301 NE 39th Avenue, Gainesville, FL
352.381.4300
10:00am-11:30am
February 14, 2024
April 10, 2024 June 12, 2024
August 14, 2024 October 9, 2024
December 11, 2024

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 percent each year.

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





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ROAD RANGER UPDATE

As we transition into Quarter 4 and navigate the winter season, the dedication of the District 2 Road Rangers persists, providing essential support to motorists on our roadways. The Road Ranger Program remains a crucial element of incident management, extending valuable assistance to drivers and collaborating closely with local agency partners. As key contributors to the Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Team, they play a pivotal role in promptly communicating updates to the Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) regarding incidents such as crashes, traffic disruptions, disabled vehicles, and road debris. Their steadfast commitment ensures the smooth flow of traffic and enhances overall road safety in District 2.

The Road Rangers operate eighteen routes in District 2, with seven of these routes providing 24/7 coverage across the District. In recent months, the RISC Lite truck, previously patrolling Route 11 on I-75, has been replaced with a 24/7 Class B Tow Truck capable of towing box trucks and unloaded semi-trucks when needed. This tow truck will operate from the Marion County Line north to SR-47 but can be called anywhere in Alachua to assist with events. Notably, this newly introduced vehicle runs on propane, marking the District 2 Road Ranger fleet as the sole Green Fleet in the State of Florida.

The Road Rangers offer assistance in various situations, including fuel provisions, tire changes, minor emergency repairs, and short-term maintenance of traffic. During the period

spanning from October 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, the District 2 Road Rangers provided assistance to an average of 4,037 events per month, surpassing the average of 3,673 events recorded in the previous quarter.

Every month, our Road Rangers participate in a compulsory Safety Training session, where a consistent emphasis is placed on promoting safe practices through presentations and instruction. To ensure comprehensive training coverage, these meetings are conducted in both Jacksonville and Gainesville, ensuring that all Road Rangers benefit from the knowledge shared. These meetings serve as crucial opportunities for the team to engage directly with FDOT staff and their fellow Road Rangers, fostering a collaborative learning environment. Given the challenging nature of their work and the high exposure on our interstates, it is of utmost importance to prioritize the well-being and safety of our Road Rangers and the motoring public alike during their travels.

The subsequent charts depict the range of event types to which the Road Rangers responded between October 1, 2023, and December 31, 2023, along with some key activities performed during these responses. Their primary focus was on addressing crashes, debris events, disabled vehicles, and abandoned vehicles. Their activities primarily involved providing Maintenance of Traffic (MOT), assisting motorists with flat tires, clearing debris, and aiding local law



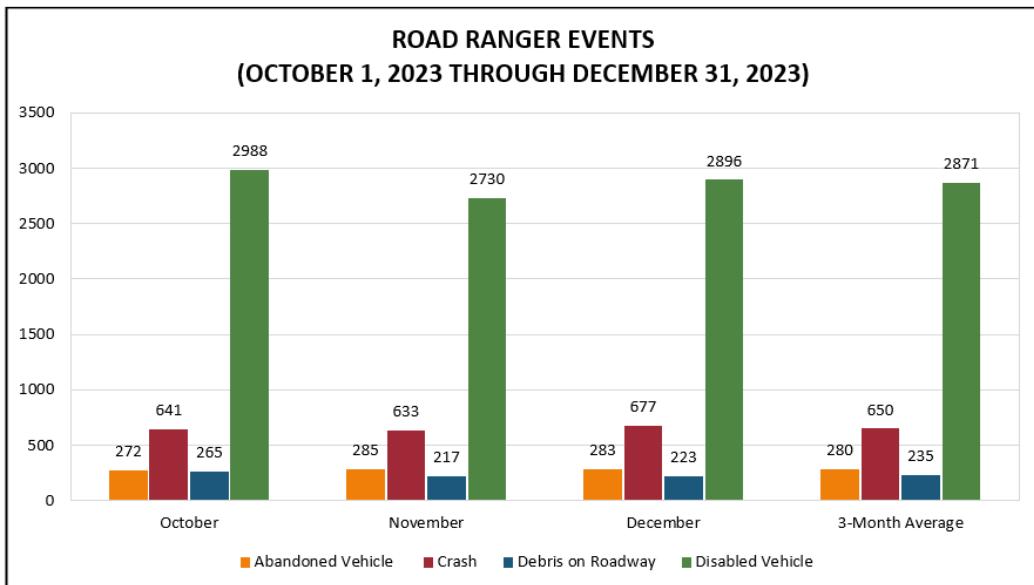
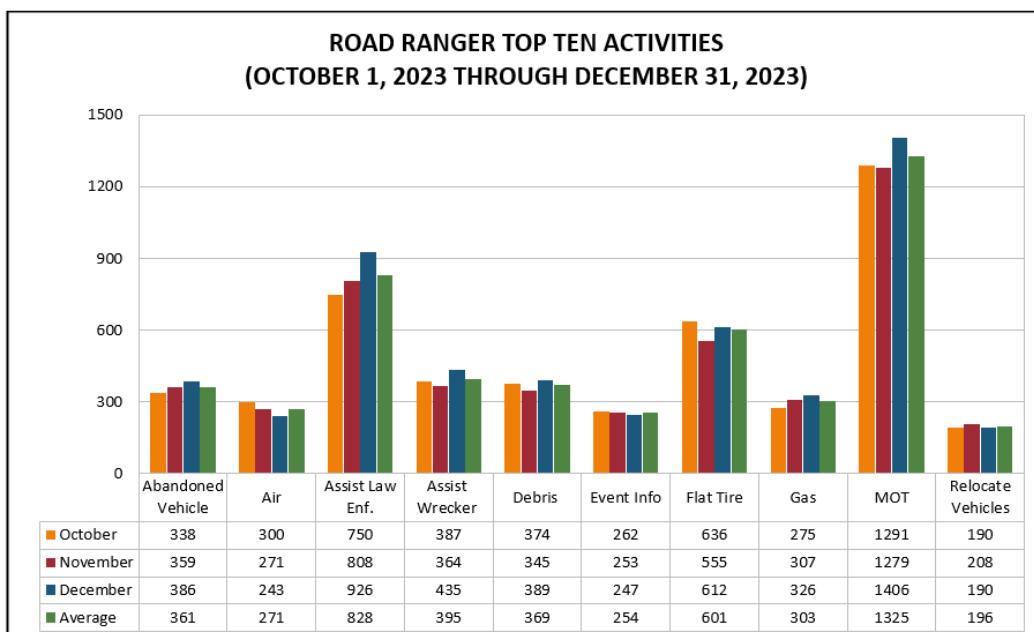
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ROAD RANGER UPDATE continued

enforcement. The data indicates that the Road Rangers responded to an average of 16.1% crashes, 71.1% disabled vehicles, 5.8% debris events, and 7% abandoned vehicles. Overall, there was a slight increase in the number of abandoned vehicles, crashes, and disabled vehicles attended to by the Road Rangers, and there was a slight decrease in the number of debris on roadway events that required Road Ranger response.





RISC – RAPID INCIDENT SCENE CLEARANCE - UPDATE

The Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) program represents an incentive-based approach that corresponds with the Open Roads Policy in Florida, which aims to swiftly clear major highway incidents and truck incidents in 90 minutes or less. Under this program, the RISC Contractor takes on the responsibility of responding to the incident within 60 minutes of receiving the activation request. Once on scene and provided with a Notice to Proceed by the lead official on scene, the contractor has a maximum of 90 minutes to reopen the travel lanes for traffic. If the required equipment arrives within 60 minutes and the towing company successfully clears the travel lanes within 90 minutes, the RISC Contractor becomes eligible for a bonus.

Often, RISC activations encompass substantial commercial vehicle accidents, such as loaded tractor-trailers, which require RISC Contractors to have specialized equipment readily available at all times for efficient response. If this extra equipment is required, the RISC Contractor might qualify for an additional incentive as compensation for deploying and using the equipment in the incident clearance process.

Over the past three months, District 2 has utilized RISC six times. This program holds immense value and is vital for reducing roadway clearance times, particularly during high-traffic periods. Below, you will find specific information regarding the RISC events that occurred within District 2 from October 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023.

Date	Time	Location	Description
10/9/2023	6:55 AM	I-10 EB at MM 308, Columbia County	Crash involving two semi-trucks resulting in both cab and trailer damage, along with fuel spillage. All EB lanes blocked.
10/11/2023	11:51 AM	I-95 NB between Lem Turner Blvd/Golfair Blvd, Duval County	Multi-vehicle crash involving a semi-truck and a sedan. The semi-truck, loaded with gravel, overturned spilling its load onto the roadway. All NB lanes blocked.
10/21/2023	8:39 AM	I-95 SB at MM 316, St. Johns County	A pickup truck hauling a boat jackknifed, causing the 16,000-pound boat to slide off the trailer blocking both the center and left lanes.
11/26/2023	1:10 PM	I-10 WB at US-129, Suwannee County	Crash involving a semi-truck which lost control, causing it to jackknife and its tractor to overturn. All lanes blocked.
11/28/2023	1:39 PM	I-95 SB at MM 334, Duval County	Crash involving a truck transporting rocks and two passenger cars, resulting in injuries. Two left lanes blocked.
12/24/2023	1:43 PM	I-295 E NB between MM 57/MM 58, Duval County	Multi-vehicle crash involving a semi-truck and pickup truck, causing the semi-truck, which was hauling wine, to overturn onto its right side. All NB lanes blocked.

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



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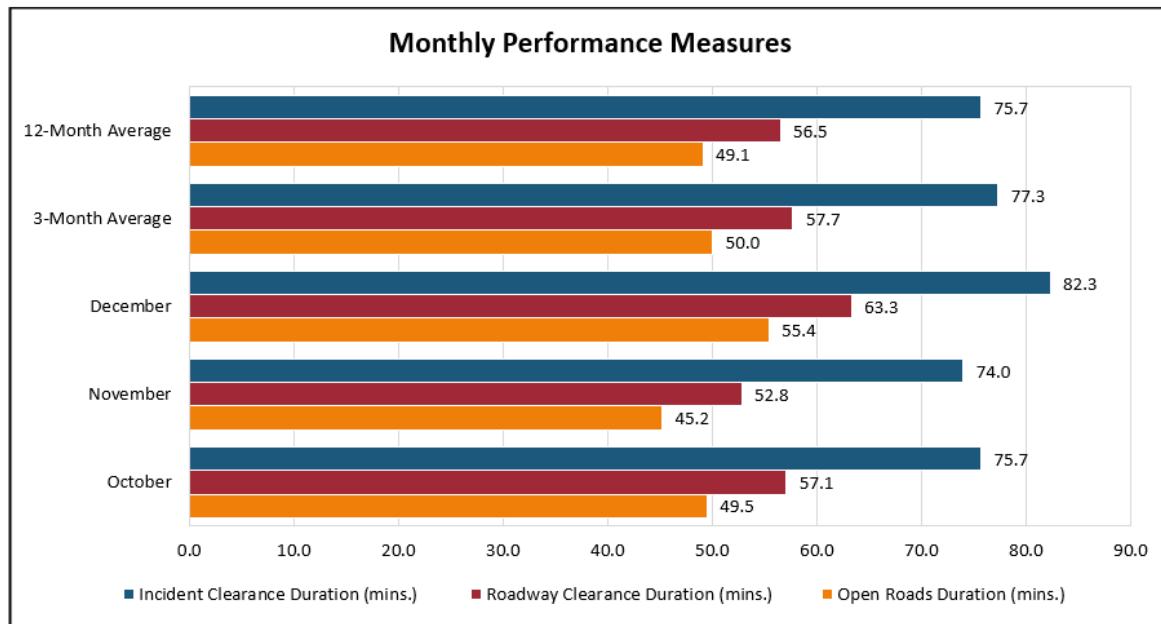


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PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Upon reviewing the Road Ranger Event Summary, summarized in the Road Rangers Event chart, it was found that between October 1, 2023, and December 31, 2023, Road Rangers responded to an average of 650 crashes per month within District 2. This is a slight increase when compared to the previous quarter's monthly average of 595. Additionally, Road Rangers responded to an average of 2,871 disabled vehicles per month in Quarter 4, which is a 14.5% increase from the previous quarter's average of 2,508. The weekly events summary, shown in the figure below, indicates that the District 2 Road Rangers responded to an average of 65 abandoned vehicles, 138 congestion events, 67 debris on roadway events, and 685 disabled vehicle events per week during the fourth quarter 2023.

Another way to determine how well the Road Rangers are operating within the district is to look at the Monthly Performance Measure information, which was gathered from October 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023. This data includes metrics such as open roads duration, roadway clearance duration, and incident clearance duration. The Open Roads Duration is calculated from the time the first responder arrives on scene until all travel lanes are cleared, with a goal of less than 90 minutes per event. The Quarter 4 average open roads duration was well below the 90-minute goal at 50.0 minutes per month over the course of the last three months, and 49.1 minutes for the last 12 months. Roadway Clearance Duration is calculated from the first notification of an event to all travel lanes cleared. The average Roadway Clearance Duration for Quarter 4 was 57.7 minutes for the past three months, and 56.5 minutes for the past 12 months. Incident Clearance Duration is calculated from the first notification of an event to the last responder departure time. The average Incident Clearance Duration for Quarter 4 was 77.3 minutes for the past three months, and 75.7 minutes for the past 12 months.



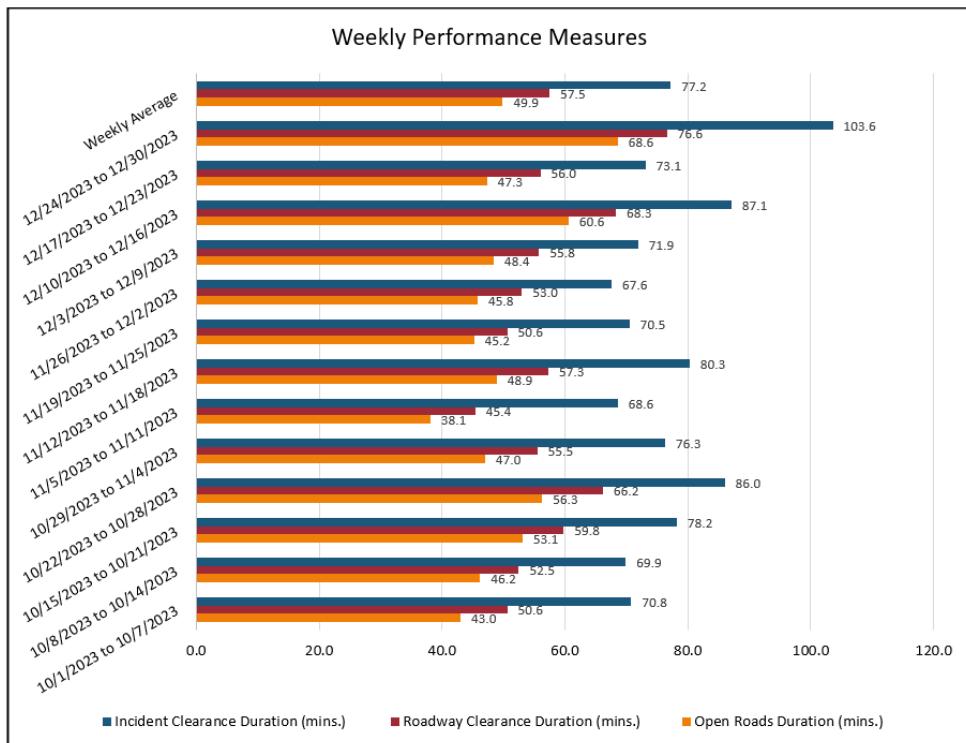
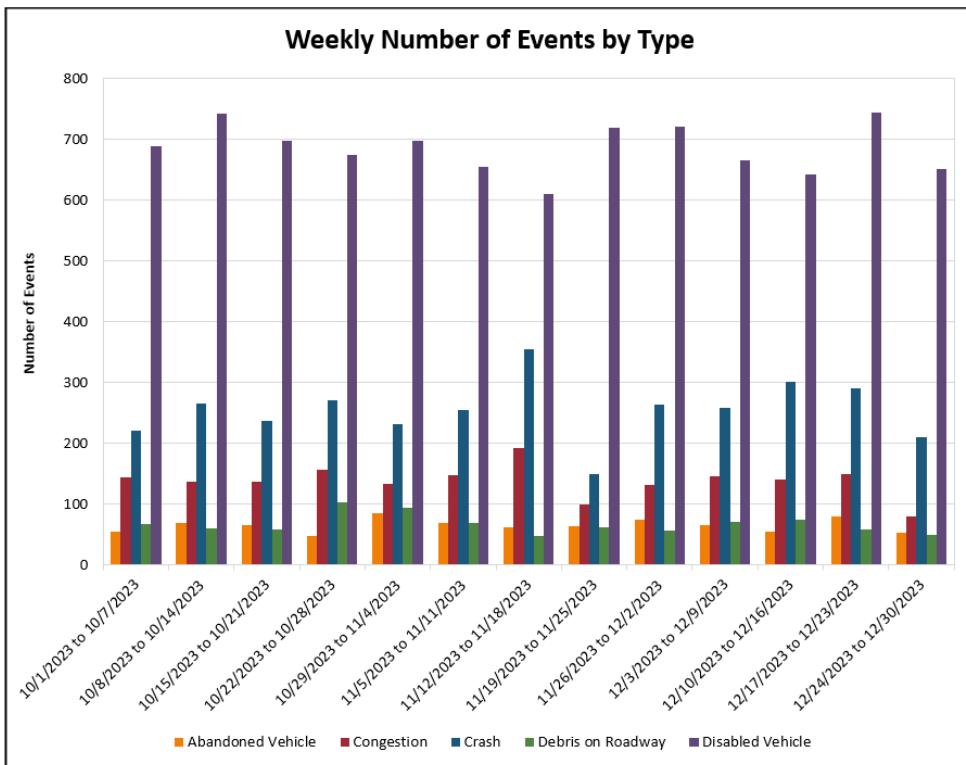


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PERFORMANCE MEASURES continued





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MARKETING

The Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) was abuzz with activity November 21st as our PIO Team hosted a pre-Thanksgiving Travel Media Day. FDOT Community Outreach Manager Hampton Ray fielded questions from local television stations regarding roadway safety, construction projects and smart travel initiatives. Florida Highway Patrol Sgt. Dylan Bryan encouraged motorists to place their phones in driving mode, exercise patience and eliminate all other distractions while driving Florida's roadways. AAA estimated that in the U.S. over 50 million people traveled 50 miles or more from home over the busy Thanksgiving holiday travel period. According to AAA, Florida saw an estimated 2.7 million of those. A big shoutout to Tracy Hisler-Pace and her dedicated team for coordinating this media outreach.

As we start to see event numbers match and even surpass pre-pandemic totals, we're excited about the New Year and all it promises to bring! This past quarter we visited Keiser University, Florida State College at Jacksonville and the City of Jacksonville Beach. While visiting the FL511 booth, motorists learned about the resources available to them through the FL511 app, website and Social Media platforms. Many motorists are surprised to learn that the information they're viewing on the overhead Dynamic Message Signs originates inside the RTMC and is also accessible through FL511. Then they immediately start asking questions like who puts that information into the system, how do we know when there's a crash and do you record images? By the way, the answer to that last question is NO! We never record images.

In 2024, we will continue to spread the message of safety and efficiency through our available FL511 platforms. We're already looking forward

to Construction Career Days at the end of February. And throughout the spring and summer months we'll continue to look for opportunities to promote the many resources available through FL511. Our first quarter calendar is looking very colorful as we fill in those dates with marketing events!

If you skipped out on holiday travel and are just now planning your vacation, make sure your trip begins and ends with FL511. From our operations hub inside the RTMC, we'll keep you up-to-date on current road conditions. FL511 is available in a variety of platforms. You can log onto FL511.com, download one of the free FL511 Mobile Apps available for Apple and Android devices, or visit us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Connect. Know. Go!

What are you waiting for?

**Sherri Byrd
Metric Engineering
Marketing Manager**



TM



SPOTLIGHT ON...JESUS AVILA **INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION** **SYSTEM SPECIALIST**

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

I was born in Honduras, San Pedro Sula. My parents and I moved to the United States when I was about 4 years old. I was raised in South Florida, from Miami all the way down to Homestead. My parents did their best as any parent should. They were hard workers. Our family values were to honor your father and mother. But most of all, be light, walk as a child of light and stand out in our unique humbling ways.

You have a long-standing history with Metric/FDOT. How many years have you worked at the Regional Transportation Management Center?

I have been in this field for 12 years. I started with Metric when they won the contract 11 years ago with FDOT District 2. I have been at the RTMC since it opened in 2015. I was able to see this building being built from the floor up.

We understand you recently made an exciting career move. Congratulations! Tell us about your former role, as well as your new role and job title.

I was first hired as a District 3 Bi-lingual and Feedback operator. My job was to translate for district floodgates in our FL 511 system and website. Back then, we also had a plane that flew around Jacksonville to help us report traffic conditions when we had no cameras on the East Beltway, Butler Boulevard and I-10 during rush hours. I was one of the dispatchers and stayed on constant radio communications with the pilot. That was a ton of fun. I was loving traffic very much. Later down the road, I became one of the first to become a Lead Operator at RTMC. The

pace and thrills, the quick decision making.... it was the rush that kept me going. But eventually, that rush was starting to fade out. My family was growing. I needed a new pace in life. This was the only time I was afraid of taking a risk to seek new adventures. I did not want to leave the traffic life and the company that has been there for me for my lowest and highest moments. After being still and praying for an opportunity to arise, I came across our employers' Metric Website. There was an opening here at the RTMC for ITS SPECIALIST! There were doubts and concerns, but I was tired of letting opportunities pass me by. I applied for it. I got a call and was asked to schedule an interview for Nov. 29th, 2022. I was offered and accepted the position. As of January 31, 2023 I slowly transitioned into my new role. And here we are. What do I do as an ITS Specialist? I am an extension to FDOT, assisting Jose Morales and Alex Varela with ITS specifications, quality assurance, troubleshooting equipment and quality control with ITS Devices inventory. Assisting contractors on field sites and in the office, I also bring my knowledge as a prior TMC operator to help improve their work environment by proposing adding cameras to certain locations where ITS devices are being deployed. Every day is different here on the ITS side. A different rush and excitement. I'm excited to have joined the team.

Any cutting-edge projects you're currently working on?

My current project is overseeing the Preventive Maintenance and inspections for all the Wrong Way Driver Detectors in the



SPOTLIGHT ON...JESUS AVILA INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM SPECIALIST continued

Northeast Florida region. I work to see that all these devices are up and running properly to prevent wrong way drivers on the interstate. So far, we have been able to catch a few glitches and errors that are being modified and handled according to specifications.

Worst day on the job? Or a foot-in-mouth moment?

Yeah, well there was this one time I was extremely hungry and all I had was an avocado in my lunch bag. Let's just say I had a few words to say about my avocado not being ripe and the whole dispatching world heard it. Yup, not just at TMC, but on the radio dispatching. (HOT MIC) Everyone heard my love and frustrations. I'm sure you love avocados as much as I love avocados.

Looking back over your career, name one defining moment you still carry with you.

My very first overnight shift. I can never forget it. A mix of fog and smoke from a nearby brush fire caused a pile-up on the stretch of I-75 in Paynes Prairie. More than 20 vehicles crashed into each other. A dozen people died that night. I wish there was more I could do. Listening to the horrific sounds from FHP and FWC's radios, I still grieve for the families that were lost in this incident.

Lunch with colleagues or microwaved leftovers while sitting at your desk?

So I didn't want to have any more avocado episodes..... haha. I knew every time my buddy Andres (TMC) was working a shift it was always Zoe's Kitchen and Chipotle on the menu. But since I've transitioned to the ITS side, I get to enjoy my wife's lovely cooking and leftovers.

Have you ever been told you look like someone famous? If so, who was it?

There was a time when my hair was short and I was fit (before being married). Everywhere I went I was told that I looked like Aaron Hernandez.

Knowing all you know now, what advice would you have given to your 15 year old self?

Don't be afraid to fail. Understand the reason why you failed. The faster you fail the better the chances of success. It's in the learning of how you fail that leads you to success. Look at this as a learning experience. Read Proverbs daily. There are 31 chapters. Read a chapter a day. When you finish, read it again and repeat. You are Valuable!

We understand you're a rock star husband and father. Tell us a little about your wife and kids.

I was recently blessed to marry my wife, Rosalyn. She is the suitable partner that was meant for me. Rosy was well known in the Property Management Commercial side of Real Estate. Prior to my transition she became a Real Estate agent so that she could coordinate her schedule to be at home for the children and to work on our small nonprofit organization we are organizing. Oh... she's also an amazing bread maker. We are a blended family of 5 children. Two girls and three boys. Nicole (22) my oldest is attending college in Tennessee in the medical field. Aliza, my bonus daughter (21) is also in college and works at Wolfson Children's Hospital. Both girls are go-getters and love adventures. Julian, my oldest son (18) is in his



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SPOTLIGHT ON...JESUS AVILA INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM SPECIALIST continued

senior year wanting to become a mechanical engineer. He's very kind and humble and optimistic. Julian also lives in Tennessee, but he sure gets spoiled when he's with us during the spring, summer and winters. And now for the two youngest, my bonus son Andrew and my son Liam (both 12 years old). DOUBLE TROUBLE. They are both grey belts in jujitsu. Andrew is the competitive one. He is on a basketball team and really devoted to it. Liam has the ability to make you laugh and smile that is out of this world. He has amazing strength and is trying out for football. Rosy and I believe these two are going to be great duos in the law field or business world because they know how to negotiate and debate very well together.

Tell us something fun we might not have guessed about you.

Back in my single life, I was a song writer and DJ. I loved music and parties. I had a few song remixes signed to some well known record labels in the dance music industry. I was also into mixed martial arts and trained in Krav Maga for five years. Now that I have settled down, most of my weekends are devoted to our family activities and serving in my surrounding communities. I love mentoring men and teaching our kids to be a light in the world, as I was taught to be.



Above, Jesus and Rosy's wedding day

Below, hanging out with the family!





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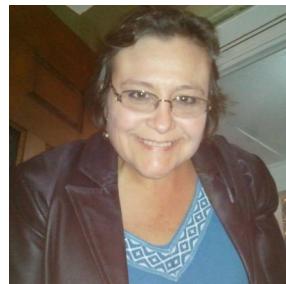
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