

## APRIL IS DISTRACTED DRIVING MONTH

A crash occurs every 44 seconds in Florida, and one in seven crashes involves distracted drivers. Distracted driving is anything that takes your hands off the wheel, your eyes off the road or mind off driving—and that includes the passengers in your vehicle being a distraction. Last year, more than 52,900 crashes occurred because of distracted driving in Florida, resulting in over 2,100 serious bodily injuries and over 300 fatalities, the most since 2021.

“

“Distracted driving is a big contributor to fatalities and serious injuries on Florida’s transportation system,” said Florida Department of Transportation Secretary Jared W. Perdue, P.E. “Remember, making smart decisions, like putting your phone away, can help save lives.”

Texting remains one of the most prevalent and dangerous distractions because it takes a driver’s eyes off the road, their hands off the wheel, and they’re thinking about something other than driving. All of which are the same abilities needed to drive safely.

If you need to text, look up directions or take an important call, pull over to a safe location and put your car in park. Or simply wait until you reach your destination. If you have a passenger, have them respond to calls or messages.



**PUT IT DOWN**  
Focus on the Road



Distracted  
Driving  
Kills

[flhsmv.gov/distracted](http://flhsmv.gov/distracted)

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

The first quarter of 2026 has been nothing short of dynamic for the TSM&O program and the future of roadway technology. Challenges encountered include dealing with BABA (Build America – Buy America) requirements, local agency Preferred Product requests, Sunsetting of Dynamic Message Signs, implementation of new technologies without planned funding in the future, and the Statewide adoption of some initiatives developed by District Two. Even though I am getting long in the tooth, these challenges are refreshing from a day-to-day perspective. The implementation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into our work mix has shown positive and negative results so far, but the reality is that this will be the next step for the enhancement of safety, mobility, and economic prosperity in the transportation industry.

I will start off with the latest on BABA, since we've turned a corner (positively) while trying to overcome impacts in the future. In short, vendors selling the type of products we use must have a large majority of their equipment manufactured in the United States. This is a Federal, nationwide directive, and must be followed by all transportation agencies in the US if federal dollars are committed to any deployment. So far, many of our vendors are headed in the right direction as they find US facilities to make their devices. The negative is that this transition will lead to significant cost increases for the Department. The latest input I've received is that transitioning to this business model increases the cost of each device by about 30%. Tack on the increases due to tariffs for component parts and we are looking at about a 40% increase in costs.

Also, what must be considered is the limited number of foreign companies willing to comply with BABA requirements, hence forfeiting the opportunity to sell in the US. This will "squeeze" the number of vendors available to us. With competition from other transportation agencies throughout the US this will lead to further price increases (i.e. the supply-demand model). It is still to be determined if the vendors can keep up with orders as the competition shrinks, thereby also impacting lead times for any orders.

As for the debate on local agencies having preferred product listings, the TSM&O program has been given some leeway when dealing with this concern. We have been given certain criteria that must be met by local agencies prior to submitting a request for a preferred product. It is pretty straight forward in that they must justify their reasons based on existing software, warehousing, training, and compatibility. Off-the-shelf products that do not meet some of these requirements (like surge protection) will not be allowed to be sole-sourced by these agencies. So, unlike BABA, this is a positive for the program.

In 2010, I recall having a conversation with several of our Dynamic Message Sign (DMS) vendors at a conference about the future of the Department. At the time, I had the foresight to suggest that DMS usefulness will reach end of life within 15 to 20 years. This was due to the fast advancement of smartphones and navigation apps. My thoughts were that we would keep existing DMS locations

but would cease to expand deployments after 2025. My recommendation was that they look at retrofitting existing DMS to extend the usefulness and life cycle. From these discussions, three vendors pursued retrofit kits and are now on the approved products list. District Two has utilized the retrofit capabilities on about 40 to 50 older signs so far.

I bring this up because the original deployment of DMS in our area was due to the rehabilitation of the Fuller Warren Bridge in the mid-90s. These DMS were used to redirect truck traffic around I-295 while construction was ongoing. They also served a dual purpose in that during wildfire and hurricane evacuations the Department was able to reroute motorists based on the impact to traffic. These use cases led to the expansion of DMS throughout the District with a focus on assisting emergency responders during downstream lane closures and accident investigations. During the evolution of our DMS deployment, the Department received several complaints from motorists about blanked out DMS (when no message was necessary). Leadership felt the way to appease these motorists was to post travel times and safety messages when there were no incidents to report.

Last summer, FDOT leadership attended the ITS World Congress in Atlanta. At this event, software and navigation app vendors were able to convince them that we no longer needed DMS since they could provide travel times and event information (albeit limited and less accurate) on their platforms. This past fall, we were given a directive to cease deploying new DMS and to remove those impacting construction projects. The first locations impacted were the northbound and southbound DMS on I-95, north of Emerson Street. Unfortunately, no policy was in place at the time that could have prevented this decision, even though it met most of the criteria in the current draft criteria. Impacts due to the removal of these two DMS will be to northbound morning/evening commuter traffic who will be impacted by incidents on the Fuller Warren Bridge and downtown connector and diversion off of southbound I-95 traffic to our Integrated US 1 corridor system when major events occur north of Butler Boulevard. We are hoping that cooler heads prevail so more to come as the policy is officially signed.

As for implementation of new technologies, we have been examining products called DERQ and Miovision that use AI technology to detect and report on arterial traffic and vulnerable road users. These all-inclusive technologies provide a “real-world” picture of what is happening at intersections while also providing real time information on traffic conditions. The hurdle will be how to expand and continue use, since there is an associated annual cost of approximately \$1,000 per intersection. Basically, we need to consider if “the juice is worth the squeeze.” With that concern, we are very excited to implement these technologies at as many intersections as possible since it will enhance the detection performance at these intersections as well as to improve safety.

As for Statewide adoption, I am proud to say that our efforts with Active-Vision, Innovative Truck Parking System (iTPAS), and Rail Crossing Detection are being expanded to most of the districts. Active-Vision is an inexpensive AI solution that uses our existing cameras to provide alerts on wrong way driving along the mainline, detection of disabled vehicles, crashes, congestion,



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interstate pedestrians/wildlife, and traffic conditions (aggregate speed & volume). This has proved to be a huge benefit to RTMC operations since it provides alerts along over 400 miles of the interstate system. This is way more coverage than what the RTMC operators can handle with 5 sets of eyes.

iTPAS also continues to impress. This simple software solution utilizes cameras at the rest areas to detect vacant/filled truck parking spaces that are reported on advanced dynamic message signs and FL511. The team continually seeks improvement of this software's capabilities and has increased its accuracy from 93% a couple of years ago to the latest month's analysis of 97% accuracy. Based on lessons learned, we are now examining the use of fisheye cameras and Active-Vision to expedite future deployments in other districts, while reducing their costs.

Last, but not least, is the Rail Crossing Detection system that is being expanded to other districts using FHWA Section 130 funding. This effort involves the use of acoustic sensors, a camera, and software, to detect gate closures at rail crossings. This has also been a very successful effort that provides information to motorists via upstream DMS, FL511, Google Maps, and WAZE. Now that we have mastered the initial effort, we are looking at the implementation of AI to detect other vulnerabilities at these crossings. The objective with this next effort is to detect anomalies, receive alerts, and share this information with FHP at the RTMC so that they can dispatch a trooper to address these concerns.

Good stuff that makes my blood flow!!!

**Pete Vega, P.E.**  
**FDOT District 2**  
**TSM&O Program Manager**



## NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS OPERATIONS MANAGER

### You May Notice Changes to Dynamic Message Signs

If you drive our corridors regularly, you might start seeing something different on the overhead message signs. We've been given direction to roll out a new approach to how we use DMS, and we're treating this as a bit of a work in progress as we figure out what's most useful for drivers.

### What You'll See More Of

Instead of default travel times, you'll start seeing more:

- Safety messages (seatbelts, distracted driving, etc.)

- Congestion alerts when traffic is outside the norm

- Corridor-specific messages where we know there are recurring issues

Some examples you may notice:

- "Secure Your Load" near port and freight-heavy areas

- Speed awareness messages on higher-speed facilities

Travel times won't be posted as the default anymore. Instead, we'll focus on highlighting when something is unexpected or worth your attention.

### We're Going to Adjust as We Go

This isn't a set-it-and-forget-it change. We'll be paying attention to what seems helpful, what doesn't, and any feedback we receive. If certain messages aren't landing or if they're creating more confusion than value, we may scale things back. That could even mean leaving signs blank by default and only posting messages during higher-priority situations or safety campaigns.

### Want to See the Full Message Library?

If you're curious what kinds of messages are in the rotation, FDOT maintains the full approved library here:

<https://www.fdot.gov/traffic/trafficservices/dms>



**Adam Storm, P.E.**  
**FDOT District 2**  
**ITS Operations Manager**

## NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS PROJECT MANAGER

Hurricane season begins June 1<sup>st</sup>. We were lucky last year and didn't have any major storms, but we always need to be prepared. I thought it would be wise to remind everyone of some tips to consider when driving in severe weather and/or preparing for hurricane season.

### Severe Weather Driving Tips

- Stay put – Avoid driving in heavy storms and stay in a safe place until after the storm passes. Be prepared to remain where you are for an extended period of time. Often, injuries and deaths occur in the aftermath of storms. Sightseers impeding roadways cause obstacles for emergency personnel responding to those in need.
- Slow down – The roads remain slick after the storm so if you have to drive, decrease your speed to avoid hydroplaning.
- Buckle up – When it is finally safe to venture out, take the extra time to buckle your seatbelt. It is the law in Florida and statistics continue to show that seatbelts save lives.
- Be cautious of high winds – Windy conditions adversely affect all vehicles, particularly high-profile vehicles, such as buses and trucks, as well as motorcycles.
- Turn around; don't drown – Never drive through flooded areas, even if you are familiar with roads. The area of roadway you cannot see beneath the water may be washed out or the water may conceal debris, tree branches or even power lines.
- Pay attention – You may come up on an intersection that is no longer controlled by a traffic control device. If a police officer is directing traffic, follow their directions. Otherwise, treat the intersection as you would treat an intersection governed by a four-way Stop sign.
- Flooding safety – Never drive into moving water. If you cannot see the roadway beneath the water, do not drive through it! The water may be deeper than it appears, and the road may be washed away.



## Hurricane Evacuations

- Make sure your vehicle is fueled up and well serviced before you hit the road. Fuel availability may be questionable and what is available is sure to generate extremely long lines at fuel pumps.
- Be sure to have all your important papers with you.
- Carry a supply of food and water for each member (and pets) of the traveling party.
- Be sure you have a supply of all medications needed for an extended period of time.
- Be sure to have cash on hand due to power outages and no accessibility of ATMs and banks.
- Do not necessarily wait to evacuate until after the announcement is made. Leave early when traffic is much lighter.
- Have a specific destination in mind and the route planned well in advance of your departure.
- When possible, evacuate tens of miles instead of hundreds of miles.
- Please pack a lot of patience and be prepared for delays. Significant traffic delays are inevitable in a state as densely populated as Florida.

## Post Hurricane

- Stay inside until the storm has completely passed. Keep a battery-operated radio on hand, so you can know when the threat has passed.
- If you evacuated, do not return until local officials say you can. Some areas may even have specific re-entry requirements. Have identification and proof of residency with you.
- Stay tuned to local media and emergency officials. This will be a critical time for information about ongoing threats, conditions, and sources of assistance.
- Help your neighbors, but refrain from venturing too far until authorized by local officials. Many people are injured or killed walking or driving around *after* the storm. Live power lines, gas leaks, dangling tree branches, flooding, damaged roadways and dangerous wildlife (e.g. snakes, alligators) can be life-threatening.
- Do not grill or operate gasoline-powered machinery indoors. Carbon-monoxide poisoning sickens or kills many people long after the storm has passed.
- Stay out of flood waters. There could be raw sewage, hazardous chemicals, bacteria, dangerous wildlife, and underwater hazards that could severely injure or kill you.



**Dee Dee Crews, BS, FCCM**  
**FDOT District 2**  
**ITS Project Manager**



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### **NORTH FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (NFTPO)**

The NFTPO will once again begin providing funds for deployments in northeast Florida in the coming years. The focus will be the deployment of enhanced technology on arterial corridors that will provide greater efficiency of traffic management at intersections, while incorporating the interactions with vulnerable road users. The type of technology being considered would be DERQ, Miovision, and possibly NoTraffic, all of which are currently being vetted throughout the State. This would be a huge investment since the costs do not end with implementation. Instead, this investment impacts the program in outer years since there is a perpetual cost for each product's associated software. I can tell you that what we've seen so far is very impressive, so the initial effort will be to prioritize intersections so that we get the most bang for our buck.

Another effort that the NFTPO is sponsoring involves a study for freight movement at Jaxport on Blount Island. This port's business is growing by leaps and bounds, hence the need to capture existing information that will help Jaxport plan for the future. Although the property is huge, there are still traffic conflicts on campus as freight tries to move from point A to point B. We assisted with the technology portion of this effort that provided the necessary data to their consultant. Now that this effort is reaching completion, Jaxport and the NFTPO can begin determining what improvements will be necessary and the cost. A positive is that once this freight exits the facility, the Department has already deployed the technology infrastructure to keep them moving!

Prior to wrapping up, I wanted to mention that our team has been invited to assist the NFTPO with a **VERY SECRET** project. Our team is very excited to be a part of this since we've developed a program that has proven technology to support this effort. This will be a public/private experience that should benefit thousands of motorists traveling in downtown Jacksonville over the coming years. The challenge will be to acclimate the private side of this partnership with the work already done to get them to this point, and our recommendations.

**Pete Vega, P.E.**  
**FDOT District 2**  
**TSM&O Program Manager**

**North Florida**  
*Transportation Planning Organization*

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## ITS CONSTRUCTION

Several Wrong-Way Driving device installation projects have been completed and Final Accepted since the last newsletter and one should be Final Accepted in the next few weeks. As highlighted in previous newsletter articles, these devices are being installed throughout the state and there are several vendors for the contractors to choose from on the FDOT Approved Products List (APL). District 2 has 4 different vendor's devices installed within the district, which will make it harder for ITS Maintenance to keep spare parts for each of the different vendors in their various warehouses and available to their personnel. But there are similar situations with other device types as well, so they will do what is needed to minimize downtime and keep Operations running as smoothly as possible.

As many of you know, there are several projects in the Jacksonville area that have been ongoing for several years. All of these are larger projects and some of them have been delayed for various reasons, but it looks like a few of them may be completed by the end of the year. The I-95/I-295 Northern Interchange Project is making significant progress toward completion and hopes to be completed around the end of summer. There is still quite a bit of ITS work to be completed on this project, so let's hope for sunny days throughout the remainder of spring and summer so that they can get the work done. The I-10 Widening project is also making good progress on the roadway work, but like the Northern Interchange Project, still has quite a way to go to get the ITS work completed. Watson is installing bridge conduits on the Buckman Bridge for the Buckman ATMS portion of their project. A large portion of the rest of the project is already completed, and they hope to get this project completed and Final Accepted around the end of summer as well.

A common theme can be noted from the previous paragraph where a substantial amount of the project work is completed, but most of the ITS related work remains to be done. Contractors on large roadway projects tend to perform the ITS work late in the job due to the requirement to keep the ITS maintained until the project is completed and meet certain warranty requirements. Therefore, the later in the project that the ITS devices and infrastructure are installed, the shorter time they must maintain it and oftentimes they don't have to extend the standard warranties for the products. Another reason is that if the contractor installs new fiber optic cable (FOC) and the FOC is damaged during the project, then they need to fix and sometimes replace the FOC, which can be very costly. So, it is very common for roadway construction projects to be coming to the end of contract time and still have ITS work to be installed, integrated, and tested. Let's hope that everything goes well for the projects listed above and there are no issues with getting the ITS work completed and tested so that they can finish as soon as possible.

**Craig Carnes**  
**Vice-President**  
**Metric Engineering**



## ITS MAINTENANCE

As we move further into the year, TCD continues to actively maintain and monitor all devices to ensure consistent reliability and performance. Thanks to the team's continued dedication and attention to detail, we are maintaining uptime in the upper 98th percentile across our systems—an ongoing reflection of the commitment to operational excellence.

Work on the Dynamic Message Sign (DMS) color retrofit is scheduled to resume July 1st. We anticipate reconvening with the project team at that time and aim to complete at least 11 sites prior to the winter season.

All Road Weather Information Systems (RWIS) continue to operate reliably following prior repairs and replacements. We are also continuing upgrades to RWIS devices utilizing the new SATLink technology, which has shown strong performance. These units are proving to be more efficient and easier to maintain compared to the legacy Microcom systems currently in use.

As hurricane season approaches in the coming months, efforts are underway to ensure system readiness. All generators will be tested to confirm operational status, and preventive maintenance activities are being prioritized to ensure reliability during severe weather events.

We appreciate everyone's continued teamwork and support. Looking ahead, we remain focused on maintaining system performance and progressing key initiatives. We look forward to reconnecting next quarter.

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

## OPERATIONS

The RTMC Staff has had a quick start to 2026 and that is for all of our groups, TMC Operations, Network and Traffic Incident Management! Just take a look at some of the successes and in-progress items in the following list:

## **TMC Operations and the Network Team**

- They continue to work with Active-Vision Software, developed by SwRI (Southwest Research Institute) with enhancements at the request of FDOT. Utilizing AI (Artificial Intelligence) our cameras can alert us about Wrong-Way Driver Detection (WWDD), congestion, stalled vehicles, crashes, with many more uses that are currently being worked on. Active-Vision has been installed on more than 650 cameras (100 percent of our limited access roadways) with more to come.
- NG-SELS (Next Generation Statewide Express Lanes Software) has been set-up on our Test Server and we are beginning to start testing, while at the same time, training our TMC staff to all of the new features of the software. If all goes well, we're hoping to "go live" this summer.
- We recently had a fiber-optics break at our Satellite TMC in Gainesville. This break meant that our RTMC staff were unable to view the cameras in Gainesville connected via the Public Works Building. I'm happy to report that as I write this article, we were able to locate the break and we are back up and able to view the cameras as well as having direct communication between our Operators at the RTMC and the Satellite TMC.

## **Network Team**

District 2 has more than 7,500 devices, including cameras, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), switches, Microwave Vehicle Detection System (MVDS), just to name a few. Central Office has requested that all districts perform updates on all devices which include:

- Phase 1-Precise (within 1/10 of a mile) latitude/longitude locations of all devices
- Phase 2-A uniform naming convention which will be utilized in all FDOT Districts

I'm happy to report that we are over 50 percent complete with Phase 1.

## **Traffic Incident Management**

Traffic Incident Management (TIM), facilitates TIM Meetings with all of our first responder shareholders. They also provide assistance with serious crashes and tracking performance measures. Working closely with Dee Dee Crews, our FDOT Project Manager they also assist with the District 2 Road Ranger Contractor. There are so many certifications, inspections and Safety Meetings that must be tracked. Some Districts utilize spreadsheets and track when expirations of required documents are coming up. We don't do that anymore. FDOT District 6 developed a software known as RRDIS (Road Ranger Driver Information System) that has automated the process and tracks when expirations are upcoming as well as many other metrics. It was a huge task to load all of the spreadsheet information into the software, but we are happy to announce that we are on-line with RRDIS!

Keep in mind, all of the items listed above are in addition to our core duties. We have a great staff who works well together as well as with sub-consultants within District 2.

From January 1<sup>st</sup> through March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026 the District 2 RTMC had **Two** RISC (Rapid Incident Scene Clearance) events. The RTMC Staff worked a total of **16,125** events with **10,399** utilizing DMS. Of those events **2,584** were crashes. Road Rangers were dispatched to a total of **11,574** events.

***Connect. Know. Go!***  
***What are you waiting for?***



**Jason Evans**  
**RTMC Manager**  
**Metric Engineering**

## **TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT (TIM)**

### **First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team**

The First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team is comprised of five counties including Duval County, Nassau County, St. Johns County, Clay County, and Baker County. The latest bimonthly meeting was held in-person on **Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026**, 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.

Consultant TIM Program Manager, Lacey Collins, kicked off the meeting with a TIM discussion amongst TIM partners. The TIM team reviewed the updated “Struck by Incidents” national data comparing 2025 to 2026. Collins provided the TIM team with a Florida Traffic Safety Overview for 2025. In 2025, the state of Florida had a total of 676,165 crashes, 12,840 serious injury crashes, and 2,862 fatalities. First Coast TIM team also discussed current wildfires in our area and current county-enacted burn bans. During Quarter 1, there was an extensive amount of fog throughout the First Coast area, in which the TIM team discussed visibility issues and the best practices for driving in fog.



Jason Evans provided ITS/511/RTMC updates to the TIM team. Evans stated that projects have slowed as we approach the end of the fiscal year, but we are preparing for DMS retrofits in early summer. Activision is fully deployed in 570 cameras across the district and is being trained to detect congestion and pedestrians on the interstates. The RTMC is beginning to prepare for the upcoming Hurricane Season as well.

Lacey Collins provided the TIM team with the First Coast Performance Measures for January 2026 and February 2026. The TIM team then reviewed major incidents that did not meet the Open Roads 90-minute goal. The First Coast TIM team had a total of 46 major events, in which 30 of those events were over the 90-minute goal.

The next First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team meeting is scheduled to be held in person on **Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026**, 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**

The Alachua-Bradford Traffic Incident Management Team meeting held its latest bimonthly meeting in person on **Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026**, 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 TIM discussion provided by Consultant TIM Program Manager, Lacey Collins. Collins provided the TIM team with the Struck by Incidents statistics comparing 2025 and 2026 which illustrated that so far in 2026, six law enforcement officers have been struck and killed along with one tow operator. Collins also provided the Move Over Citation Statistics for 2025 which showed 17,352 citations were issued in Florida primarily to drivers between 20 and 29 years of age. Collins provided the TIM team with the new wrecker law, FAC 15B-9 which states that all wrecker drivers must complete the National Traffic Incident Management Responder training along with FEMA IS-700 within 180 days of the law being enacted.

Jason Evans provided Lacey Collins with the ITS/511/TMC updates to present to the TIM team. The US-301 project in Starke is almost complete which will include new CCTVs and DMS between the start and end of the Truck Bypass (US 301 Bypass). The RTMC is currently monitoring a few wildfires throughout the district and hopefully the rain will help reduce them.

The next Alachua-Bradford Traffic Incident Management Team meeting is scheduled to be held in-person on **Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2026**, at 10:00 A.M. If any changes are made prior to the next meeting, we will send an email notification to all 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.



## ROAD RANGER SERVICE PATROL

The District 2 Road Rangers play an essential role working with the Traffic Incident Management (TIM) team. Road Rangers are spread across the District enhancing highway safety by providing rapid response to incidents and assisting disabled vehicles. They also assist in promptly communicating updates to the Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) regarding a variety of roadway incidents. Incidents include anything from assisting motorists to assisting law enforcement which require immediate attention to maintain traffic flow and public safety.

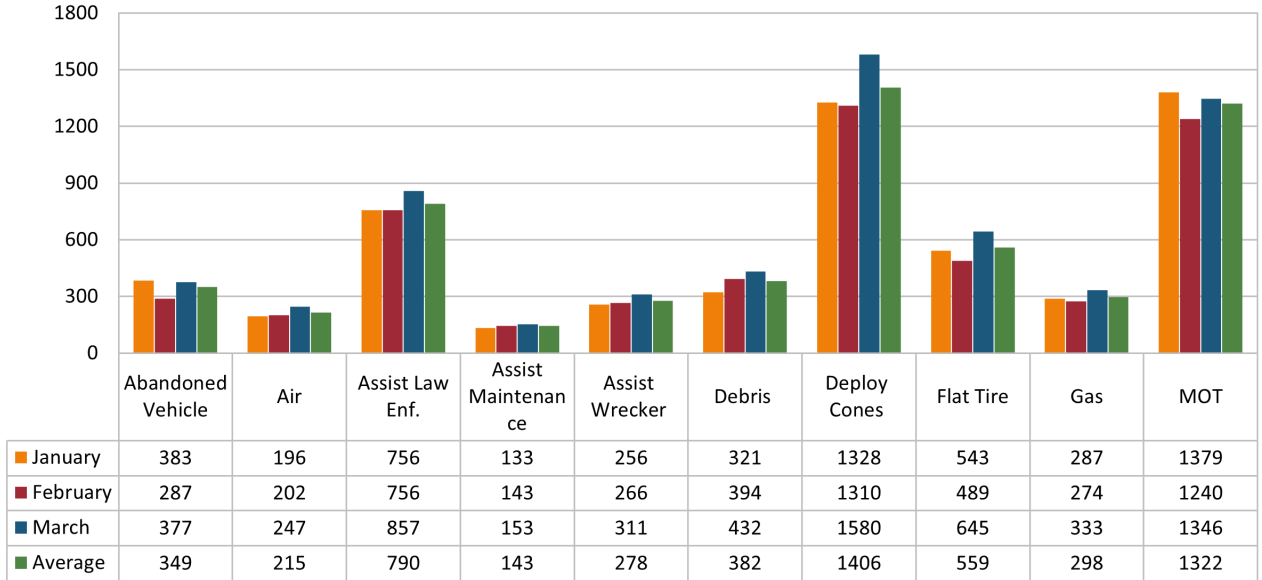
Road Rangers patrol Nassau County, Duval County, St. Johns County, Clay County, Baker County, Columbia County, Hamilton County, Suwannee County, Madison County, and Alachua County. With that being said, all interstates within District 2 have full road ranger coverage 24/7. In Alachua County, District 2 provides a Road Ranger wrecker 24/7 to assist disabled vehicles that are blocking the roadway or in an un-safe location. The disabled vehicle is then relocated off of the interstate, if possible, to a safe location. In Duval County, a Road Ranger wrecker was implemented in March of 2026 to cover the east beltway of Interstate 295 24/7. When a vehicle becomes disabled on the Dames Point Bridge, which is a hot spot for disabled vehicles, District 2 now has a quick reliable way to relocate the vehicle to a safe location.

The District 2 Road Ranger fleet stands out in a variety of ways compared to other Districts across the state. In District 2, the entire Road Ranger fleet runs on propane making them not only the sole Green Fleet in the state of Florida but also across the nation. What are the benefits to this you may ask? Propane fuel reduces greenhouse gas emissions and allows the fleet to be more cost effective. District 2 Road Ranger trucks emit 25% fewer greenhouse gas emissions than gasoline and 80% fewer smog-producing hydrocarbon emissions than diesel. Each truck within the Road Ranger fleet is equipped with a large propane tank and safety devices, thus ensuring reliability and efficiency. With District 2 Road Rangers being a Green fleet, it has enhanced operational efficiency and achieved environmental goals.

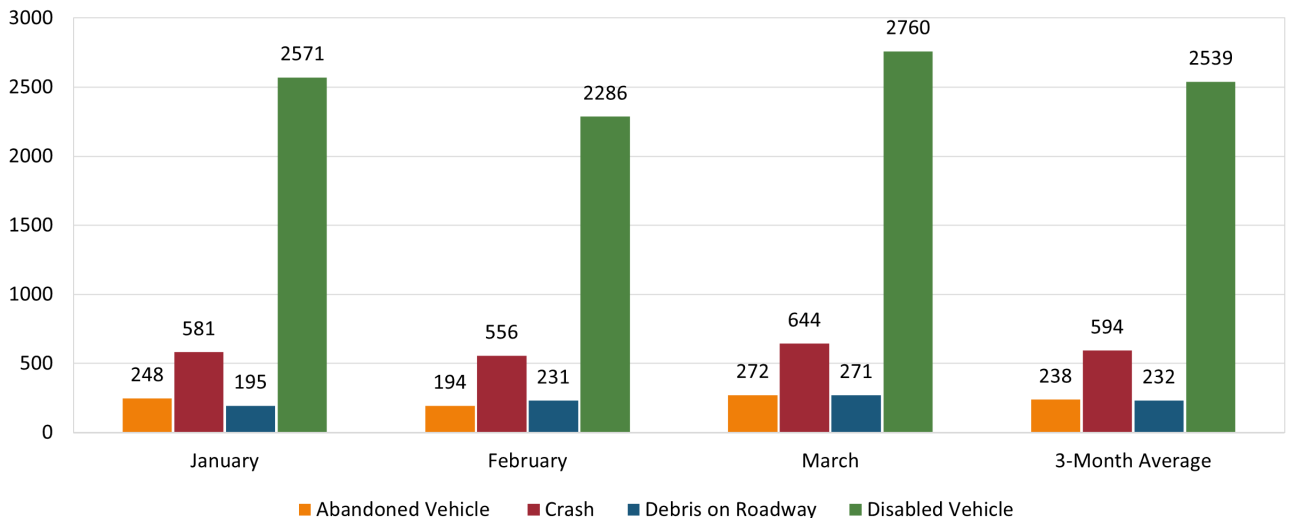
During Quarter 1, District 2 Road Rangers responded to 10,911 events with an average of 3,637 events per month and performed an average of 3.73 activities per event responded to. These activities can range anywhere from assisting law enforcement, providing air to motorist tires, to picking up debris out of travel lanes. More information regarding these activities can be found in the Road Ranger Top Ten Activities chart.

The subsequent charts depict the range of event types to which the Road Rangers responded between January 1, 2026, and March 31, 2026, along with key activities performed during these responses. Their primary focus was assisting law enforcement, assisting wreckers, clearing debris from the roadway, and assisting with both abandoned and disabled vehicles. The data indicates that the Road Rangers responded to an average of 16.5% crashes, 70.5% disabled vehicles, 6.4% debris events, and 6.6% abandoned vehicles. Taking a deeper look at the activities performed, Road Rangers provided MOT an average of 1,322 times over the last quarter and assisted with 559 tire changes. Overall, there was a decrease in the total number of assisted events with Road Ranger response from Quarter 4 of 2025 to Quarter 1 of 2026.

### ROAD RANGER TOP TEN ACTIVITIES (JANUARY 1, 2026 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2026)



### ROAD RANGER EVENTS (JANUARY 1, 2026 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2026)



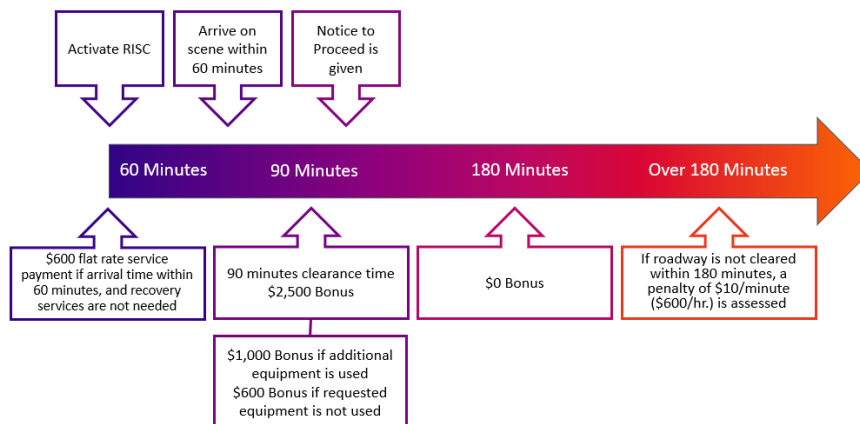
## RAPID INCIDENT SCENE CLEARANCE (RISC)

The Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) program is an incentive-based initiative by the Florida Department of Transportation aimed at rapidly clearing major traffic incidents, particularly those involving heavy vehicles. The RISC program corresponds with the Open Roads Policy in Florida, which aims to swiftly clear major highway incidents in 90 minutes or less. FDOT contracts towing and recovery companies that must be approved to perform RISC responsibilities and specialize in heavy wrecker operation. RISC vendors must have two Class C wreckers, one of which is a rotator, a support vehicle/trailer, and a skid steer available to deploy rapidly if RISC is activated.

Once a Trooper arrives at the scene of the incident, if he/she believes it qualifies as a RISC, the Trooper will request RISC activation. Crash parameters are then put into a software where approval is either given or denied. The RTMC manager or TIM manager can override the software if it denies RISC activation, but feels RISC is needed for the event. Once the RISC activation is approved, the RISC vendor at the top of the rotation is notified and must respond to the event within 60 minutes. If the vendor at the top of the list declines the RISC event, the vendor that is next on the rotation is then notified.

When the vendor arrives on scene with all required equipment, they are provided Notice to Proceed by the lead official on scene. The contractor then has a maximum of 90 minutes to clear all travel lanes of debris and vehicles. The RISC vendor is awarded more monetary incentive if additional equipment is used, which can include, but is not limited to, a dumpster, extra skid steers, hazmat equipment, etc. The vendor is also required to call the RTMC with certain timestamps to be eligible for their monetary incentives, including arrival time, the time they are provided Notice to Proceed, departure time, and all travel lanes cleared time. The following graphic provides the full FDOT RISC timeline.

**RISC Procedures Timeline**





Over the past three months, District 2 has utilized RISC two times. This program holds immense value and is vital for reducing roadway clearance times, particularly during high-traffic periods. Every time a RISC event occurs, it is discussed in detail at the TIM team meetings in the appropriate location.

During our TIM meeting, RISC vendors, law enforcement, fire rescue, maintenance asset managers, and all other involved parties participate in the RISC debrief. TIM team members review all positive and negative outcomes for every RISC and strive to assist with making the RISC events go as smoothly as possible. Below, you will find specific information regarding the RISC events that occurred within District 2 from January 1, 2026, through March 31, 2026.

Date	Time	Location	Description
01/4/2026	3:14 PM	I-95 Northbound at MM306 St. Johns County	A semi-truck and trailer hauling cabbage collided with an SUV. The semi-truck and trailer overturned and became fully engulfed. There was a large debris field across all lanes and a large diesel spill on the roadway.
01/29/2026	6:29 AM	I-295 Northbound between I-10 and Commonwealth Ave Duval County	A semi-truck and trailer hauling steel beams collided with the guardrail resulting in the truck and trailer overturning across all lanes of the interstate. All steel beams and metal came off the trailer and scattered across the roadway.

**Dee Dee Crews, B.S., FCCM**  
**FDOT District 2**  
**ITS Project Manager**

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

After reviewing the Road Ranger Event Summary, and the accompanying Road Ranger Events chart, it was observed that from January 1, 2026, through March 31, 2026, Road Rangers responded to less incidents than they did in Quarter 4 of 2025. On average, per month, Road Rangers responded to an average of 238 abandoned vehicles, 594 crashes, 232 debris events, and 2,539 disabled vehicles. When compared to the previous quarter, abandoned vehicles, disabled vehicles and crashes saw decreases of 16.4%, 10.3% and 12.9%, respectively, while debris on the roadway events saw an increase of 5.61% respectively.

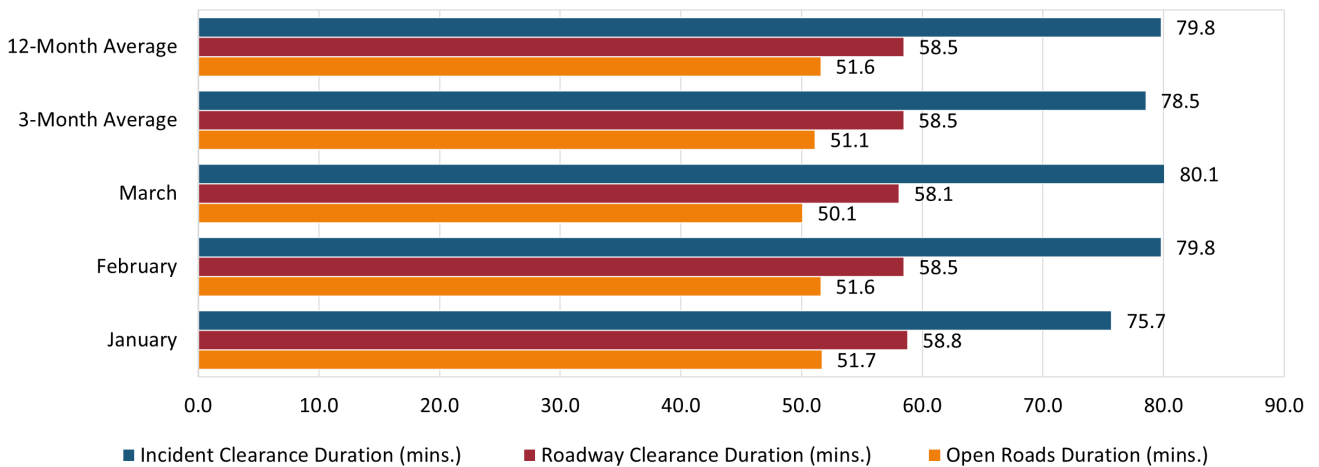
One metric that is used to determine how well the Road Rangers are operating is Monthly Performance Measures, which were exported from SunGuide for Quarter 1. This data includes information such as Open Roads Duration, Roadway Clearance Duration, and Incident Clearance Duration.

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 1 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 traffic homicide investigations, oversized vehicle collisions, 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 58.5 minutes per month, and 58.5 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 1 was 78.6 minutes per month, and 79.8 minutes for the past 12 months.

**Monthly Performance Measures**



**Lacey Collins**  
**TIM Program Manager**  
**Metric Engineering**

## MARKETING

Realization dawned on me as I made my way across the Hart Bridge early one morning. From my vantage point, I could see the Mathews, the Dames Point, the Fuller Warren AND the Acosta Bridges WHILE I was driving across the Hart Bridge. What a spectacular city we live and work in! And how amazing to know that a quick check of either the FL511 app or website gives me a leg up on my commute into the office every day. My drive across the bridges can be either pleasant or painful depending on current roadway conditions. And that is our aim at Marketing events and corporate fairs, to educate the motoring public on the various tools FL511 provides, all in the hopes of minimizing lost time, capitalizing on fuel efficiency and championing safety. Knowing about congestion spots ahead of time helps reduce the risk of secondary crashes. And it also keeps the ole blood pressure in check. Traffic can be anxiety-inducing, even on the best of days!

Spring is one of the busiest seasons we encounter from a marketing standpoint. We often average one to two events per week! That's a lot of talking. Just to highlight a few of these venues, there's Career Source Northeast Florida, St. Johns River State College (St. Augustine campus), the Duval County Fair for High School Seniors and Juniors (picture on following page), Keiser University and Bishop Kenny. Oh, and we also visited both Paxon and Stanton College Preparatory Schools. At Bishop Kenny (picture on following page) alone we spoke to over 1,000 students! They always time their student fair to coincide with Prom and Spring Break... prime time to remind students about roadway safety!

In the coming weeks we'll attend health and wellness fairs at FSCJ's South Campus, Bozard Ford in St. Augustine and JP Morgan Chase in the Baymeadows area of Jacksonville. We proudly work alongside other vendors at these events whose core messages also reinforce the optimal health, well-being and safety of Northeast Florida residents.

Back in March, TV Traffic Reporters Crystal Moyer (First Coast News) and KaJeza Hawkins (Action News Jax) visited the RTMC and were treated to Pete Vega's world class tour of our beautiful facility. It's always a treat to have these TV personalities stop by!

And one final item of note, we made it into the 2026 edition of the First Coast Relocation Guide! Visit [Northeast Florida/Jacksonville - Heritage Publishing, Inc.](#), page 101, or get a sneak peek of their digital release on the following page.

Wherever your journey takes you, 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?



## Employee Spotlight

### ANDRES GOMEZ, FDOT FMS/AMS SPECIALIST III

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

I grew up in Cartagena, Colombia, spending my childhood enjoying the sun, playing sports, and relaxing at the beach with friends. My favorite memories are at my grandma's house in the old walled city, exploring the neighborhood and playing until sunset. After high school, I moved to Bogotá for college, trading the sea breeze for mountain views and new experiences.

#### **Now tell us about your education, including the college years. Be sure to brag on yourself!**

I started college at just 15. Looking back now, I see how young I really was. Here's a quick story: my two older brothers were already in elementary school, and I wanted to join them. My mom called the school, but they said I was too young, but she kept insisting. Eventually, they allowed me to take a test, and even my mom didn't expect me to pass. But I did, so I started elementary school almost two years early. Later, I graduated with a degree in Marketing and Advertising in Bogotá, and a few months after that, I moved to the United States. After a few years, I took financial classes at National University, and now I'm close to finishing my second bachelor's in Business Administration at FSCJ. My goal is to keep working hard and keep learning, even after I graduate.

#### **You have exciting news to share! Fill us in on both your former role with Metric Engineering, Inc., as well as your newest job as an FDOT employee!**

I first heard about RTMC before Metric partnered with FDOT. I still remember my interview with Ryan Crist at the DOT building. At that time, there were only about six operators, all working together in a small space. It was a new and fun experience for me. They needed a bilingual operator, and I was lucky to get the job. A few months after I started, the transition to Metric began, and it turned out to be a great experience. The management team worked hard and was always supportive, which helped me learn more about the job and the ITS program.

After almost 14 years with Metric Engineering, I'm grateful for the chance to grow in my career and balance work with family life without missing out on important moments. Metric's support meant a lot to me. All of these experiences led me to my current role as FMS/AMS Specialist III with FDOT. Now, I use what I learned at Metric and the TMC to help with new projects, working behind the scenes with SunGuide and other tools that support traffic operations and keep motorists moving safely in our district.

In my new FDOT role, even after just a few months, it's been a great experience and a wonderful place to grow my career. My program manager, Pete Vega, Adam, and Jose made me feel welcome and supported. Their encouragement lets me grow without unnecessary stress, and I truly appreciate their leadership.

ANDRES GOMEZ, FMS/AMS SPECIALIST III (continued on following page)

**Were you able to stay in the same building, or did you have to relocate?**

When I started my new job with FDOT, my main office became the FDOT building, but I still have access to an office at RTMC. My job lets me work from RTMC when needed, especially during hurricane season or for special projects. In fact, we also have biweekly meetings at the TMC, so I'm often walking the same halls, just with new responsibilities and a different team. Staying connected to both places made the transition easier and let me keep seeing many familiar faces.

**What special projects will you be working on?**

In my FDOT role, I'm working on several exciting projects. Transitioning into this position means there's a lot to catch up on from before I joined, but I've already started learning the ropes behind the scenes on SunGuide as we add new features and updates. I also use traffic data and analysis tools to improve service and make routes safer. I'm working with both the FDOT and Metric teams to find solutions using Active-Vision as our technology keeps changing. We stay busy, and these projects will help make travel safer and more efficient for everyone in District 2 and across Florida.

**Since you've been immersed in the field of Transportation for quite a few years, what are some of the biggest changes you've witnessed?**

Since 2012, I've seen big changes in the ITS Program. Back when I started as an operator, we had just over 100 CCTVs. Currently, we have almost a thousand CCTV cameras connected to the ITS network, covering a much larger area from the Flagler County line to Madison County on I-10. One of the biggest advances in the last few years has been Active-Vision, which lets our CCTVs automatically detect wrong-way drivers, stalled vehicles, and more features coming soon to keep motorists safe and traffic moving.

Another big change is the significant growth of the Road Ranger Program. When I started, there were only six Rangers, and they only worked until 6 pm, not around the clock like now. Now, there are 19, and they also cover the western part of our district. Alongside this growth, moving into the new building has made a big difference, too, making our work more efficient and helping us work closely with FHP and other agencies that keep motorists safe. It's been great to see our program grow and to be part of a team so dedicated to the safety and mobility of everyone traveling through our district and Florida.

**Knowing all you know now, what advice would you give to your younger self?**

When I moved to the States in 2001, everything felt new and sometimes a bit intimidating. I'd tell my younger self to focus on building skills and see every challenge as a chance to learn. Don't be afraid to step outside your comfort zone. I'd also remind myself to keep learning, ask more questions, and not be shy about sharing new ideas. Discipline, humility, and consistency can take you farther than you think.

**Everyone's had a bad day at the office (or two). Do you have any funny stories relating to your career? Or a foot-in-mouth moment you'd like to share?**

I have a couple of funny stories from over the years! Years ago, we used a different radio system to talk with the Road Rangers. The system had a handle, and if you weren't careful, the clip could get

stuck, leaving the channel open. One day, after I'd 10-4'd a Ranger, I thought the channel was closed, but it wasn't. I started mumbling and singing a little in Spanish, and of course, everyone could hear me! When I suddenly heard, "Hot mic," I realized it was me, and we all had a good laugh.

Another time on I-95 near 8th Street, JFRD and JSO were chasing a little dog on the highway. The dog kept dodging around the officers' legs, and everyone in the TMC was laughing. It looked just like a scene from a TV comedy. I'm sure it wasn't as funny for the drivers stuck in traffic, but it's one of those moments that reminds me how unpredictable and entertaining this job can be!

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

Years ago, Metric management let me start training others and get feedback from new operators. This experience gave me the chance to mentor others and helped me grow in my job. It taught me the real value of teamwork, communication, and supporting each other through challenges. I learned that even small steps can make a big difference, and I still carry those lessons with me every day as I continue to grow in my career.

**Microwaved leftovers, Uber Eats, or lunch with colleagues?**

I will never trade a good meal prepared by my wife for anything. Leftovers from her cooking are always my first choice for lunch the next day. I'm not a fan of Uber Eats. Instead, I'd rather use my break to quickly pick up lunch for myself and any teammates who want something from the same place or maybe even the spot next door.

**On a typical weekend, where would we find you?**

It really depends on the season! Right now, it's my son's baseball season, so you'll usually find me at different baseball fields or sometimes making an out-of-town trip. When the weather warms up, that's camping time for us. During the summer, we're out almost every weekend camping at spots near the beach or by a lake, enjoying nature and making new memories as a family.

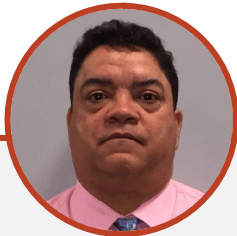
**Tell us a little about your family. This is your chance to brag on them!**

We are a blended family! My daughter Gabriella is almost 20 and lives out of state, but we stay close. My wife has two adult children, Andrew (31) and Gabrielle (27), who live nearby in different counties. At home with us is our little man, Matthew, who's 8 years old. Yes, we started over again—LOL! My wife is an amazing mom and truly the heart of our home. Her support and positivity keep us all grounded and motivated. Matthew is full of energy and passion, especially for school and baseball. Watching him grow, both on and off the field, is one of my greatest joys. It's even more special because I see myself at his age, playing in Colombia. We love spending time together, whether we're camping, exploring new places, or just relaxing at home. I feel truly lucky every day to have such a supportive and fun-loving family by my side.



*Andres and his lovely family*

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