





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

In the past, the holiday season was an opportunity for our staff to catch its breath as we prepped for the upcoming New Year. Well, that ship has sailed based on the past six weeks (and basically the next few months) as the pace and magnitude of tasks continue to multiply. November 1<sup>st</sup> kicked it off with ROADS (Reliable, Organized, and Accurate Data Sharing) training that is managed by our OIT group. This is an effort to aggregate the data from various offices into one site and since the ITS office generates terabytes of data each year we were an obvious choice for participation.

Once the dust settled with this training it was on to Express Lanes meetings the following week. This gathering was an effort to standardize many of the deployments around the State while allowing some flexibility based on the needs of each region. At this meeting the group created a Configuration Management Board team that will maintain standardization of the software while addressing the needs of each District.

This was followed by a kick-off meeting for the North Florida Smart Region Master plan project led by the NFTPO. It was interesting in that the group was expected to transition from “ITS speak” to more “Technology speak” with a focus on automated and connected vehicles as well as usage of technology for transit, freight and bike/ped issues. After Veteran’s Day it was off to South Florida for the bi-annual ITE/ITS Transpo Conference. This event allowed us to see the latest technology that’s anticipated for availability over the coming year and to gain knowledge based on lessons learned by various agencies around Florida. The best part of this event was the opportunity to network with colleagues while getting some answers on the

future of the ITS industry. Likewise, on the Expo floor I had the opportunity to “play” with some of the new technology so that I could get a better perspective on what would be useful to our District.

During the event a harsh bit of reality hit many of the participants extremely hard. Mr. Charles Robbins, from C2S Engineering, had been a key colleague within Florida’s ITS industry for an extensive period of time. Unfortunately, when many of us inquired about his absence we learned that he had been stricken with an ailment that led to him being hospitalized due to a high fever. A few weeks later our dear colleague passed away, thereby leaving a huge hole in our industry. Charlie (as he was known) was always ready to step in to help when needed. I recall one meeting where I had a difficult time understanding the Algorithm for the Express Lanes matrix. Charlie noticed my confusion and on his own dime spent some time with me later in the week to explain the nuances of the formula. Likewise, he did it with the great big smile that always made those around him feel very comfortable.

I mention Charlie because this unexpected loss by his wife and children was a compelling view on the realities of life. His passing was unexpected and painful, yet they had their chance to say goodbye, whereas over the past month we’ve dealt with roadway incidents that did not give many deceased that opportunity. In one instance, on December 19<sup>th</sup> a 91 year-old woman lost her life due to a wrong-way driver along I-95. There was nothing unusual at 8 PM that evening except for an intoxicated 29 year-old woman who got behind the wheel, drove her vehicle in the wrong direction along



**NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT  
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM  
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PROGRAM MANAGER continued**

this Interstate and robbed the opportunity for this elderly woman to enjoy one more Christmas holiday. This poor woman did not get the chance to say good-bye to her family and friends.

In early December two teens lost their lives in separate **AVOIDABLE** accidents. One of the accidents involved a woman traveling at a high rate of speed who ran a red light and collided with the teenager's vehicle. He passed away that evening at the hospital and never got the chance to say good-bye to his family and friends. In the other accident, a teenager was speeding along a winding road after leaving a high school football game, lost control and ran directly into a tree. He was killed instantly thereby never getting the chance to say good-bye to his family and friends.

The week prior to Christmas a 16 year old girl was killed while driving along I-10. She lost control of her car, drove across the median and hit several vehicles "head-on" before coming to a stop. The news media had a field day with this accident, running several stories featuring grieving family members and friends who spoke about how great this young girl was in her community. The investigation is on-going but my hope is that she wasn't "texting and driving" while this occurred. Of course, she never got the chance to say good-bye to her family and friends.

My apologies for writing such a morbid article but while working in the RTMC during the month of December it seems like there have been way too many traffic fatalities. It's hard to swallow when you consider that this is the holiday season where cheerfulness should be prevalent

in everyone's life. Instead, it seemed that each day I was getting multiple e-mail alerts from the SunGuide system notifying me about another fatality that's occurred along our roadways. I just hope that many of the impacted families will be able to cope with the sudden passing of their loved ones during a time when everyone should share a little joy.

This month's events got me to thinking about all the accident investigations I'd done over my years with the Department. After a while, I became hardened and unaffected by the crash scene. I recall on one occasion where a vehicle ran into one of our DMS structures and then caught on fire while under the sign. I took staff out to the site so that we could investigate if there was any damage to the equipment. As we examined the broken cabinet I noticed out of the corner of my eye two bodies still in the front seat. I tried to alert my staff but it was too late and the shock of witnessing the deceased was much more than they could handle. It took me a while to calm several of them down but I was unaffected.

The team was somewhat shocked by my limited reaction, so I had to explain that we had a job to do (very quickly) in order to prevent a secondary accident from occurring upstream that may lead to further injuries or fatalities. Each body was positioned in such a way that it appeared both had fallen asleep in their seats and run off the road directly into the structure. They were burned so badly that their bodies looked like mannequins placed in a manner you would see at a staged crash training. The trunk contained luggage so my initial assessment was they



**NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT  
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PROGRAM MANAGER continued**

were headed out in the early morning hours on a trip, the driver and passenger fell asleep, the car veered off the shoulder and traveled several hundred feet prior to impacting the structure. When all was said and done I do recall thinking they never got the chance to say good-bye to their family and friends.

So, this month has been a tough one but it helped me to fully understand a conversation I had two years ago with one of my former interns. During this conversation she mentioned a story about a young girl who died after spending a day at the river. It was due to bacteria that somehow got in her body and led to her eventual death. This former intern was very disheartened by the young girl's death but it didn't sink in at the time. I now get how this former intern felt and the impact that these unexpected fatalities have on society.

So, with that I want to wish everyone a great and prosperous 2017! Don't forget to buckle-up, stay within the speed limit, have your head on a swivel, put the phone down, call Uber if you want to drink, inspect your car's condition at least once a week ...and always expect the unexpected. In parting I would like to include a link to a video of Tesla's "Autopilot" feature that helped prevent a motorist from being involved in an accident. <http://www.nbcnews.com/tech/tech-news/tesla-autopilot-begins-braking-wreck-driver-n700941>

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

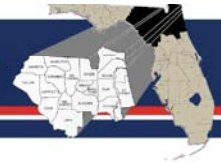
**NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS  
PROJECT MANAGER**

Last month I attended the 2016 Automated Vehicle Summit in Tampa. Automated Vehicle technology is changing the way we view today's roadways and infrastructure. It was a glimpse into the future of how this technology may change things in my job.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is planning for the deployment of autonomous and connected vehicle technologies on public roadways with the establishment of the Florida Automated Vehicles (FAV) initiative. It made me think about some of the things I experienced at the summit.

I had the opportunity to take a test ride in a Tesla with level two autonomous features. Level two features allow the driver to keep their hands off the wheel and the car is designed to take over "safety-critical functions" for the driver. The car is able to drive on the highway for minutes at a time without touching the wheel, but the driver is supposed to pay attention in case of unexpected problems. There are Level 4 and Level 5 cars coming out in the near future that will be semi-autonomous. I'm curious to see the prices and the response of the general population on this new technology.

One of the sessions I attended discussed the use of drones. Several wrecker companies in Florida are currently using drones to survey crash scenes to evaluate what equipment is needed before they arrive on the scene. There was a new legislative change that went into effect August 2016 which will change the guidelines for drone usage for governmental agencies. We are in the process of seeing



**NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS PROJECT MANAGER continued**

how the changes could help in our campaign to use drones. I believe drones would be a beneficial tool to use in incident management for debrief purposes in the future. We will keep you updated on our findings.

One of the hot topics at the conference was the concept of "Smart Cities." I attended several sessions which focused on the concept that would enable a city to integrate driverless cars, connected vehicles and smart sensors into its transportation network. The theory behind smart cities is to improve mobility through management and operations of the transportation network by using new technology. One session was on Columbus, Ohio who was recently selected by the U. S. Department of Transportation to receive a grant to implement their smart city concept. Columbus plans on implementing a holistic vision for how technology can help all of the city's residents to move more easily and to access opportunity. The city proposed to deploy three electric self-driving shuttles to link a new bus rapid transit center to a retail district, connecting more residents to jobs. Columbus also plans to use data analytics to improve health care access in a neighborhood that currently has an infant mortality rate four times that of the national average, allowing them to provide improved transportation options to those most in need of prenatal care.

As technology changes daily, we won't see an immediate day to day change in our roadways. Good changes are coming and we will all benefit from them. These changes will improve safety issues, congestion issues and hopefully create a more pleasant driving experience.

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

**NORTH FLORIDA TPO**

About ten years ago the North Florida TPO championed an effort for the area's initial Regional Transportation Management Center. Due to their efforts, the Department, JTA, FHP and several City of Jacksonville agencies involved in transportation agreed to move into a new RTMC that would be located at what would be called the Jacksonville Regional Transportation Center (JRTC). The location of this center would have been just north of the Prime Osborn Center, near the Bay Street Skyway station. This JRTC had acres upon acres of land available that would be used by Greyhound, JTA, Amtrak and taxi cab companies. The objective was to tie together all modes of transportation at one centralized location that would accommodate the needs of the community at that time and in the future. So for example, if an out-of-town person had a meeting downtown they could fly into JIA, take a cab or bus to the JRTC, jump on the Skyway and head to their final destination. Likewise, if JTA were to develop commuter rail a person could take the train to the station adjacent to the Prime Osborn, use the elevated walkway to the JRTC and grab a bus or the Skyway to their final destination.

The RTMC would have played a major role at this complex by managing the roadway system while sharing information with all modes of transportation. There was actually 100% plans completed and ready to go until the bottom dropped out of the economy. This situation caused many of the partners in this JRTC effort to back out until a rebound occurred, hence delaying our goals for an RTMC as well as this complex. Since the RTMC was so critical to helping manage the growth of traffic in Jacksonville the North Florida TPO decided to proceed with the



**NORTH FLORIDA TPO continued**

facility as a separate project. Due to funding and design challenges it was determined that building the RTMC at the current location instead of the JRTC complex made much more sense due to a cost savings of several million dollars. The uncertainty of the JRTC project's timeline was disconcerting but the thought was this concept would be revisited in the future.

Well, the future is NOW as JTA announced in December that they are moving forward with the Jacksonville Regional Transportation Center! In early 2017 the Jacksonville Transportation Authority is set to break ground on this new transportation hub that will feature local, regional and intercity transportation services. This center will also try to incorporate private enterprise with space for restaurants, coffee shops and small stores. If JTA maintains its schedule the entire project is expected to be completed by the end of 2019, thus leading to an evolution for transportation in the Jacksonville community!

Of course, it would not make sense to incorporate the RTMC in their plans since we just opened up this facility a little over one year ago. However, we are looking at ways to assist JTA's operation by trying to tie the systems together so that all the traffic information is shared among several agencies. The reality is there would have been limited interpersonal coordination between the group at the JRTC and RTMC, but the data is critical to achieving each agency's goals. So, I extend my congratulations to the Jacksonville Transportation Authority and promise to go the extra mile to make this a grand success for the North Florida region!

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

**MAINTENANCE**

The RTMC is getting a new video wall, which will be located on the back wall of the operations floor. This wall will be a smaller version of the video wall at the front of the room. Traffic Control Devices (TCD) crews have been installing fiber optic cable from the computer room to the new video wall location to provide for video distribution from the Activu server to the future video monitors. TCD has also been running fiber optic cable from the computer room to many of the offices on the RTMC side of the building to provide video capabilities to these offices so that personnel can stay up to speed on any incidents the TMC operations personnel may be working on.

TCD personnel have also been doing their normal maintenance duties as well as sending back damaged equipment and testing the equipment once it has been returned from repairs. On a more personal note, Bruce Leach is retiring from TCD after almost 29 years with the Company. I have known Bruce for the better part of my 14 year ITS career, as TCD has been on several contracts I have been a part of during that time. It has been a pleasure working with Bruce and I wish him the best.

I'm always busy keeping up with all of the ITS Maintenance activities, billing, contract management, purchasing and inventory control associated with the program, but with the shortage of FDOT personnel, it has recently been even busier. The ITS Program is continuing to expand and with that expansion comes plan reviews, design meetings, and field meetings. Not only is ITS expanding, but with ITS communications, devices and infrastructure present on every mile of Interstate in and around the Jacksonville area, almost all Construction projects impact the ITS System in some manner.



**MAINTENANCE continued**

Making sure that these impacts are kept to a minimum is an important aspect of my job so that system downtime is minimized.

I was able to break away from the office for a few days in November to attend the ITS Florida Transpo conference in West Palm Beach. Transpo was a joint meeting this year between ITS Florida, Florida Section of ITE, and the local chapter of Women in Transportation Seminar. The meeting was held at the Hilton West Palm Beach from November 13<sup>th</sup> through November 16<sup>th</sup> and included keynote speakers and four separate tracks of technical sessions. The event was well attended with the number of registered attendees exceeding the organizers' goal and surpassing all previous Transpo attendance numbers. During the meeting, FDOT, state and local government, and consultant personnel were able to share information and hear about current and future projects throughout Florida and even some out of state projects.

Metric Engineering personnel have continued to provide administrative support and provide assistance with inventory control and other duties as needed.

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

**CONSTRUCTION**

The I-95 St. Johns County ITS Project is currently in the integration and testing phase. The contractor has several CCTV and MVDS devices remaining to test and has started their 30-day burn in period for the DMS throughout the project. The contractor is expecting that all devices will be fully operational and available for use prior to

Christmas, just in time for TMC Operators to monitor the traffic congestion caused by all of the last minute shoppers. There are still some remaining items to be completed, but the project is anticipated to be completed prior to the contract end date, which is at the end of February.

Directional boring along the US 1 corridor has been completed on the SR 16/US 1 Fiber Installation Project. Directional boring along the US 1 corridor presented significant issues due to the presence of several high profile utilities within the right of way. Construction crews hit a fiber optic cable, owned by Level 3 Communications, several times while conducting boring installations. FDOT, Contractor, Level 3, and CEI personnel met on-site multiple times to find resolution to the fiber damage and multiple conflicts. The only directional bore remaining will go under the San Sebastian River on SR 16 just West of US 1. Ongoing work also includes the installation of fiber pull boxes and splice vaults. This project is scheduled for completion in February 2017.

The I-75 Fiber Optic Cable Installation Project is nearing completion. The 90% construction inspection was held in November. The contractor has completed the installation of all of the conduit and infrastructure as well as the communications master hub and is currently approximately 90% complete with the installation of fiber optic cable. This project is anticipated to be completed in January 2017, but the contract completion date is February 6, 2017.

The I-75 ITS Device Installation Project will install ITS devices within the project limits of the fiber optic installation project detailed



**CONSTRUCTION continued**

above and will use the fiber optic cable to communicate back to the Gainesville Smartraffic TMC. TMC operations personnel will control the devices and view CCTV camera images from both the Smartraffic TMC and the North Florida RTMC. The Notice To Proceed for this project was given on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Contractor is currently procuring devices and materials and field work is anticipated to begin early next year.

The I-10 Fiber Installation Project will install fiber optic backbone cable and infrastructure on I-10 between Jacksonville and Tallahassee. This project will provide a communications link between FDOT District Two and FDOT District Three, resulting in all FDOT Districts being connected by fiber optic cable. The Notice To Proceed for this project was given on November 16<sup>th</sup> and field work started on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Kevin Jackson  
ITS Construction Liaison**

**ROAD RANGER UPDATE**

First Responders risk their lives every day by assisting disabled motorists on our interstates here in District 2. They have proven themselves to be a calming force to drivers who are in need of assistance in the midst of all of the hustle and bustle on our roadways.

Our Road Rangers play a vital role in incident management and most times they are the first agency to respond to an incident. They provide real-time information to the Traffic Management

Center (TMC) regarding accidents, congestion, disabled vehicles and road debris. They also provide basic Maintenance of Traffic at accident scenes until FDOT Maintenance or their contractor arrive on scene to deploy full Maintenance of Traffic. There are sixteen (16) Road Rangers on duty from 6:30 A.M. to 6:30 P.M. – eight (8) in the morning, eight (8) in the evening on all major interstates in Duval County leading into St. Johns and Nassau.

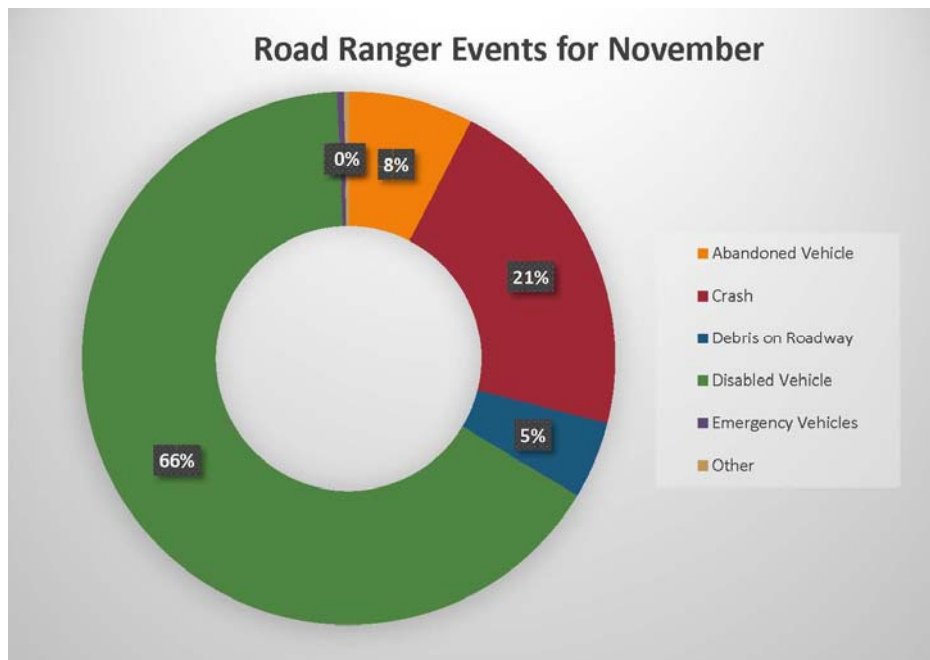
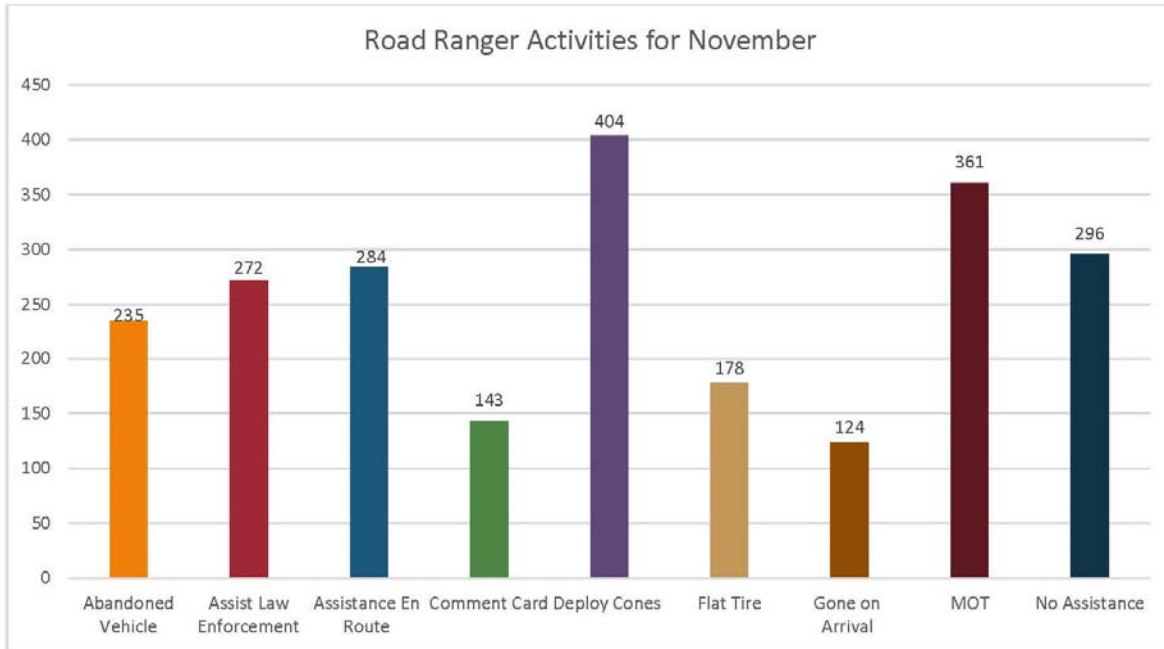
At the beginning of both November and December, the Road Rangers held their monthly safety meetings. At both of these meetings Mr. Cody Parham stressed the importance of safety with all of the drivers. He wanted them to know that their lives are extremely important and that they are an essential part of what makes the Road Ranger TEAM so great.

In the activities chart following, the most common Road Ranger event types for the month of November are highlighted to show the variety of services provided by the Road Rangers along with the event. The Road Rangers have attended to approximately 3,017 events in the month of November and are seemingly on the same track if not higher for December. These services include assisting with abandoned vehicles and law enforcement, removing debris, changing flat tires and providing MOT when needed. We cannot thank the Road Rangers enough for their service and we wish them a great end of year and a happy new start to 2017.





**ROAD RANGER UPDATE continued**



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



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

The Florida Department of Transportation in conjunction with the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) created the Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) program to support Florida’s Open Roads Policy and established a 90-minute goal for the clearance of motor vehicle incidents on Florida’s roadways. The goal of RISC is to quickly secure and restore highway facilities for public use and is a major component of Florida’s Traffic Incident Management strategy. RISC has been activated twice over the course of the past two months and we are very fortunate to have such a program in District 2.

RISC was activated on **Tuesday, November 17, 2016**, on I-75 SB at US 441 in Alachua County at 2:36 A.M.,



involving two semi-trucks and one dump truck, where the dump truck overturned spilling asphalt all over the southbound lanes. RISC was confirmed at 2:55 A.M. to retrieve the dump truck only and arrived on scene within 49 minutes but was not given notice to proceed until 66 minutes later.

At 3:02 A.M. FHP advised that a Bobcat would be needed to clean up the asphalt that spilled all over the southbound lanes and maintenance was on scene to assist with the process. Due to the location of the incident the District 2 Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) coordinated with the Atlanta RTMC to inform them of the incident. The incident lasted over four hours and was cleared at 6:46 A.M. The table following shows the responding agencies’ on scene times.

| Agency | Arrival | Departure | Time    |
|--------|---------|-----------|---------|
| FHP    | 2:44 AM | 6:46 AM   | 4:02:00 |
| RISC   | 3:48 AM | 6:46 AM   | 2:58:00 |
| DBI    | 3:51 AM | 6:46 AM   | 2:55:00 |

Another RISC incident occurred on **Tuesday, December 6, 2016** where a serious accident with injuries occurred on I-75 NB and blocked all northbound lanes at 2:03 A.M. in Alachua County. FHP arrived on scene shortly after the incident occurred and two left lanes were then blocked. RISC was activated at 2:14 A.M. and arrived on scene within 53 minutes. At 3:25 A.M. notice to proceed was given to the RISC contractor and the incident scene was cleared by 5:50 A.M. Overall, the incident took approximately four hours to clear. Below you will find the responding agencies’ on scene times.

| Agency | Arrival | Departure | Time    |
|--------|---------|-----------|---------|
| FHP    | 2:03 AM | 6:17 AM   | 4:14:00 |
| RISC   | 3:07 AM | 6:00 AM   | 2:53:00 |

**FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE**

The First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team held its bi-monthly meeting at the Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) – 980 N Jefferson St., Jacksonville, Florida on November 15, 2016 at 10:00 A.M. Ms. Dee Dee Johnson welcomed all of the TIM members and acknowledged that the meeting’s primary focus was for each responding agency to be able to communicate with one another in a productive environment. All responding agencies are working towards achieving the same open roads and safety goals together. Mr. Bill Kays then went right into the Overland

Continued on following page



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

Bridge project update where he informed the group that there will be several major traffic changes before the Christmas holiday and the second phase of the Florida East Coast Railroad crossing will begin in mid-January.

Mr. Ron Tittle then moved the group into the Construction Update where he stated that North Florida seems to be experiencing a bit of construction fatigue at the moment due to the number of ongoing construction projects in the area. During the holidays several projects were halted to allow the residents to recuperate but will resume right after.



Ms. Jessica Renfrow from Metric Engineering gave the TEAM a brief overview of the current ITS/RTMC/511 projects. She discussed the ongoing fiber optic project and informed the group that the project is drawing near to completion. This project includes the installation of fiber optic cable from SR 24 to the Georgia line. After this connection is complete there will be fiber from the Marion County line to the Georgia line. The device installation project will start soon after the fiber project is completed which will include the installation of cameras,

microwave vehicle detection systems and dynamic message signs all the way from SR 24 to the Georgia line.

Sergeant Dylan Bryan also gave the TIM members a brief overview of FHP's role in event management and how we all work as a team. He informed the group that FHP's main priority is traffic safety and protecting the public. He asked all TIM members to please keep the duty officers involved in everything that is occurring at the incident scene. It is important to keep communication going so that informed decisions and procedures can be made. He also thanked everyone for playing their role in the incident management team because it is detrimental to the success of the team.

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 welcomed and can be sent to [DeeDee.Johnson@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:DeeDee.Johnson@dot.state.fl.us).

The next First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team meeting will be held on **January 17, 2016** at the Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) – 980 N Jefferson St., Jacksonville, Florida on November 15, 2016 at 10:00 A.M. Please mark your calendars to attend this meeting. 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 next Alachua-Bradford Traffic Incident Management Team meeting will be held on **February 8, 2017** at the FDOT Gainesville Operations Office – 5301 N.E. 39th Ave., Gainesville at 10:00 A.M. Please mark your calendars to attend this meeting. If you are unable to attend, please feel free to send someone else who could represent your agency. We look forward to seeing you there!

**PLEASE NOTE:** *If anyone is interested in the SHRP2 Incident Management Training Course, please contact Craig Carnes at [ccarnes@metriceng.com](mailto:ccarnes@metriceng.com) or Misha Gonzales at [melder@MetricEng.com](mailto:melder@MetricEng.com) /904-260-1567. Craig is available to work with any agencies' schedule; including nights and weekends to make sure the course is available for groups of ten or more trainees.*

**TEAM MISSION:**

*The Florida Department of Transportation District Two's Traffic Incident Management Teams through partnering efforts strive to continuously reduce incident scene clearance times to deter congestion and improve safety. The Teams' objective is to exceed the Open Roads Policy thus ensuring mobility, economic prosperity, and quality of life.*

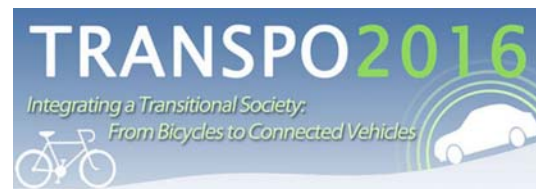
**TEAM VISION:**

*Through cooperation, communication and training the Teams intend to reduce incident scene clearance times by 10% each year through 2015.*

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

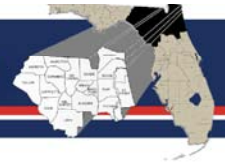
**OPERATIONS**

On the afternoon of November 13<sup>th</sup> Penny Kamish, Jason Evans and I headed out of Jacksonville to West Palm Beach to attend TRANSPO. TRANSPO is a conference held annually and this year was sponsored by ITS Florida, the Florida Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers and the South Florida Section of the Women's Transportation Seminar. The event was four days of learning, networking, sharing ideas and some fun sprinkled in. The theme of the conference was "Integrating a Transitional Society: From Bicycles to Connected Vehicles" and the conference had the content to back it up.



The opening session got things kicked off with some words by the West Palm Beach Mayor, Jeri Muoio. Mayor Muoio talked about the importance of transportation, finding more intelligent ways to manage traffic and how our industry will help shape the future of getting from point A to B. We are the key to optimizing mobility and with that comes the potential for economic growth. Mayor Muoio and the others on stage had that excitement in their voice knowing that our industry is at the doorstep of an industry boom. To be honest, to date, not much has changed since the Model-T Ford. Yes, cars are faster, look nicer, have safety features and slick interiors. But the basic premises have remained the same. With connected and autonomous vehicles basically here things are about to change drastically.

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**OPERATIONS continued**



The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) reported that up to 75 percent of crashes are human error. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) states that some ninety percent of motor vehicle crashes are caused at least in part by human error. Autonomous vehicles can remove the majority of that human error, take out the driver reaction/ decision time period and add capacity to the roadway by shortening the space between vehicles. This all leads to improved safety, enhanced efficiencies and travel time reliability helping to optimize the mobility of goods and services. We may not be at the level of the Jetson's but we are getting closer!

The session tracks varied from Advancing TSM&O, Making Vehicles Smarter, Keeping Vehicles Moving and Serving Pedestrians and Bicyclists. I enjoyed showing Jason Evans the ropes as we attended sessions on Arterial Management, Understanding Connected Vehicles, Looking forward to the future of TSM&O, ICM and Intersections, Big Data and It's All about Managed Lanes. Having taken pages of notes I am still trying to implement new ideas I borrowed (stole) from the presenters into our daily operating procedures here in District 2. The event closed with a roundtable about What's new at FDOT with Pete Vega (D2, Lee Smith (D3) and Javier Rodriguez (D6). The conversation by these gentlemen shined a light on our state, and industry, and the vision of not only where we are going but how we are going to get there. It was the perfect end to a valuable conference.



All in all, this was probably the best conference I have attended in my 12 years doing TMC Operations. The sessions were all relevant, informational and entertaining. The networking was exceptional helping me put faces with email addresses and pick up on things other Districts are doing. Everyone



**OPERATIONS continued**

was very approachable to bounce ideas off of, discuss lessons learned, follow up with presenters on their topic and peruse the exhibit hall to help find possible solutions for projects.

It gave me a chance to catch up with some old friends, make some new ones, spend time with Metric staff from other areas and introduce Jason to no less than 45 people. Head spinning Jason? Name test next week. It was also a wakeup call that a new generation of ITS Professionals had slipped in behind me? Where did the 12 years go? Why don't I like staying up to double digit hours at night? During this time of year I like to reflect and give thanks. To give thanks for all of the knowledge my mentors and peers have provided, support from friends and co-workers and the time and patience of all to help me get to where I am. My wife is a Saint and without her I couldn't have these opportunities. Happy Holidays and safe travels!



I am the oldest person in this picture.

**Ryan Crist  
RTMC Manager**

**MARKETING**

2017 looms large in the front windshield while 2016 looks more like a speck of dust in the rearview mirror. Goodbye Model T, Hello Autonomous Vehicles. What else can we expect in the New Year? Managed Lanes, new cameras on the arterial roads, more car charging stations, enhanced pedestrian crossings...oh, and a new IKEA. Looks like Santa has a big list to fill!

As Jacksonville's vehicular traffic increases, so does the need for expanded ITS coverage. I travel quite a bit throughout the day, leaving my house just before 5am to make the trek into downtown. Once I arrive at the Regional Transportation Management Center, I park my personal vehicle, run into the building and grab the keys for the 511 car. Then I spend the next 3 ½ hours or so motoring through rush hour traffic to help monitor conditions along our Interstates and State Roads. After that, I typically make a few marketing visits or attend a Corporate Health and Wellness Fair. All told, I can spend anywhere from five to seven hours a day...in a car!

I say all this to stress the fact that a comprehensive real-time, state of the art traffic system is vital to maintaining traffic flow in a burgeoning state like Florida.

Time and again, whenever I'm attending these corporate fairs, I hear motorists say one of two things: a) I use 511 all the time. It has saved me more times than I can count! b) I wish I had known about 511 last week when I was stuck in traffic on the Buckman Bridge for over an hour!

Last month Stephen and I enjoyed connecting with employees at Black Knight Financial Services and neighboring business partner



**MARKETING**

Fidelity National Financial. This two-day event brought us face to face with almost 400 motorists! We were all “talked out” by the end of it (well, almost), but we also found that our batteries were recharged by the enthusiasm we encountered at the event. One of the big takeaways we latched onto was how similar a situation most of the employees are in. Some live in Fleming Island. Some commute from Hilliard. Some live in Georgia even! But the average commute time to and from the office tends to be around 1 ½ to 2 hours. (45 minutes each way, give or take) That equates to a whole lot of ITS data being disseminated via our 511 system.

So, onward and upward we go! Charting a new course and launching into unfamiliar territory. Seeking out new business partners (and old ones alike) to educate motorists about the time-saving advantages of using our 511 apps, phone services and website. Whether 511 is the only traffic service a motorist uses, or one of many in their arsenal of traffic weapons, knowledge is the key to power!

As we close the books on 2016, our 2017 calendar is already filling up. But before we flip the last page, we’ve got one more screenplay to write. It’s time, once again, for our annual Holiday Media Extravaganza. We’ll be bringing Law Enforcement Officers, Transportation Officials, Road Rangers and the news media together under one roof (the RTMC) to discuss travel plans and future transportation projects.

**Sherri Byrd  
Marketing Manager**

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Over the past two months District Two has been cleaning up all of the damage that was caused by Hurricane Matthew but something changes in the spirit of the air during the November/December months. Call it the spirit of the holidays or maybe a sense that a new year is coming. As the saying goes: “New year, new beginnings”.

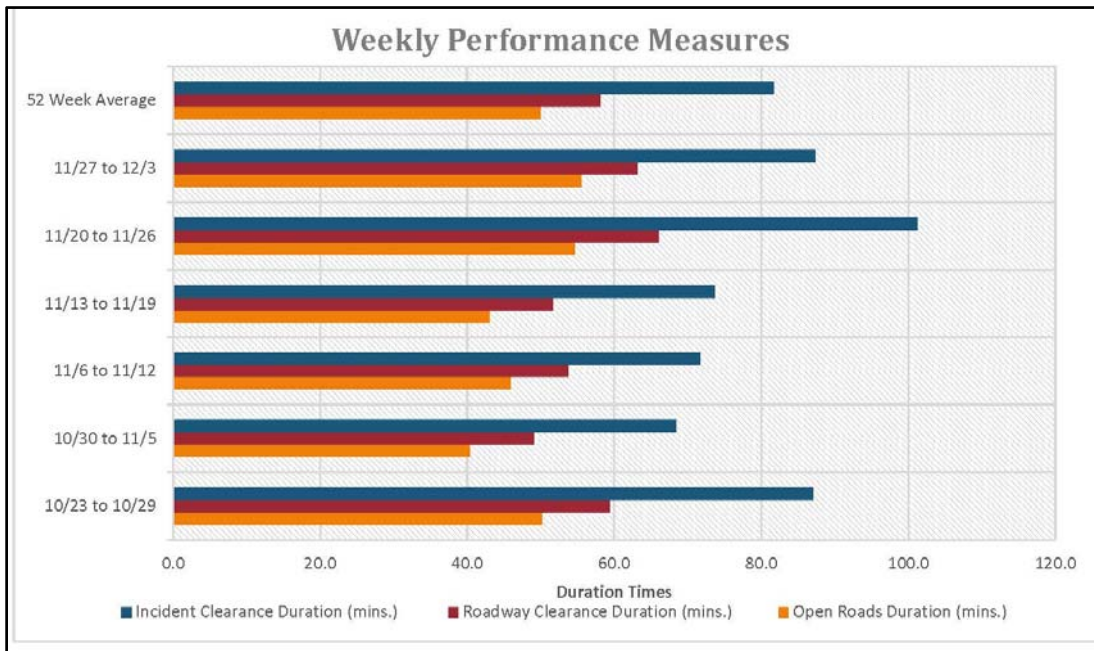
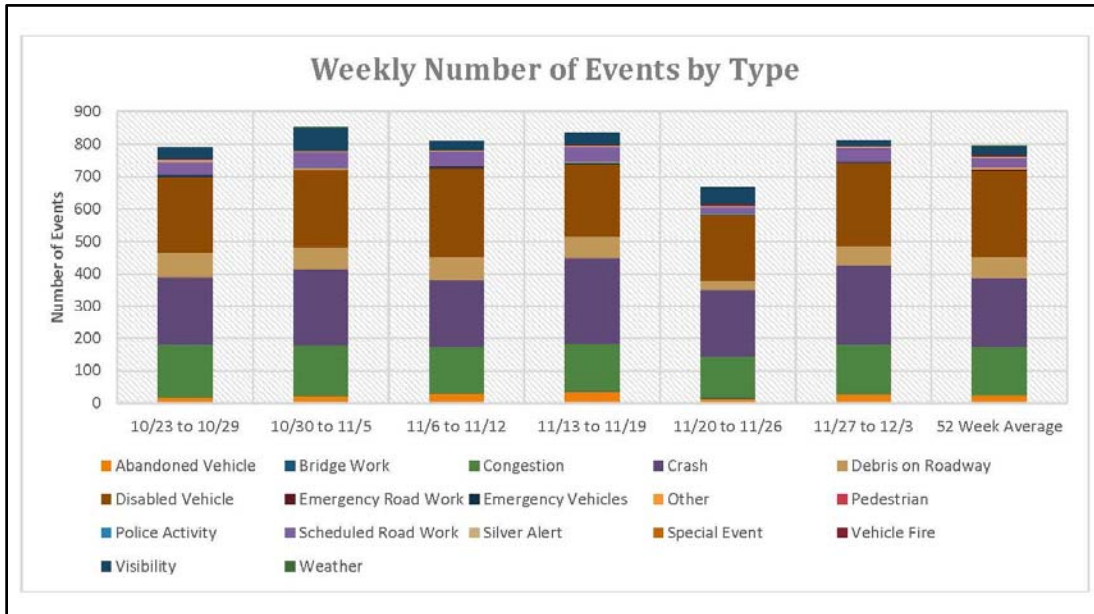
As this will be our last newsletter for 2016, it was great to look back at past newsletters and see how much we have grown since then. No matter where you go in District 2, one can see the physical growth of ITS on each and every corner. It is as if we are preparing for something... or anticipating the future perhaps? Can one say connected/autonomous vehicles?

Overall, we have done an excellent job here in the District, if I must say so myself. Even the data proves that a lot of work has been done but there is also so much more to do! For the past 12 months the Road Rangers have averaged a total of 3,500 events per month which is about 42,000 events per year and this number only represents the number of events that the Road Rangers have responded to, not the total number of events that have occurred in our District. This monthly average is attributed to all of the crashes, disabled vehicles, debris events and congestion events, just to name a few. As we move into future years and as more cars congest our roadways we know that it will take a joint effort on all of our incident management responders parts.

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



**PERFORMANCE MEASURES continued**



**Sherrell Lall  
Metric Engineering**





**SPOTLIGHT ON..SANDRA LENIS**

**Sort of set the stage for us. Where were you born and raised? How long has Jacksonville been your “home”?**

I’m from Colombia. I moved to the United States with my family in 2000 and lived in Miami two years. After two years my father got a great job offer and we decided to move to Jacksonville, it has been 14 years since I moved to Jacksonville.

**Where did you go to college and what was your specific field of study?**

I graduated in May of 2015. I earned my Bachelor’s degree from the University of North Florida in Civil Engineering.

**How did you end up in Traffic Operations/Engineering and how long have you been working in the industry?**

When I was in college I had the opportunity to do an internship at FDOT with Peter Vega from whom I learned a lot and while working with Mr. Vega, I had the chance to meet a lot of people in the industry. One of the people I met while working for FDOT was Mr. Rakesh Sharma, he helped me take the first steps towards working with HNTB as a traffic/ITS engineer. It has been a year and a half since I started working with HNTB.

**What are some of the projects you’re currently helping out with at the North Florida Regional Transportation Management Center?**

My current role at the RTMC is assisting my colleague Jennifer Kennedy and Peter Vega with the Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSM&O) program, this involves helping with reviewing documents, reports and ITS construction plans.

**Give us an overview, if you would, of your current role at HNTB.**

I work for HNTB Corporation at the Jacksonville office as a Traffic/ITS Engineer. I work on projects for FDOT and North Florida TPO along with other Florida local entities.

**What other positions have you held? Past jobs and appointments?**

Prior to HNTB I had an internship in the ITS department at the FDOT.

**What’s the most significant change you’ve witnessed to date during your career in Transportation?**

During my career I have been able to notice a great amount of technological influence in the field of transportation. Safety has been increased dramatically with the help of computers and sensors. The density of the population is increasing rapidly and with it the roadways are having to race to catch up with this growth.

**Relative to traffic, what changes do you see coming in the not-too-distant future, within the next 5 years, let’s say?**

Traffic/Transportation is constantly changing every day. With new technology such as Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), sensors, cameras, and specifically automated vehicles, within the next 5 years transportation will not be the same as we know it today.

**What is the most difficult project you’ve worked on?**

I’m new to the industry and I can say that some of the projects that I had worked on were interesting and challenging. I always enjoy working with the Transportation team and every day I always learn something new.

**SPOTLIGHT ON...SANDRA LENIS**  
**continued**

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

After graduating I was not sure where my career was going to take me. I was not sure if I had the experience to find a job and I knew that there were a lot of graduates looking for a job as well and that the challenge was going to be big. Luckily I was able to meet very important people that helped me find a job in the industry, a full year has already passed and I have since learned more than I could have ever imagined.

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

Perseverance is a very important part of success. It does not matter how slow you go, as long as you do not stop working hard.



League Winning Soccer Player, Sandra Lenis.

**On a lighter note, do you have any funny stories relating to your job?**

There are always funny anecdotes that I experience every time I do my field reviews. People are always interested in what I am doing out there. Sometimes people stop and ask me how I am doing and if there is something they can do to help me, or they start telling me about some issue that they have seen in the area. Another interesting moment was when a person thought that I was a police officer and asked me why I did not stop the guy that ran the red light, I had to explain to him the reason why I was standing at the traffic light and that I was a traffic engineer. He came out of his car, apologized to me, and thanked me for the work that I was doing.

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

I like to practice sports during my free time, I like riding my bicycle, roller skating or playing soccer. I currently play on a soccer team on Fridays and Sundays and we just won the soccer league.

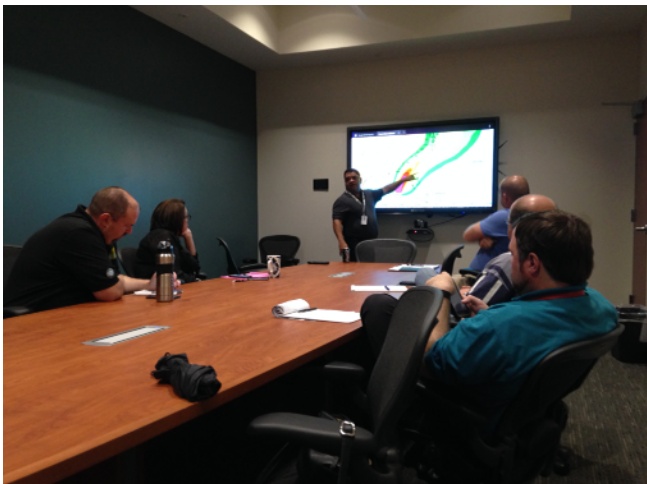
**Anything else you'd like to add? (please feel free to embellish here...professionally or personally)**

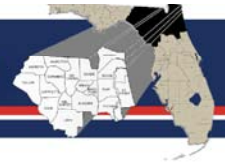
I love to travel. Each year my family and I always plan to visit a new country. This year, we spent the spring break in Europe. We went to Spain (Madrid and Barcelona), Italy (Rome), and France (Paris). Hopefully, next year we will be able to plan another family trip to a new country. Maybe Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, Brazil, or Dominican Republic.

**PHOTO GALLERY**



Above-Stephen McCowan spreading the word about 511 to the employees of Black Knight & Fidelity Financial Services; top right-Halloween at the RTMC with special appearance by “Jake from State Farm”; at right- Matt Harbert, Pete Vega & Jerry Ausher with the ITS Florida RTMC Award and appropriately, below, Hurricane Matthew planning with all of the latest tools at the new RTMC





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Traffic Incident Management 2017 Meeting Schedule

First Coast TIM Team
Regional Transportation Management Center
980 N. Jefferson St., Jacksonville, FL
904.903.2000
January 17, 2017 March 21, 2017
May 16, 2017 July 18, 2017
September 19, 2017 November 21, 2017

Alachua/Bradford TIM Team
FDOT Gainesville Operations Office
5301 NE 39th Avenue, Gainesville
352.381.4300
February 8, 2017 April 12, 2017
June 14, 2017 August 9, 2017
October 11, 2017 December 13, 2017

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