

IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR KIDS TO HEAD BACK TO SCHOOL



**LEARN THE RULES ABOUT STOPPING
FOR SCHOOL BUSES ON PAGE 5!
KEEP OUR CHILDREN SAFE!**



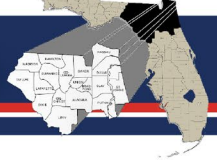
**NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM
MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS (TSM&O)
PROGRAM MANAGER**

As the summer heats up there's nothing better than being put under the pressure cooker during a tenuous situation! Let me begin by setting up what led to this moment. I was asked to participate in a SASHTO sponsored Regional Operations Leadership Forum (ROLF) in Raleigh, NC, a couple of weeks ago. This was an opportunity for State DOTs in the Southeast to share knowledge and experience within their TSM&O programs. Participants included Florida, Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Tennessee. This 2.5-day session was very revealing in that it displayed the progress Florida has made with its TSM&O program when compared to their counterparts. Yes, Georgia may appear to be comparable, however the turnover rate for their program is so great that the consistency and vision do not appear to be present.

At this meeting we discussed topics related to freight, recruiting, emergency management, technology, operations, and leadership. If I were to rank the status of each State's program, South Carolina would be last. That is very understandable since they are averse to taking Federal funds for their interstate system. Their biggest effort to date is to deploy CCTV cameras and DMS along their roadway system, something that we started nearly 30 years ago. I was impressed with Tennessee's "all-in" effort to incorporate the latest technology onto their roadway systems; however, their challenge is that the compass to achieve their goals is still

being developed. The same holds true for North Carolina as they battle with capacity projects for every penny to implement technological solutions. Alabama is trying to make advances in TSM&O, yet one thing stood out that put their program into perspective. Their entire state budget for technology deployments is less than the amount District Two gets for O&M.

Georgia is most comparable to Florida, but the approach is done differently. Whereas Florida partners with the consultant and contractor industry to deploy, manage, and maintain their systems, Georgia handles it internally with State staff. They mentioned that this business model is not very sustainable due to the high turnover rate and costs associated with personnel, therefore they are transitioning to a similar approach to Florida. The most lively discussion I had with GDOT related to their program's approach, since they spend tons of money on technology in the Atlanta area but little to nothing near the Florida border. I tried to explain the value of having southbound DMS and CCTV near Kingsland and Valdosta to alert motorists of travel conditions across the State border. The response was that with the limited constituents in this area and the fact that most of the motorists impacted were tourists, their GDOT 511 system would suffice. Very sad to hear that response!!!



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

So, the (ROLF) meeting ended on Thursday at 11:15 AM and I was headed to the airport for my 3:15 flight on Delta. I thought about catching an earlier flight at 2:05 but felt “there was no need to rush”. Boy was that a huge mistake! While at the gate, passengers were notified that there would be a slight delay due to the west to east storm passing from North Carolina through Georgia. As we were seated in the plane we were notified by the Pilot that take off had been pushed out an hour because of lightning. Apparently, all the baggage was not loaded on the plane and when there is lightning within three miles the loaders had to seek shelter until this condition had passed. The good news was the Pilot said all flights in Atlanta had been delayed as well, so there should not be a problem for connecting flights. “Yeah, Right!”

I was notified via text that my connecting flight had been delayed, hence giving me plenty of time to handle that horrendous experience of going from one terminal to another at the Atlanta-Hartsfield airport. Upon approach to the airport I received another text from Delta notifying me that the flight had been delayed another hour due to the impacts weather had on their schedule. As we hit the runway, one final text came in saying, “Hey, your flight’s been canceled.” Then the fun began!!! Yes, unbeknownst to me, I was one of the victims of the CrowdStrike issue! Delta told everyone on the plane not to worry and connecting flight

arrangements would be arranged at the gate. Not!!! Instead, they directed me to go to Guest Services at Terminal A for assistance. The line was over 50 people deep when I arrived.

Once I got to a Guest Services representative my hope was they could get me on a later flight to Jacksonville. Instead, I heard the shocking news that the earliest they could assist was tomorrow (Friday) “if” they could assist at all. Tada, that’s when I learned it wasn’t weather causing these problems but instead the issue with the CrowdStrike software. I decided to see if they could help in finding me a sister hotel or airline. All I basically received was a shrug of the rep’s shoulders and nope, everything’s booked. Luckily, I was able to find a fleabag hotel at a reasonable rate (under \$90) for the night. Yes, based on the prior it was a high risk overnight stay, but I won’t go into the details once I got to the hotel.

The next day I figured everything would pan out and that Delta would have a game plan for their passengers when I arrived at the airport at 9 AM. Totally got it wrong again. Initially, they told me that I was booked on the 10:45 AM flight. Good news, right? Nope, within 15 minutes this flight was canceled as well. I decided to peer out the window and the realization set in when I noticed every gate had a Delta plane parked and the



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

terminal was completely full. This CrowdStrike problem had totally shut down Delta's operations in the airport! So, I trudged back to Guest Services and encountered a line of over 200 people. Yes, this totally sucked.

After an hour in line, I got to the Guest Services rep only to be told that they would get me on a connecting flight within.....the next 48 hours!!!! Insane! I decided to try and rent a car to drive back to Jacksonville instead. Unfortunately, every car rental agency in Atlanta was not providing one-way cars for the entire weekend. So much for that idea. I decided to do a deep dive into the other airlines to try and find a way home. Fortunately, Southwest Airlines had a flight available at 10:55 PM on Friday night. Booked it and hoped for the best. As I was seated at the terminal, Southwest sent an e-mail saying this flight had been delayed by an hour. Uh-Oh! As the time grew closer to this rescheduled flight another text came in saying that this flight was delayed again and would not depart until 12:30 AM on Saturday. Just about then PTSD set in as I thought I'd never get out of friggin Atlanta!

As the butterflies fluttered in my stomach, I noticed that many of the folks at the terminal were also Delta passengers scheduled on the same canceled flight as me. We shared our war stories from the past two days and found some consolation in knowing we were in this situation together. As we were seated in the plane, everyone hoped for the best and expected the

worst. Once the flight took off the concern transitioned to "will this plane land in Jacksonville!?" It did get me back to JIA around 1:30 AM Saturday and I can now proudly display the badge of courage for surviving CrowdStrike!

The moral of this story is that Delta did not handle this emergency well at all. In fact, it was the worst customer service experience I'd ever encountered and mainly it was due to their lack of preparation for such an emergency. Even the Pilots, flight crews, and service personnel were frustrated since they were impacted as well. Once the nerves calmed down on Saturday afternoon a sense of pride flowed through me as I reflected on how the Department handles major events. We plan, prepare, deliver, and do not panic. We stay well grounded and put our customers, the motorists, first. All I can hope for is that Delta realizes their faults and can build a better customer service approach in the future. And yes, I will NEVER fly Delta again.

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





NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS OPERATIONS MANAGER

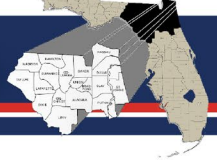
If you hadn't heard, Alex Varela left our team in late June to join NAVFAC (Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command) at their NAS Jax office in Jacksonville. If you were wondering, his decision to leave was due to several factors. One was that he's been a member of the Florida Air National Guard out of Camp Blanding for the past several years. His interest in continuing with this division and their mission worked well with this new opportunity in the private sector that supports the cause. Secondly, his wife began her new career as a nurse and therefore needed greater assistance with the children due to the odd hours she would have to work. The location of Alex's office reduces his commute to less than 10 minutes, thereby allowing him to respond to their needs in an instant.

I won't sugarcoat it when I say that the position he held in the TSM&O program was very demanding and expected a lot out of our team members. From the onset, I've warned staff that we are a 24/7 operation with the expectations of responsiveness during a time of need. Likewise, the TSM&O program is one of the biggest areas of Traffic Operations with an annual funding amount for deployments plus O&M of nearly \$20 million per year. It's a non-stop job all day that can be compounded by unexpected events, thereby leading to impacts on family life. Alex was responsible for managing the day-to-day activities of his staff when dealing with RTMC Operations, Road Rangers, Rapid Scene Incident Clearance, ITS Maintenance, Procurement and Office Services. There is no room for the weary in this position!

Alex joined our team in January of 2017; however, he would not actually begin work in the TSM&O program until January 2018 since he was deployed to active duty for the entire 2017 year. Once he joined our team the expectation from me was a two-year learning curve to absorb the entirety of the program. Many people may not realize that we are involved in technology projects from the planning stage and continue through design, construction, O&M, and end-of-life. If you consider that our coverage area is over 700 miles (arterial and interstate) that can put into perspective the demands every day at work.

After a couple of years on the job, Alex received his orders and was gone for nearly an additional year of active duty. This took a toll on his family and work life balance that made him consider an alternate career path. As mentioned, our program has huge demands on team members, and it did not pan out with the quality of life he desired. He had a lot of catching up to do with the TSM&O program which had a significant impact on the adjustment upon his return. Hence, he made the decision to seek another career path that best fit his expectations and notified me of his pending departure back in May of this year.

We are in the process of vetting candidates to fill this role and are seeking someone with an understanding of technology, but with an HR and business sense to manage the day-to-day activities of the program. I've received interest from several potential candidates and hope to fill this position soon.



NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS OPERATIONS MANAGER continued

As to not be outdone, one of our greatest assets, JoAnna Hand, left our team as well. Her reasoning was different in that she loved what she was doing but had greater aspirations for her career. Central Office was seeking someone to run the Statewide SunGuide software project and JoAnna fit the bill. It was a fantastic decision that was bittersweet for our team but great for her career path.

We speak on occasion via TEAMS and I can see the joy in her face with the new role. She has actually done so well that her workload has increased to also handling Connected Vehicle software and Data platforms. I just hope that they do not burn her out as they realize her skill set and pile on the work. The worst part of her departure is that on occasion she would bring us pastries from her sister's bakery in Lake City (Xapa Bakery). Everything she brought was SO delicious! Guess we will have to live off the memories until our next visit to District Office 😊

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

NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS PROJECT MANAGER

Back to School Bus Safety

I know every one of us has a special child in our life – son, daughter, grandchild, niece, nephew or friend who starts school within the next couple of weeks. According to Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles there were almost 3,000 crashes that involved school buses in 2022. In 2023,

the Florida Department of Education conducted a survey of school bus drivers that showed on a single day, 11,224 illegal passes were made based on the observation of 8,432 school bus drivers.

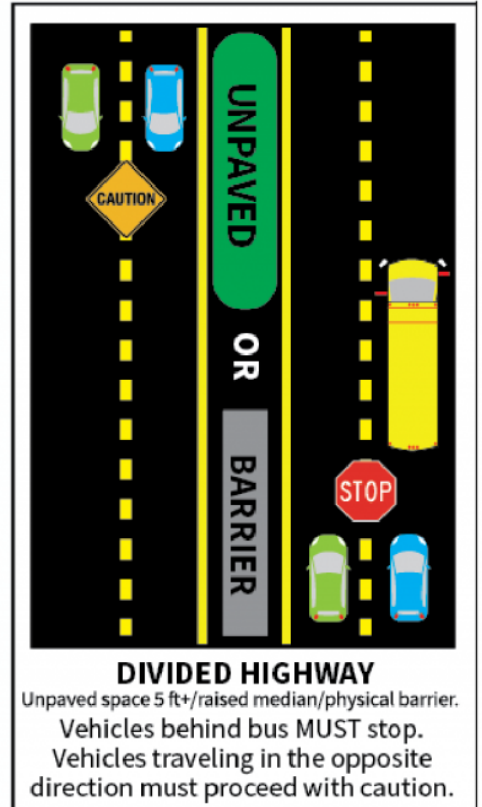
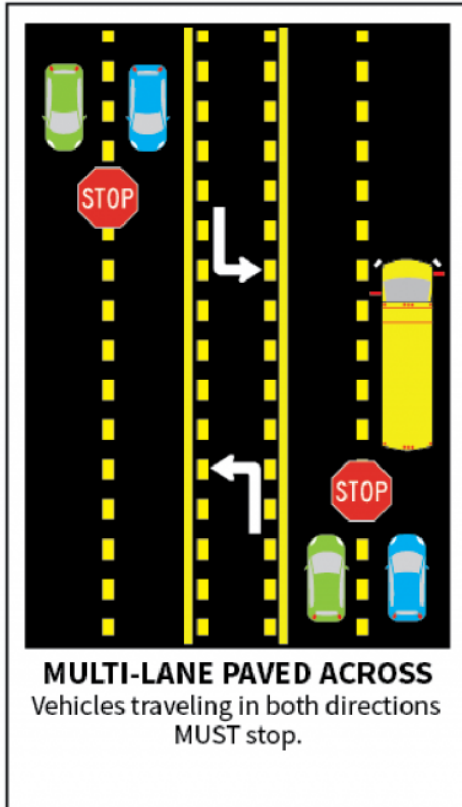
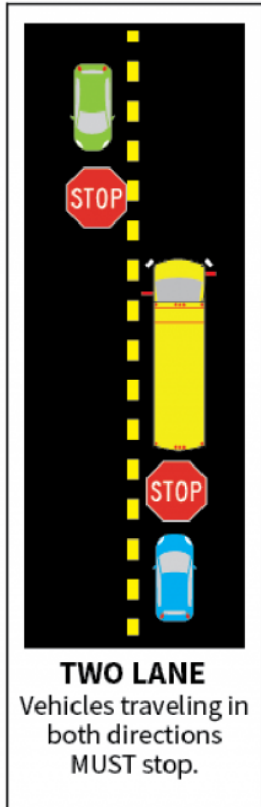
I thought it would be helpful to remind everyone of the rules of the road for motorists when approaching school buses. Everyone keep your eyes open and watch out for our precious future leaders. Florida school buses carry precious cargo – our children. Motorists should always be alert and drive with caution around school buses and in school zones where children may be present like schools, bus stops, school buses and school parking lots.

Tips for Motorists

Be alert and watch for children especially near schools, bus stops, school buses and in school parking lots.

- Children on bicycles can be unpredictable and can make sudden changes in direction. Be especially careful when children are present in school zones and residential areas.
- Pay extra attention to lower speed limits in school zones.
- Watch for and obey signals from school crossing guards.
- Only drive or park in authorized areas to drop off or pick up children at school.
- Motorists are required to stop when approaching a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing and STOP arms extended. (See the different situations in the diagram on the following page)

NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS PROJECT MANAGER continued



- All drivers moving in either direction on a two-way street must stop for a school bus displaying a stop signal and must remain stopped until the road is clear of children AND the school bus stop arm is withdrawn. (see diagram, TWO-LANE)
- On a highway divided by a paved median, all drivers moving in either direction must stop for a school bus displaying a stop signal and must remain stopped until the road is clear of children AND the school bus stop arm is withdrawn. (see diagram, MULTI-LANE)
- The only time traffic approaching an oncoming school bus does not need to stop is if there is a raised barrier such as a concrete divider or at least five feet of unpaved space separating the lanes of traffic. (see diagram, DIVIDED HIGHWAY)
- On a highway divided by a raised barrier or an unpaved median at least 5 feet wide, drivers moving in the opposite direction do not have to stop for the bus (painted lines or pavement markings are not considered barriers). However, these motorists should slow down and watch for students loading or unloading from the bus. (see diagram, DIVIDED HIGHWAY)



NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS PROJECT MANAGER

Penalties for passing stopped school bus include:

- Moving violation subject to citation;
- Requirement to complete a basic Driver Improvement Course upon conviction;
- Four points on your driver's license; and
- Minimum fine of \$265, if you pass on the side where children enter and exit, you will receive a minimum fine of \$465. If a second offense is committed in 5 years, the person's license can be suspended up to 2 years.

On July 1, 2017, the Cameron Mayhew Act took effect in Florida, which increases the minimum penalty for drivers who illegally pass a stopped school bus, resulting in the injury or death of another person. Cameron Mayhew was killed by a motorist that failed to stop as he was walking to his stopped school bus in 2016.

Penalties for passing a stopped school bus that causes or results in the serious bodily injury or the death of another person include:

- Serving 120 community service hours in a trauma center or hospital;
- Participating in a victim's impact panel session, or if such a panel does not exist, attending a FLHSMV approved driver improvement course;
- Six points on your driver's license;
- Suspension of license for a minimum of one year; and \$1,500 fine.

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

NORTH FLORIDA TPO

Reflecting back on my ROLF experience, the meeting was hosted by the Capital Area MPO (CAMPO). Their office is located at the Fenton Town Center, a very upper middle-class complex that combines high end shops with exclusive eateries and apartments. I am guessing that MPO pays a pretty penny each month to lease these offices based on location. Likewise, I took a tour of their offices and could not resist taking pictures for Jeff Sheffield to show what he's missing! All the offices had glass walls and contemporary furniture. Multiple meeting spaces as well in conjunction with their Board Room. I spent some time with their Executive Director and learned that there are over 25 staff working out of this office. This is for a population of just over 2-million in the Raleigh-Durham region. For comparison's sake, this comes out to one staff member for every 80,000 citizens.

The North Florida TPO has approximately 1.7 million citizens in their coverage area of Nassau, Duval, Clay, and St. Johns County. They handle this with 7 personnel, which amounts to one staff member for every 254,000 citizens. Efficiency is the key in Jeff's well-oiled machine as he supplements the necessary support with consultant staff. I would say that is pretty impressive in comparison between both regions.

The caveat is that when I discussed the Department's partnership with the North Florida TPO, the mouth of the CAMPO's



NORTH FLORIDA TPO continued

Director was agape! He could not believe the partnership and investment made with the NFTPO. He said he could only hope for such a success story in his region in the future since not much headway has been made so far. When I went over all the technological advancements made in our region thanks to the NFTPO it left him salivating at the opportunities. We discussed the use of Federal grants to fund some of these efforts, thereby allowing us to stretch our dollars. This is something he's proposed in the past with little to no luck with the NC DOT.

So, in comparison they have a smaller ratio of staff to citizens, expend much more to operate annually, and have a minutiae of success when compared to the NFTPO. Kind of makes me proud to know I've been very fortunate over the past 20 years to be working with Jeff's team.

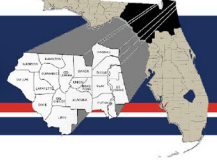
**Pete Vega, District 2
TSM&O Manager**

ITS CONSTRUCTION

Each quarter I write this article and detail what the ITS Group has been doing relative to Construction and Design Projects, but it occurred to me that you may not know why this work is important. So, for this month's Newsletter article, I wanted to provide some information that will help you understand why it is important for the ITS Group to coordinate with the Engineers of Record (EOR) and Construction Engineering Inspection (CEI) companies for basically all new roadway construction contracts.

FDOT District Two ITS (D2 ITS) has fiber optic cable along every Interstate roadway within the District and on several adjacent and intersecting roadways. D2 ITS also has power service feeds and devices along these roadways as well. Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras with Pan-Tilt-Zoom (PTZ) capabilities are spaced approximately every mile along the Interstates and closer together when needed to see the entire roadway from shoulder to shoulder, including entrance and exit ramps. D2 also has Microwave Vehicle Detection Sensors (MVDS) and Bluetooth travel time sensors along these roadways to provide data used to calculate travel time along many segments of the Interstate. Additionally, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) have been installed in strategic locations to provide important motorist information related to incidents, congestion, travel times, safety messages, etc. In addition to the DMS, the Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) also uses the Florida 511 (FL511) website and FL511 Application to provide traffic information to motorists. All of these devices along with the fiber optic cable and power infrastructure and related devices in roadside cabinets make up the D2 ITS Network.

D2 ITS uses a central software package named SunGuide® to communicate to all of these devices, view video images, and send traveler information messages to the DMS. The software also does all of the data crunching to provide travel time information and includes applications to control and monitor these devices, as well as storing information on servers in the RTMC. Due to new technologies and new needs, the SunGuide® software



ITS CONSTRUCTION continued

package is constantly being upgraded to accommodate these new technologies and meet these new needs and requirements. SunGuide® upgrades over the past few years have included Managed Lanes capabilities, Wrong-Way Vehicle Detection System interfaces, and many other upgrades and “bug” fixes.

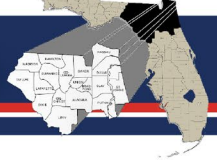
D2 ITS is not the only District to have such a system. Every District in FDOT has either completed or is close to completing a complete ITS Network on all of their Interstate roadways and uses SunGuide®. This means that no matter what Interstate you are travelling in Florida, you should expect to be made aware of important traffic related information as long as you pay attention to the DMS and use the hands-free FL511 App. Not only does every District have a similar system, but all of these ITS Networks are also connected to each other and FDOT Central Office. SunGuide® also includes a Center to Center (C2C) module that allows any District's ITS Network to be controlled by any other District. This functionality is vital during Hurricane and other disaster type scenarios where a District may be required to evacuate their RTMC for the safety of their personnel. As long as that District's devices have power and communications still available to them, the other Districts within the state can operate their system and continue to provide motorists with the information they need to safely and efficiently travel the Interstate corridors.

So, now that you have the background on exactly what the ITS Network is and some of its capabilities, let's get to the meat of this article. TMC Operators monitor the SunGuide® software 24/7/365 from the RTMC. Not only do they perform the functions noted earlier, they also

communicate with First Responders, dispatch and communicate with Road Rangers, and dispatch and communicate with the Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) contractors to make the roadways as safe as possible, not only for motorists, but for the First Responders and crews working along the roadways as well. All of this is made possible by the fiber optic cable and power infrastructure and devices that are located along the Interstates.

During the design phase of roadway projects, our FDOT and consultant personnel review the plans to determine if the new project will impact the fiber optic and power infrastructure or devices. Additional concerns include occluding the view of the CCTV cameras or the “line of sight” of the MVDS to the point that they are not operationally effective. Our group provides comments in the Electronic Review Comments (ERC) system to make the EOR aware of these possible issues and meet with them, as needed, to help resolve these issues. By taking these steps during the Design phase, we attempt to minimize potential time and money impacts to the Construction, as well as maintaining our operational capabilities.

During construction our group continues our coordination with project personnel by attending construction progress meetings, reviewing ITS related submittals, providing field reviews, assisting with answering Requests for Information (RFIs), and generally serving as subject matter experts for any ITS issues that require consultation. In the last Newsletter article, I talked about the large number of instances where construction equipment such as backhoes, bulldozers, and others have hit our fiber optic cables and power service runs.



ITS CONSTRUCTION continued

So, even though we did our due diligence during the design to minimize the impacts to the ITS Network, we often have issues during construction. When these infrastructure hits cause damage to the network, we coordinate with the CEI to have the contractor put a temporary repair in place and plan for and design an appropriate long-term repair that does not degrade the quality of the network. These fiber optic cable and power service hits cause localized single device failures at a minimum and often times, when network redundancy is not possible, cause large scale outages. With D2 ITS having the only fiber optic cable that connects to FDOT District 3 and Central Office, any damage to our fiber optic cable to the west of I-75 can mean that District 3 and Central Office can be cut off from the rest of the state's ITS Network. This is extremely important from June through November during Hurricane season so that Central Office can monitor any evacuations and so that other Districts can assist District 3 with their network or take over the operation of their network and devices, as needed.

Well, there you have it, a quick summary of why we do what we do. It all comes down to ensuring that TMC Operations can keep motorists, First Responders, and roadside workers safe, while also reducing congestion and providing network connectivity for all of the ITS Networks across the state.

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

ITS MAINTENANCE

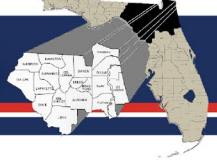
We are now in Hurricane season and with the help of TCD we have tested and maintained all permanent generators within our district. We are prepared for anything that comes our way. TCD has been busy this quarter wrapping up multiple projects FDOT had going on for a while. One that is now complete is the movable bridge pedestrian project.

The personnel in the bridge tender can now see any pedestrians on the bridge before opening the bridge for oncoming vessels. This took a lot of hardware installation and configuration from TCD and the vendor so kudos to them for getting this completed. The next one is the transition of all Wrong Way Driver Units (WWD) from Cellular/ Solar to our FDOT network/ direct power. All the WWD units are now on the FDOT network and performing as they should. All that remains are a few locations that need direct power installed and we are hoping to get this done by next quarter.

I would again like to thank everyone who plays a valuable role in ITS maintenance. Without my team we would not have accomplished everything we did in the previous quarters, including keeping our device uptime at 98% throughout this timeframe.

See you next quarter!

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



OPERATIONS

If you are not aware, SunGuide® Software is the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT's) advanced traffic management software. Since its inception in 2003, SunGuide® Software has continued to evolve to meet its users' needs and stay current with technological advancements. To ensure the State of Florida implements change in SunGuide® Software consistently from District to District and from agency to agency, the State Traffic Engineering and Operations (TEO) Office, Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSM&O) Program, has established a statewide Change Management Board (CMB) and developed standards for the SunGuide® Software enhancement requests. At regularly scheduled meetings of the CMB during the year, FDOT Districts vote on enhancements to the SunGuide® Software that they think will be beneficial to the program. The CMB bases enhancements according to greatest need and costs.

SwRI (Southwest Research Institute), the consultant for SunGuide® Software will be rolling out version 9.0 in the upcoming weeks. This is a major update with several enhancements as well as "hot-fixes" to correct errors in the software.

Since each District has their own "wish-list", District 2 is very excited about some of our requests that will now be reality, including:

- The ability to draw a box on the map which opens a new video wall with all of the CCTVs (Closed Circuit Television) within the designated box. This is one of District 2's oldest requests and was proposed in January of 2018.

- A RISC (Rapid Incident Scene Clearance) module chronology report. We will finally be able to use the RISC module within SunGuide® and will no longer need to keep paper note sheets and utilize separate programs for tracking RISC vendor rotation.
- Several bug fixes that include audits for location and responder times, fixes and updates to FHP CAD alerts just to name a few.

FDOT District 6 is doing the final evaluation on their Test Server to ensure capabilities with SELS and we're hopeful to be able to deploy this version shortly.

As I write this article, we have Invest 97L that is churning around in the Atlantic Ocean/Gulf of Mexico, but if all goes as forecast, this should only be a big rain event for District 2. That being said, we're adding an extra Operator as flooded roadways can cause an exponential increase in incidents. It's Hurricane Season, and we are always ready!

From January 1st through March 31st, 2024 the District 2 RTMC had six RISC (Rapid Incident Scene Clearance) events. The RTMC Staff worked a total of 18,765 events with 10,934 utilizing DMS. Of those events, 3,007 were crashes. Road Rangers were dispatched to a total of 13,246 events.

Connect. Know. Go!

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

**Jason Evans
Metric Engineering
RTMC Manager**



FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team's bimonthly meeting was held in-person on **May 21st, 2024**, 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.

Hampton Ray kicked off the meeting with the Construction Project Update, where he stated there will be several traffic shifts for the I-295/I-95 northern interchange project in the coming months. Construction for this project will be occurring for at least another year, with an estimated completion date of Spring 2025. He concluded his update by asking the Team to reach out to him if there are any questions regarding the I-295/I-95 northern interchange, the I-295 at US-17 interchange, or I-10 detours.

Jason Evans then provided both the Emergency Operations Update and the Maintenance Operations update, where he stated the 2024 Hurricane Season began on June 1, 2024, and will conclude on November 30, 2024. The Colorado State University Tropical Weather and Climate Research Team is predicting an extremely active Atlantic Hurricane Season, with twenty-three named storms. Of these twenty-three named storms, eleven are predicted to be hurricanes with five of these hurricanes predicted to be Category 3 or greater. Coverage areas for the 2024 Hurricane Season predictions include

the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Caribbean. He concluded with the Maintenance Operations Update, stating that cleanup of the downed trees stemming from the recent storms has been completed.

Craig Carnes then provided the ITS update, stating that there are several ongoing projects throughout the District 2 region. The ITS group works in close coordination with all projects to ensure the Fiber Optic Cable infrastructure is not damaged at any point in the construction process. The following project updates were then provided: the Buckman Bridge ATMS project is ongoing, the I-10 widening project has been going smoothly with no recent fiber cuts or power outages, a new MLK Parkway project is underway to address the issue of trucks hitting the bridge, and the relocation of a Dynamic Message Sign (DMS) in the I-95 widening project from Emerson Street to Atlantic Boulevard project limits. Peter Vega then reminded the team that all CCTV cameras in the State can be accessed through FL511. Jason Evans then concluded by reminding the Team that the FL511 app is continuing to improve, and they are currently undergoing a pilot project in District 5 to expand both Connected Vehicle (CV) and Emergency Vehicle (EV) applications within the app.

The next First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team meeting is scheduled to be held in-person on **September 17th, 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!



ALACHUA BRADFORD TRAFFIC **INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE**

The Alachua-Bradford Traffic Incident Management Team meeting held its latest bimonthly meeting in person on **Wednesday, June 12th, 2024**, 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, provided by Jason Evans, who stated that the 2024 Hurricane Season began on June 1, 2024, and will conclude on November 30, 2024. The Colorado State University Tropical Weather and Climate Research Team is predicting an extremely active Atlantic Hurricane Season, with twenty-three named storms. Of these twenty-three named storms, eleven are predicted to be hurricanes with five of these hurricanes predicted to be Category 3 or greater.

Jason Evans then continued with the ITS/511/TMC updates, where TMC hurricane preparations were discussed. These preparations included ensuring that generators and Master Hubs were topped off, stocking up on batteries and food, testing the generators, and ensuring sleeping arrangements are in place in

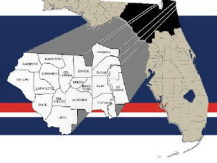
case of power outages due to storms. Jason continued by stating the RTMC is continuing to install cameras along the interstates and ramps where there are gaps in coverage. Dee Dee Crews then concluded the RTMC update by stating that the Road Rangers are aware that routes could be extended to 24/7 coverage in the case of emergencies.

The next Alachua-Bradford Traffic Incident Management Team meeting is scheduled to be held in-person on **Wednesday, August 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.

PLEASE NOTE: If anyone is interested in the SHRP2 Incident Management Training Course, please contact Craig Carnes at ccarnes@metriceng.com or Taylor Rouse at taylor.rouse@metriceng.com/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 are currently in 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 can be sent to DeeDee.Crews@dot.state.fl.us.



TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE continued

TEAM MISSION:

To identify, prioritize, develop, implement, operate, maintain, and update TSM&O program strategies and measure their effectiveness for improved safety and mobility. The delivery rate of fatality-free and congestion-free transportation systems supporting the FDOT vision and Florida Transportation Plan goals

TEAM VISION:

To increase the delivery rate of fatality-free and congestion-free transportation systems supporting the FDOT vision and Florida Transportation Plan goals.

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
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
August 14, 2024 October 9, 2024
December 11, 2024

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

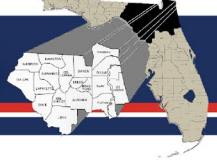
A FEW REASONS WHY TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT IS SO IMPORTANT

Effective TIM saves the lives of emergency responders who are often killed or injured at incident scenes by passing vehicles:

- Approximately 43,000 Americans are killed in highway crashes each year. That is the average spectator capacity of some of the largest baseball stadiums in the nation.
- Traffic crashes claim the lives of more law enforcement personnel than any other cause of death in the line of duty. "Struck-bys" are the 2nd leading cause of accidental law enforcement officer death and account for 20% of on-duty firefighter deaths per year.
- Effective TIM also reduces the occurrence of secondary crashes. The likelihood of a secondary crash increases by 2.8% for each minute the primary incident continues to be a hazard, increasing the risk to driver and responder lives, and making it even more difficult for responders to get to and from the scene.
- Faster detection of and response to highway incidents saves lives. Response time has a well-documented relationship to the likelihood of crash survival.

Effective TIM relieves congestion on our nation's roadways:

- Traffic incidents account for approximately 25% of all congestion on U.S. roadways.
- Good TIM practices help shave almost 4.2 billion hours per year Americans sit in traffic and approximately \$87 billion per year in time and fuel costs.
- Americans burn more than 2.8 billion gallons of fuel per year, nearly 24 gallons of gas per driver stuck in incident-related traffic.



ROAD RANGER UPDATE

As key contributors to the Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Team, the District 2 Road Rangers 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. The Road Ranger Program remains a crucial element of incident management, extending valuable assistance to drivers and collaborating closely with local agency partners. 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. All trucks in the District 2 Road Ranger fleet run on propane, marking the District 2 Road Rangers as the sole Green Fleet in the State of Florida.

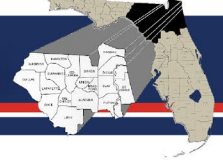
During Quarter 2 of 2024, the District 2 Road Rangers responded to an average of 4,241 total events each month, performing an average of 3.72 activities per event. These activities can range anywhere from assisting law enforcement, clearing debris from the roadway, assisting motorists with flat tires, and even relocating disabled vehicles to safer locations along the interstate. More information regarding these activities can be found in the Road Ranger Top Ten Activities chart.

Every month, Road Rangers participate in a compulsory Safety Training session, where a consistent emphasis is placed on promoting

instructions. 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.

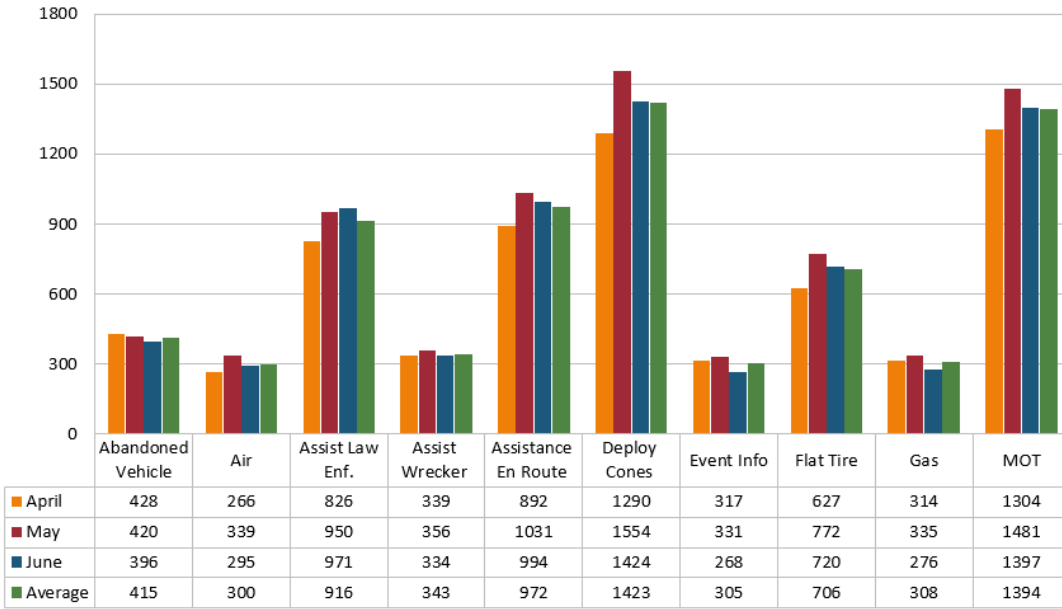
The subsequent charts depict the range of event types to which the Road Rangers responded between January 1, 2024, through March 31, 2024, along with some key activities performed during these responses. Their primary focus was on addressing crashes, roadway debris events, disabled vehicles, and abandoned vehicles. The data indicates that the Road Rangers responded to an average of 15.8% crashes, 70.9% disabled vehicles, 6.4% debris events, and 6.9% abandoned vehicles. Overall, there was a slight decrease in the number of events with Road Ranger response, when compared to Quarter 4 of 2023.



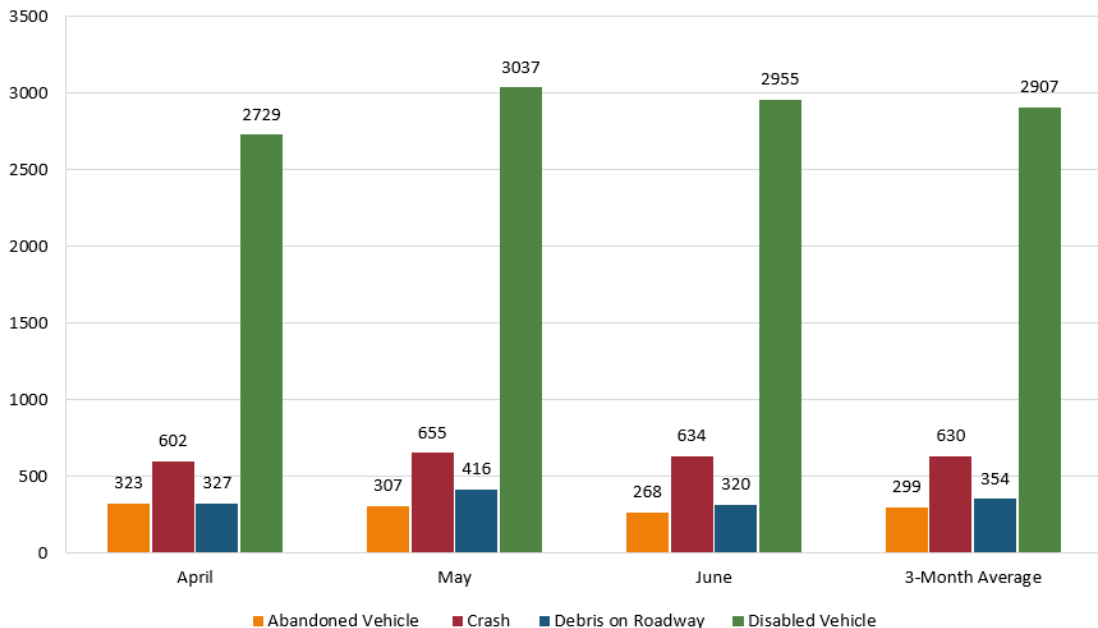


ROAD RANGER UPDATE continued

**ROAD RANGER TOP TEN ACTIVITIES
(APRIL 1, 2024 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2024)**



ROAD RANGER EVENTS (APRIL 1, 2024 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2024)



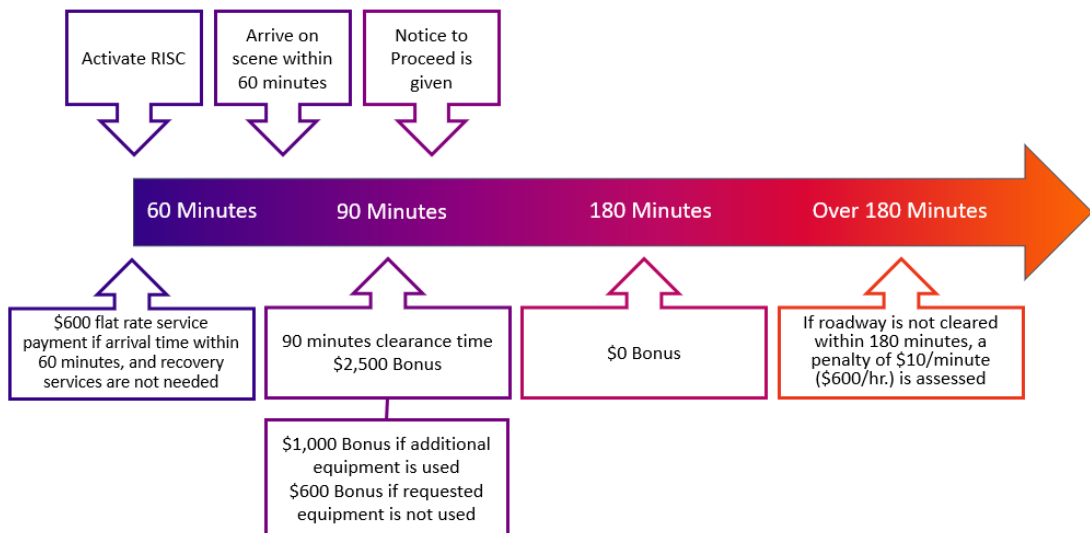


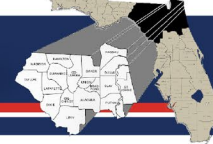
RISC – RAPID INCIDENT SCENE CLEARANCE - UPDATE

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.

Typically, an officer on the scene of the incident will call the RTMC and request a RISC activation. Crash parameters are then put into software where approval is either given or denied. On rare occasions, the TMC manager can override the software if it denies a RISC activation that is needed. Once the RISC activation is approved, the RISC vendor at the top of the rotation is notified and given the opportunity to accept or decline the event. If the vendor at the top of the list declines the RISC event, the vendor that is next on the rotation is then notified. Once the vendor has accepted and is on scene, they are provided with a Notice to Proceed by the lead official on scene. The contractor then 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. The vendor is also required to call in certain timestamps into the TMC to be eligible for their bonuses, including arrival time, the time they are provided with the Notice to Proceed, departure time, and all travel lanes cleared time. The following graphic provides the full FDOT RISC timeline.

RISC Procedures Timeline





RISC – RAPID INCIDENT SCENE CLEARANCE - UPDATE continued

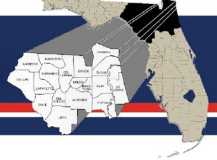
Often, RISC activations encompass substantial commercial vehicle accidents, such as loaded tractor-trailers, which require RISC Contractors to always have specialized equipment readily available for efficient response. If this extra equipment is required, the RISC Contractor might qualify for an additional 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 April 1st, 2024, through June 30th, 2024.

Date	Time	Location	Description
4/19/2024	1:55 AM	I-95 NB, beyond MM 306, St. Johns County	Crash involving a semi-truck and car hauler with all lanes blocked.
5/10/2024	6:58 AM	I-295 W NB at I-10, Duval County	Crash involving a semi-truck carrying sand which overturned. The sand spilled across the northbound lanes of I-295, blocking all lanes.
5/14/2024	2:16 AM	I-95 SB beyond MM 322, St. Johns County	Crash involving a semi-truck which jackknifed and went through the guardrail that separated the northbound and southbound lanes. The semi's final resting position was on the guardrail, blocking the 2 left southbound lanes and spilling hazardous materials onto the roadway.
6/10/2024	3:22 PM	I-95 NB at MM 320, St. Johns County	Crash involving a box truck which overturned across the northbound lanes of I-95, blocking all lanes. The driver of the box truck suffered serious injuries.
6/25/2024	6:13 AM	I-75 SB before MM 385, Alachua County	Multi-vehicle crash involving a pickup truck and a semi-truck, which was loaded with approximately 25,000 pounds of paper plates. The semi-truck overturned, blocking all southbound lanes.
6/28/2024	7:17 PM	I-95 NB at International Golf Pkwy, St. Johns County	Multi-vehicle crash involving semi-truck which overturned, blocking all northbound lanes.

It is important to note that after each TIM Team Meeting, any RISC events that have occurred (in the meeting's respective coverage area) since the previous meeting are debriefed with the appropriate agencies. This is to ensure that any procedural errors are discussed, and the team can review any lessons learned for future events.

Taylor Rouse, EI
Metric Engineering



PERFORMANCE MEASURES

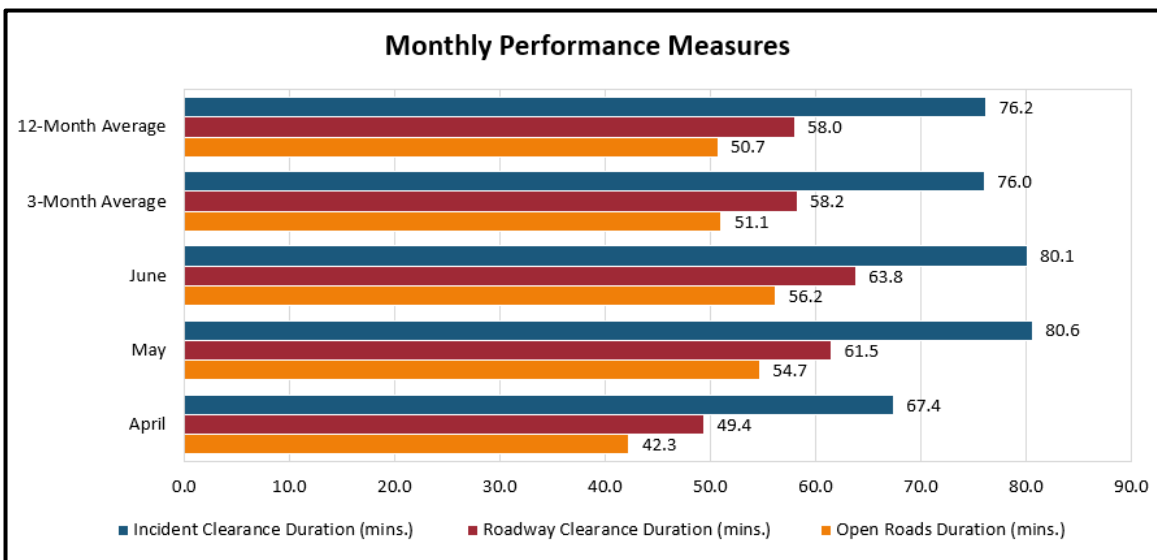
After reviewing the Road Ranger Event Summary, and the accompanying Road Ranger Events chart, it was observed that from April 1, 2024, through June 30, 2024, Road Rangers responded to more incidents on average than they did in Quarter 1 of 2024. On average, per month, Road Rangers responded to 299 abandoned vehicles, 630 crashes, 354 debris on roadways events, and 2,907 disabled vehicles, reflecting increases of 17.9%, 8.7%, 51.6%, and 11.8%, respectively, from the averages of the previous quarter. These increases can be attributed to the increase of travelers on the District 2 roadways as the Spring and Summer seasons began.

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 Quarter 2. This data includes metrics such as Open Roads Duration, Roadway Clearance Duration, and Incident Clearance Duration.

The Open Roads Duration is defined as 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 2 average open roads duration was well below the 90-minute goal at 51.1 minutes per month, on average. Some circumstances can lead to a higher-than-average open roads duration, such as any traffic homicide investigations, serious bodily injury investigations, or any event that requires Hazardous Materials cleanup.

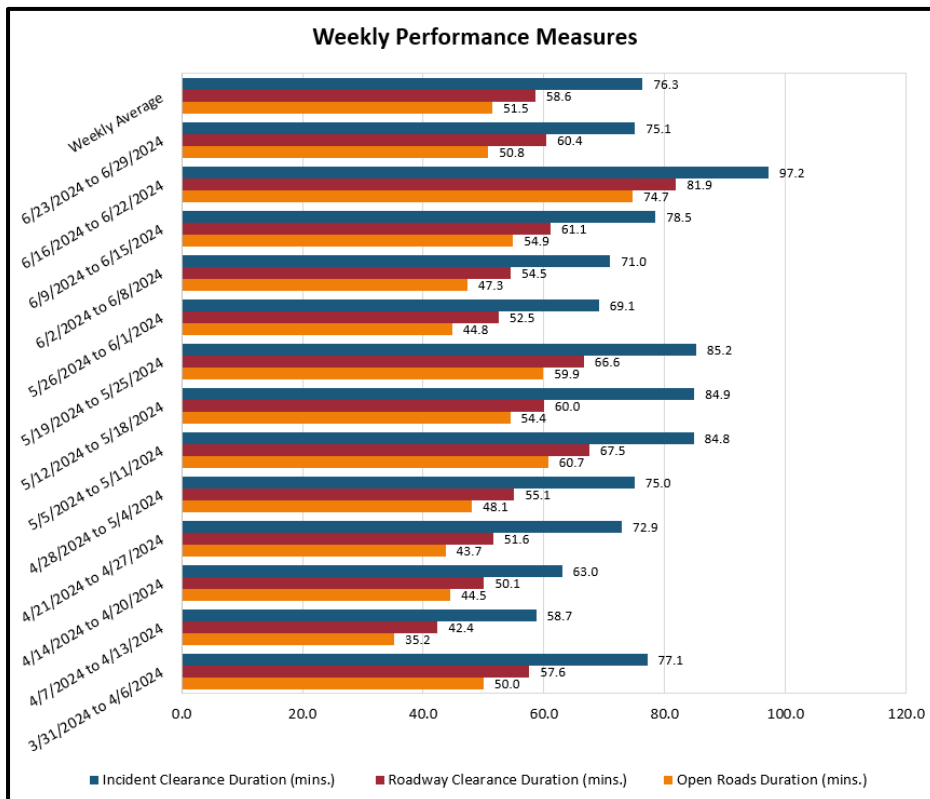
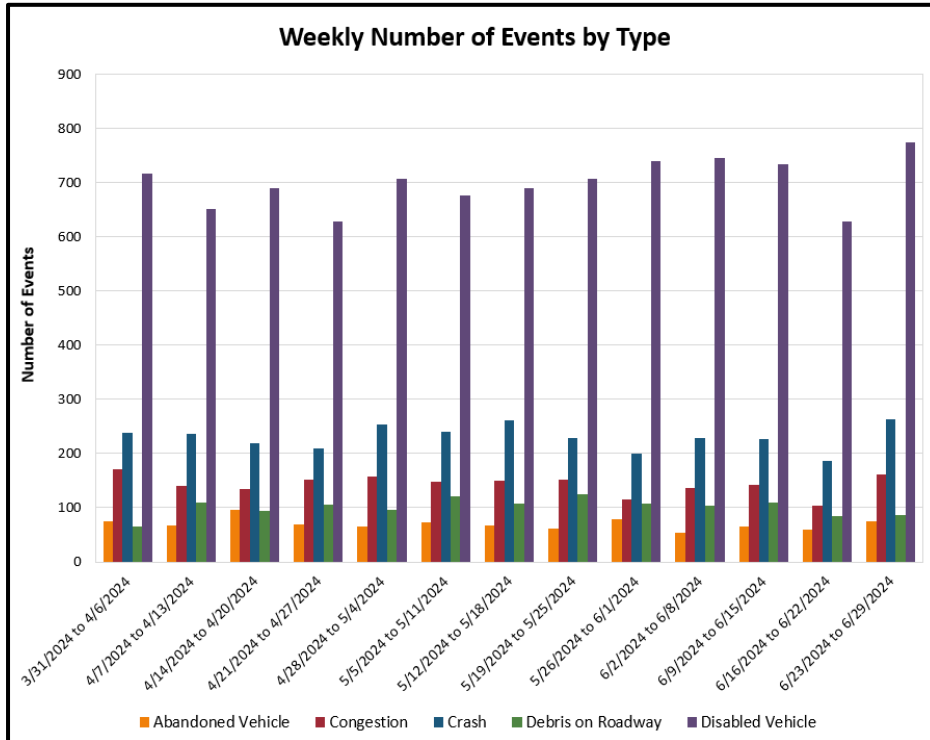
Roadway Clearance Duration is defined as the first notification of an event to all travel lanes cleared. The average Roadway Clearance Duration for Quarter 1 was 58.2 minutes per month, and 58.0 minutes for the past 12 months.

Incident Clearance Duration is defined as the first notification of an event to the last responder departure time. The average Incident Clearance Duration for Quarter 2 was 76.0 minutes per month, and 76.2 minutes for the past 12 months.





PERFORMANCE MEASURES continued





MARKETING

When the tropics heat up, our marketing schedule kicks into high gear. Our team recently attended the City of Jacksonville's inaugural JaxReady Fest which was held at the Prime Osborn Convention Center downtown. Every square inch, both inside and out, was devoted to front line responders and their heavy-duty storm-ready equipment. Mobile disaster units and safety demonstrations were conducted outside the venue, while information tables were set up inside the building. Attendees witnessed firsthand what it takes to keep our city safe during natural disasters. Mayor Donna Deegan and Chief of Emergency Preparedness Andre Ayoub conducted the opening ceremonies and were on hand throughout much of the event to answer questions from the general public.

Our FL511 table was a big hit as we displayed live streaming video of our traffic cameras. In fact, on the first day of the event, Jacksonville experienced an unexpected "Gustnado," resulting in an overturned semi on the Dames Point Bridge. We couldn't have staged a better "show and tell" to highlight our role in emergency operations. I think half the people in the building stepped over to huddle around our traffic monitor. Nothing like watching things unfold in real time!

Other stops this quarter included Tote Maritime, Bozard Ford in St. Augustine and Bishop Kenny High School (their last hurrah just before school let out for the summer). Tote Maritime stages a hurricane expo for its employees every July. Some of their employees are still working a hybrid 3/2 split, three days in the office and two remotely from home, but by next year they should have 100% campus representation again. That said, 98% of their employees made the trek into the office that day to learn about the resources available to them during natural

disasters. We worked alongside representatives from the National Weather Service, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Poison Control and a host of others!

Next quarter we'll attend key events with both JAXPORT and the City of Jacksonville Beach. If the first quarter passed in the blink of an eye, the second was a blur! We'll continue to work hard promoting FL511 and the many benefits this service provides to motorists.

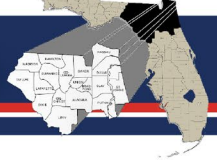
Before hitting the roadways make sure all of your trips begin and end with FL511. From our operations hub inside the RTMC, we'll keep you up-to-date on current road conditions. FL511 is available in a variety of platforms. You can log onto [FL511.com](https://www.fl511.com), download one of the free 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**





SPOTLIGHT ON...GRACIE CRANFORD, **RTMC SUPERVISOR**

Talk about your upbringing – where were you born/raised?

I was born and raised in the small town of Macclenny, FL in Baker County.

Give us a brief description of your early career and/or job history.

During high school I worked within the family business as the office manager. I continued to work there part-time through October of 2022.

How long have you been with Metric Engineering/FDOT? Also, tell us about your former role, but especially about your recent promotion!

I have been with Metric Engineering since February of 2020. I initially was a part-time employee working night shift. Eventually came to day shift where I then became full-time mainly dispatching the road rangers and in May of 2024 I was promoted to Supervisor.

What is one phrase you wish you could scratch from the RTMC's vocabulary?

"Quiet," As soon as the word is said there is always chaos that follows.

Most bizarre call you've ever received at the RTMC?

The two most bizarre call that I have received was when there was a bull loose on I-10 and they ended up having to shut down the whole interstate to catch it. Also, when JSO stopped to assist with a naked pedestrian on I-10 and the pedestrian ended up stealing the patrol car and crashing into the wood line about three miles down the road.

What is one message you wish you could get across to drivers?

The message I wish I could get across to drivers would be to exercise patience and slow down.

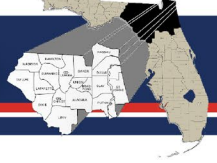
Who brings the best snacks to share at the RTMC "community table"?

Shelby Mullins always has the best snacks.



What is something we don't know about you that might surprise us?

I have no hobbies. I'm a very boring person lol.



SPOTLIGHT ON...GRACIE CRANFORD, RTMC SUPERVISOR continued

When you're not at work, where would we most likely find you?

When I am not at work you can typically find me hanging out with friends. My sister is expecting a daughter at the beginning of August, so soon my time will be consumed in baby loving.

Everyone has a doppelganger. Have you ever been told you look like someone? If so, who?

No one.

And finally, tell us a little about your family (pets also count).

I am the oldest of three girls and come from a very large close-knit family. I'm not the biggest fan of animals so I don't have any pets lol.

PHOTO GALLERY 1



Above, Sherri takes FL511 on the road to Bozard Ford in St. Augustine; below, Students at Bishop Kenny learn about FL511



Above, the only thing that could have made Gracie's bull story better. (only in Nebraska)

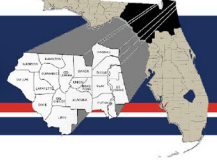




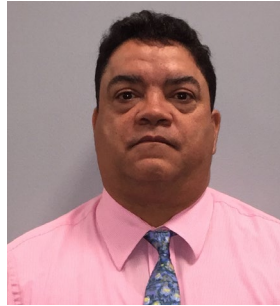
PHOTO GALLERY 2

FL511 and First Coast Road Rangers participated in the City of Jacksonville's inaugural JaxReady Fest. Attendees learned about FL511, got to see one of our Traffic Cameras (and no we don't record the video) as well as seeing, up close, one of our Road Ranger trucks!





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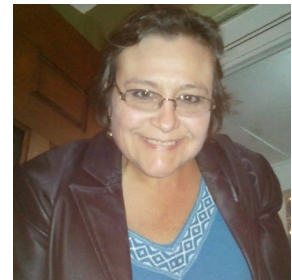
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