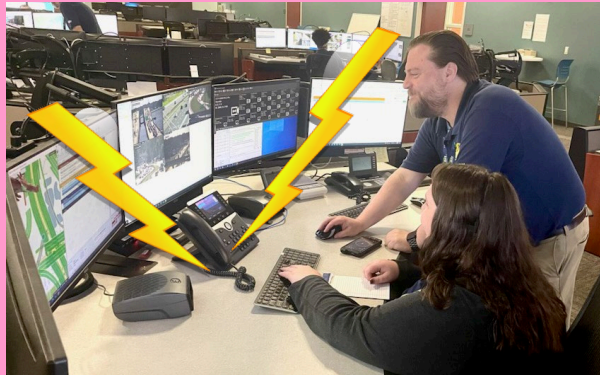


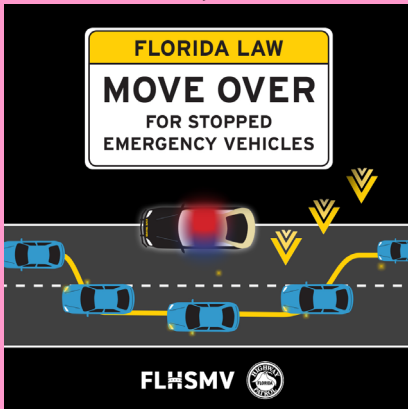
GET READY FOR LOTS OF GREAT ARTICLES ON UPDATES SINCE THE LAST NEWSLETTER AND UPCOMING EVENTS!

LIGHTNING FAST COMPUTERS

*Pictured :
Gracie Cranford & David Rolfe*



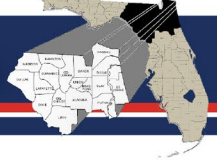
CHANGES TO FLORIDA'S MOVE OVER LAW COMING JANUARY 1, 2024



A NEW & IMPROVED UPGRADE TO THE FL511 APP



Crash Responder Safety Week (CRSW) November 13-17, 2023



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

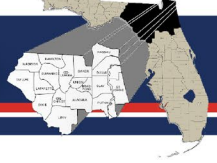
Well folks, as of October 2nd I've achieved my 30-year tenure with the Department. The countdown now goes into overtime as I try to wrap up some assignments before determining when it's time to go. I made a commitment of one year with the City of St. Augustine so that I could assist them with getting the SMART St. Augustine project off the ground. This would take me to October of 2024 before I would begin deciding on my next venture in life. I also would like the iTPAS (innovative truck parking) project to reach maturity by seeing it utilized throughout all Districts. Hopefully, this goal will be reached by next Summer. The last venture that keeps me here is the Train detection project that has surprisingly succeeded expectations beyond my wildest dreams. The goal is to deploy at least 100 crossings by the Fall of 2024, with most of the locations within the northeast Florida region.

After that, who knows? There may be some interesting technology project that piques my interest, thereby leading me to extend my time with the Department. The most challenging aspect of it all would be who would step into my shoes once I've departed. I have dealt with many young engineers who have the capability, however there is still the determination of who would be the most grounded and committed. This is a 24/7 position that District Two relies upon throughout the year, and this is not currently the normal workplace expectation for the younger generation. The needs of our District Two and State partners are high, so I don't want to see a drop in responsiveness from District Two with my successor.

As for this past quarter, I was able to attend the I3 Conference in Orlando and Florida Automated Vehicle (FAV) summit in Tampa. Both events were interesting yet somewhat disappointing in that they seemed like the "same old, same old" on topics that have been covered over the past ten years. My belief is that the setback was due to limited direction and standardization from the Federal Government as the vendors/manufacturers try to figure out how the actual connected vehicle (CV) effort will evolve. It's a huge investment for these firms to develop the necessary technology and at this point it seems to be a guessing game for many. High risk with limited reward from my point of view. At least (I believe) we've hashed out the issue with the FCC on the transition from DSRC (Dedicated Short-Range Communication) radios to C-V2X (Connected Vehicles to Everything) radios.

Currently, District Two has one of the most robust connected vehicle deployments in Florida, with over 150 CV radios in the City of Gainesville and on the Interstate system. The objective of this effort was to provide the University of Florida's UFTI program with the necessary infrastructure to research the use and value of connected vehicle technology. Unfortunately, progress has been slow with this UFTI effort and all that's been learned is the capabilities of this technology to communicate with vehicle On-Board units (OBUs). The basics are being communicated (SPaT, MAP, TIM, etc.) between the infrastructure and vehicles, however the

Continued on following page



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

benefits are yet to be determined. The question is “will this technology reduce intersection crashes, pedestrian/bicyclist conflicts, mobility, safety, etc.”. Time will only tell if this objective is achieved in the coming years.

However, the fruits of these efforts have been that the autonomous vehicle industry has gone into high gear by not waiting for the CV effort to mature. This industry has taken the “bull by the horns” as they invest in researching, testing, and deploying vehicles with their own technologies that address roadway challenges. In the future, the CV portion appears to be a supplement to their capabilities and will be more of an enhancement rather than a driving factor on improvements for intersection crashes, pedestrian/bicyclist conflicts, mobility, safety, etc. The use of LiDAR, cameras, machine learning and artificial intelligence are the technologies of choice for the industry. Car manufacturers like Tesla, FORD, Hyundai and Mercedes Benz (to name a few) have determined these advanced types of technologies are needed for their vehicles and are diving head-first into manufacturing based on the lessons learned.

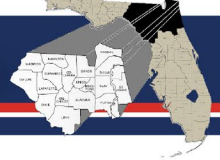
I had the opportunity to be a presenter at this past FAV summit and shared a table with a gentleman from Kodiak Robotics, who presented on the company’s autonomous trucks. What piqued my interest was the moment he stated that Kodiak has been running autonomous trucks from Dallas to Jacksonville for the past year. Huh!?! What!?! Yup! Their approach is to provide the capabilities to go from hub to hub in

each city, with the last mile being handled by the freight company being serviced. The vehicles operate autonomously with numerous sensors that deal with any roadway conflicts on the road. If this company grows its business opportunities, it will be a huge game changer for freight operations in the United States.

Kodiak’s service will offset the need for thousands of truck drivers in the future, a very limited commodity at the moment. It would counteract the challenges presented by limited hours allowed for CDL drivers since this autonomous capability can go 24/7. It would transform the industry into a last mile service, thereby allowing drivers to handle the short hauls locally, with the benefit being that they could sleep in their own bed every evening. This would be a game changer for the current generation who may not be interested in sleeping in the cab of their truck. It would also provide cost controls for freight carriers associated with equipment, personnel and regulations.

I did say “huh” when I heard his presentation. Dallas to Jacksonville! Wait a minute! This is the first time I’d heard of this happening. In the past few years, I’d been made aware that this could be a future issue that needed to be addressed by FDOT but hadn’t heard a peep for over one year. After FAV, I reached out to the presenter for more information and learned that initial discussions with FDOT Central Office had just begun. My inquisitive nature led me to request a meeting with their

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

team (scheduled for October 26th) so that we could learn more about their activities and business model. Since I once was the proud owner of a Class A CDL, this capability has been a long-time coming. No more log books to track work, off-time and sleep hours for long-haul trips. Now it could be an 8 to 5 job for many of our truck drivers.

If you would like to learn more about this company, please go to the link to gather further details ([Home - Kodiak Self-Driving Trucks](#)).

If this latest technology does spark my interest, it may be that I will decide to extend my tenure to 2025!

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



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

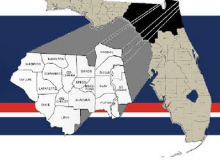
Happy Fall, Ya'll. A little fun fact, the United States of America is the only place that uses the term Fall for Autumn. I cannot believe we are already in the last quarter of the year. I am looking forward to the cooler weather and holiday season after a historically brutal summer. This brutal summer also brought a very strong hurricane to District 2's doorsteps that came through the gulf coast. Hurricane Idalia came with some ferocious speed and rain. The Department, Florida National Guard, and private companies all jumped in as soon as it was safe to begin clearing roads and getting everything ready to allow people to move again. The Road Rangers were

in full swing and our ITS Maintenance Crew were busy deploying generators to make sure signals were operational and key ITS devices could get back online. The resolve of all the people performing public service was amazing and it was great to be able to drive all the roads and help where I could.

I was able to give some live information about DMS signs through the north end of I-75. Florida is no stranger to weird phenomena. We have sinkholes, lightning strikes, hurricanes, waterspouts and not to mention most of the wild animals trying to harm us. The big takeaway is being prepared by knowing your plan and practicing. We cannot account for everything that will happen but having your plans in place allows for an easier transition. The District's office generator went out during the height of the storm recovery and they had to move to a new location. They had a plan and knew how to execute it to minimize disruption and continue the operations. This shows that a little bit of future planning goes a long way when unfortunate circumstances occur. Fortunately, Hurricane season ends on November 30th and we typically do not have to worry about snow events in Florida, so we get a little bit of a break, but before you know it we will be prepping for the new hurricane season.

Have a Happy Halloween, a great Thanksgiving, and a cheerful Christmas. Please drive safe and never Drink and Drive.

**Alejandro Varela, P.E.
FDOT D2
ITS Operations Manager**



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

RESPECT OUR ROADSIDE HEROES -SLOW DOWN. MOVE OVER. BE SAFE. These six words remind all that the lives of motorists and responders depend on effective actions taken by drivers and highway heroes to save the lives of complete strangers.

Every minute of every day, emergency crash responders across the state of Florida work tirelessly to help save lives at the scene of traffic incidents. Every year hundreds of emergency crash responders representing Fire/Rescue, Law Enforcement, Emergency Medical Services, Road Rangers, Asset Maintenance Companies, Towing and Transportation agencies are struck and either injured or killed while responding to incidents throughout the United States. This type of secondary crash intensifies the impact to communities, individuals, and the economy. We read about these tragedies caused by distracted driving, vehicle malfunction and other variables almost every day and the emergency response community stands to lose the most.

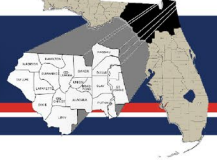
In an effort to help raise awareness about the dangers emergency crash responders face while on-scene at traffic incidents, **November 13-17, 2023**, has been designated as **Crash Responder Safety Week**. This year’s theme is **“Respect Our Roadside Heroes”**. In the United States from January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022, fifty (50) first responder fatalities occurred – 17 law enforcement officers, 11 firefighter/EMS personnel, 17 Towing and Recovery personnel, 4 mobile mechanic/road service technicians and 1 DOT/Safety Patrol/Road Rangers. The goal of this week is to reach out to every responder, and to every driver, and to every passenger, to make it clearer that every person has a role to play. Too many are struck on scene. Too many die.

As Traffic Incident Management program participants and responders, we are faced daily with dangers on the roadway and in our local communities. Together we can use well-rehearsed procedures, coordinate response times to get equipment to the right locations faster, protect motorists and responders and restore traffic to normal flow quickly. Traffic incidents are the single greatest cause of unexpected delay.

Time spent in traffic jams due to traffic congestion and incidents costs businesses billions of dollars in lost productivity. The time lost in no way compares to the value of heartache and time spent when you or a loved one is involved in a serious traffic crash. When lives are at stake, time is never more precious. Every minute counts when emergency responders are trying to get to the crash scene and then to the hospital, to deliver lifesaving help to people injured in a crash.

These **“Heroes of the Highway” cannot do it alone** – we need everyone’s help in spreading the word. Motorists need to know and abide by safe, quick clearance laws, and policies that require drivers to slow down and move over. Drivers need to be informed to move their vehicles out of the lanes of traffic, to a shoulder or safe location, if they are involved in an incident, where their vehicle is drivable and there are no injuries. We need to make sure that our loved ones, responders, and motorists alike, make it home safe each and every day.

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



NORTH FLORIDA TPO

This past summer, I was asked to volunteer as a Technical Review Committee (TRC) member for the selection of a consultant who will be examining flood sensor capabilities in the Northeast Florida region for the NFTPO. Once again, the NFTPO is a true champion in the use of technology by looking at issues and trying to find solutions for citizens in our area. This is something that is not commonly done by other MPOs/TPOs in the State of Florida. The objective of this effort is to determine roadways (local and state) that are prone to flooding, thereby impacting the movement of traffic and vulnerability of residents. Once this determination is made, the consultant will recommend the types of sensors that can detect, measure, and alert when water levels are at critical stages.

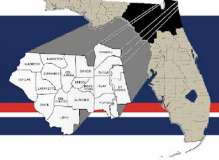
The next step for the consultant would be to provide a means of getting this information out to local agencies and the public, thus generating the opportunity for them to take preventive measures to deal with the flooding event. Options include staying put in a safe location, leaving early before the flooding gets worse or taking an alternate route to avoid the impacted roadway. This is critical information for citizens who live near roadways known to flood in St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra, Black Creek, downtown Jacksonville, and Fernandina.

The TRC members received proposals from four consultants. Each had a unique approach to addressing this need while partnering with experienced firms we'd never heard of in the past. These firms were new to us and mainly dealt in the road weather information system arena, so the submittals became a challenge due

to the TRC members' limited experience with this industry. The positive was that all the submittals approached this project as a team effort, bringing in expertise from their planning, transportation, and ITS divisions. No matter who is chosen, I am confident that an excellent solution will be delivered at the end of this project.

One of the key elements in this project is that the product actually includes flood sensor deployments in the field, with a preference for different types of technologies throughout the region. This way, when we decide on a future need in District Two or other Districts, there will be some background information on the capabilities of various sensors so that the best one is chosen for the situation/problem. For example, some sensors may be mounted on a pole with a laser to provide water level measurements above the surface, while another may be a submersible sensor that's installed within a drainage pipe. Another alternative could be piezo meters that measure the subsurface earth moisture to determine when there's nowhere for the water to go except to begin the flooding event. All options are on the table, and this was the desire of the NFTPO staff.

When you think about it, this project is necessary to enhance roadway resiliency in the future. Having the historical data will allow us to determine which roadways are most in need of drainage projects to deal with flooding events. It will also provide us with a gauge on the impacts of weather events, sans hurricanes. There are times during the year



NORTH FLORIDA TPO continued

when Northeast Florida is impacted more by Nor'easter flooding than a tropical event that brings a day or two of rain.

All in all, the NFTPO has stepped it up another notch by being the champion of this project.

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



ITS CONSTRUCTION

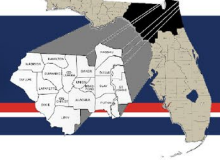
The FDOT ITS Network spans all Interstate Roadways in Florida and connects each of the eight FDOT Districts, to include Florida's Turnpike Enterprise. This network allows the Districts to have Center-to-Center communications between their RTMCs and provides the ability for each of the Districts to control the ITS devices throughout the State in case of emergency. It also provides video feeds to FDOT Central Office, the Statewide EOC, as well as many of the District's Headquarters Buildings and EOCs. This means that the ITS Network is a high-profile asset for FDOT, especially when Hurricanes are approaching and soon after they pass.

Because of the importance of the ITS Network, FDOT has added a pay item for construction projects to pay the contractors to locate ITS fiber and power infrastructure. This pay item pays for the contractor to have a utility locator available every day of the contract to locate FDOT's ITS

facilities in an effort to minimize damage to the ITS infrastructure. This new pay item was requested by the Florida Transportation Builders Association's (FTBA) Lighting Electrical Signs and Signalization (LESS) Committee. The LESS Committee understood the importance of the FDOT ITS Network and devices being available to the greatest extent possible and the impacts that earthwork has on the fiber optic cable and electrical service wires for the ITS network and system as a whole.

Unfortunately, this pay item is only applicable to newer projects, and therefore, longer duration projects that began prior to the new pay item being introduced do not have this pay item on their contract. These older contracts still rely heavily on the Sunshine One Call System (811) and locates performed by FDOT maintenance contractors which are normally performed once per month. During the month between locates, utility locate marks can be covered up by earthwork, removed by rainfall, or made otherwise ineffective by other work associated with the project. This, and other project related issues, led to the unfortunate circumstance of the ITS fiber optic cable or electrical service wire being damaged by excavators, bulldozers, trenchers and other construction equipment.

Cuts of the electrical service wire are normally easy to repair and don't take a lot of time or money to get the electrical service to the device back in operation and in a condition that is as good as it was prior to the damage. The same is not the case for damage to the fiber optic cable. Fiber optic cables contain multiple fiber optic strands of glass that are as



ITS CONSTRUCTION continued

thin as a human hair. These fiber optic strands transmit light waves along the fiber optic cable path. These light waves are used to transmit data along the network and are extremely sensitive to any imperfections in the glass. When fiber optic cables are cut or otherwise damaged, the damaged portion of the cable has to be replaced with new cable, which is spliced into the existing cables. These splices in the cable cause imperfections which cause signal loss to the light waves.

With the number of “hits” that occur on the ITS fiber optic cable the signal loss can accumulate to a point where it degrades the signal enough to cause network issues. Therefore, many times long sections of the fiber optic cable, between existing splices, must be replaced to avoid these signal loss issues. The procurement, installation and splicing of the fiber optic cable can be an unexpected significant cost to the contractor as well as resulting in possible project delays.

Both FDOT and its contractors are very hopeful that this new pay item will result in a reduction in the number of fiber optic cable and electrical service wire hits. As of now, both sides are getting used to having this new pay item available and we are all waiting to see if it has the impacts we hope for it to have. As a best case scenario the ITS System will be a more reliable system and device uptime will be maximized. At worst, we will see little to no improvement over the “old way” of doing things. Only time will tell.

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

ITS MAINTENANCE

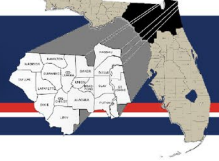
We had our first hurricane (Idalia) and it hit us pretty good on the west side. TCD worked hard over the course of several hours deploying more than 100 generators along I-10 and I-75. Because of their due diligence, we managed to have most of the CCTV cameras online so the EOC could assess damage and debris along the I-10 and I-75 corridor. Thank you TCD for your hard work throughout the storm.

Now let’s get into maintenance. Phase 2 of the DMS retrofit project will be on hold until Fiscal Year 2025. Instead TCD will be working on installing power and fiber optic cable to all wrong way devices that are solar/cellular. This will help the units keep constant power and we will be able to connect devices to our D2 network and Sunguide. This project will be completed before the new fiscal year so as to not incur new cellular costs.

TCD is still working on SR-202. Fiber drops have been completed and we are waiting for the go ahead to install power services to these devices so we can eliminate the solar panels and batteries. TCD has installed 50 cyberlocks along I-75. We will continue installing cyberlocks on all D2 cabinets to make it a more secure entry point. And finally, TCD is working diligently on testing and replacing ground wire, ground rods, and surge components throughout D2. This project should be wrapping up in the next few weeks. This work will help keep our devices intact when a hurricane or lightning strike occurs and will minimize electrical impacts to our devices.

See you next quarter!

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



OPERATIONS

Where to begin! Our Operations Staff is over the moon with the brand spanking new computers that have been purchased by FDOT and installed on the floor by David Rolfe and the rest of our amazing network team. They have 24 core processors that make them lightning fast and the Staff can access 20+ CCTV (closed circuit TV cameras) without slowing. This sure helps in getting the device checks done with efficient use of time. Software is software and SunGuide crashes from time to time, but instead of it taking several minutes to restart, it's a matter of seconds.

Next, the FL511 app has been upgraded and has many new bells and whistles. You can now get floodgates on the app!! It now has links to all other aspects of 511 including the website, Twitter now X, Facebook and Instagram. You can also call FHP (Florida Highway Patrol) through a quick link whether you need to report a crash, a stall or if you need Road Rangers on our covered routes!! The safety factors to prevent distracted driving remain. One stop traffic for virtually any information you need and it remains customizable! You can set it up for any alerts you might want to receive; set up customized trips that you want to receive real-time traffic information while traveling; there's an auto-drive mode that turns off the map (to save phone battery) but still give audio alerts. This travel app is designed to deliver traffic, road conditions and other information by audio so that you do not have to interact with your phone while driving. Set up and configure your app when you are safely parked or out of your vehicle.

If you already have the FL511 app, IOS will automatically upgrade. For Android, go to the Playstore and upgrade. If you don't have it, what are you waiting for?

On January 1st, 2024, prior to our next newsletter, Florida's expanded "Move Over Law" will officially take effect. Previously, the law stated:

Motorists must move over one lane, when they can safely do so, for the following:

- *Stopped law enforcement.*
- *Emergency responders.*
- *Sanitation and utility service vehicles.*
- *Tow trucks or wreckers.*
- *Maintenance or construction vehicles with displayed warning lights without advanced signs or channelizing devices.*

Motorists who can't move over, or when driving on a two-lane road, should:

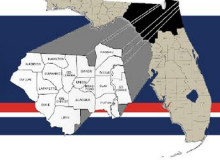
- *Slow to a speed that is 20 mph less than the posted speed limit.*
- *Slow down to 5 mph when the posted speed limit is 20 mph or less.*

The new expanded law includes all aspects of the previous law, but adds the following three additional scenarios:

Motorists will also be required to move over if:

- *There is a disabled motor vehicle that is stopped and displaying warning lights or hazard lights.*
- *If a vehicle is stopped and is using emergency flares or posting emergency signage.*
- *When a vehicle is stopped and one or more persons are visibly present.*

Violators could be pulled over and fined between \$60 and \$158.



OPERATIONS continued

According to AAA:

- From 2016-2020, an average of nearly 350 people per year were struck and killed while outside a disabled vehicle on the roadside.
- On average, two emergency responders, including tow truck workers, are struck and killed every month by a driver who fails to obey the law by moving over to an adjacent lane and allowing the roadside rescuers the space to operate, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- Roadside crashes are notably deadly for tow workers. Government data shows that tow operators are killed at a rate of almost 43 deaths per 100,000 workers, compared to three for all other industries.

Pay Attention; Move Over; Save Lives!

From July 1st through Sept 30th, 2023 the District 2 RTMC had 1 RISC (Rapid Incident Scene Clearance) events. The RTMC Staff worked a total of 16,697 events with 9,163 utilizing DMS. Of those events, 3,169 were crashes. There was a total of 11,819 Road Ranger events.

Connect. Know. Go!

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

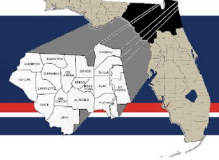
**Jason Evans
Metric Engineering
RTMC Manager**

FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team’s latest bimonthly meeting was held in-person on **September 19th, 2023**, at 10:00 A.M. Facilitating effective communication among all TIM agency partners is crucial for FDOT to enhance incident scene clearance times, alleviate congestion, and improve safety on interstates within District 2. These meetings play a vital role in establishing an open line of communication to achieve these objectives.

The Team started off with the construction project update provided by Nathan Pick, who advised that there were overnight detours at the I-10/I-95 interchange the week of 9/18/2023. He then continued by stating from 9/17/2023 to 9/21/2023, there were additional detours in relation to the I-10 widening projects. Additionally, detours for the I-10 at US-301 (I-10 EB, exiting off onto US-301) began on 9/20/2023. He closed by stating the operational improvements for the I-295 at Normandy Boulevard resurfacing project began this summer and will be running through Summer 2024 and will include overnight work.

The emergency operations update was then given by Carrie Stanbridge, who began by stating the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was still responding to impacts seen from Hurricane Idalia, especially on the western side of the district. In both Madison and Suwannee Counties, a 15-mile stretch of I-10 had over 10,000 downed trees that were



FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT
MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE
continued

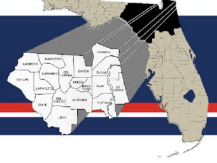
cleared from the roadways in less than 12 hours after the storm made impact. There has been ongoing debris removal to fully clear the debris from I-10. There were also clean up operations on US-90 in Madison County. She then continued by stating there was an increase in trucks for both hauling and cut crews on I-75 in both Hamilton and Suwannee Counties, and close to 137 trucks in action across the western portion of the district. Carrie concluded the emergency operations update by stating the State Roads in Columbia, Levy, Suwannee, Taylor, Hamilton, Dixie, and Madison Counties saw 2nd and 3rd passes of debris removal operations.

Carrie Stanbridge then provided the maintenance operations update, where she began by stating they are currently adjusting a lot of the in-house contracts. These contracts include MOT contracts along with additional supports contracts for bridge crews. Contracts were also put in place to replace the wildlife fence along I-10, from Madison County to Suwannee County, which was damaged during Hurricane Idalia. Contracts were also activated for sign replacements, as a lot of big signs were damaged by the storm on the western side of the district. The light poles that were downed/damaged during the hurricane were also repaired and replaced.

The group then discussed the ITS Update/ITS Projects/511/RTMC updates, which were provided by Craig Carnes, Jason Evans, and Peter Vega. Craig Carnes began by stating there

is ITS work being included in upcoming big projects, such as the I-10 Widening project and the I-10/I-295 interchange project. Jason Evans then advised there is an upcoming MLK project that spans from I-95 to the Hart Bridge, and from the Hart Expressway down to Atlantic Boulevard. Both fiber optic communications and ITS devices will be installed along these corridors over the course of the next year, which is expected to be completed late 2024. Peter Vega then advised there is a project at JAXPORT Blount Island, which will tie into the truck traffic in an attempt to increase both traffic flow and freight mobility. There is also an upcoming project that will include rail detection which will be deployed at 70 locations initially, with more to come. This system will be tied into SunGuide and posted to DMS.

Jason Evans continued by stating the FL511 app is in the process of undergoing a facelift, with improvements in both look and functionality. He also advised that the State is in the process of switching to a new Express Lane Software, which will be going into testing within the next month or two. District 2 will be the first district in the State with the software, with full implementation in early 2024. Peter Vega then closed the RTMC update by stating there is a new lane control software system that will be added to the current software to control the gantries that were installed over the Buckman Bridge in both directions.



FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE
continued

The next First Coast Traffic Incident Management Team meeting is scheduled to be held in-person on **November 21st, 2023**, at 10:00 A.M. If you are unable to attend, please feel free to send someone else who could represent your agency. We look forward to seeing you there!

ALACHUA BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

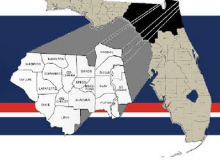
The Alachua-Bradford Traffic Incident Management Team meeting held its bimonthly meeting in person on **Wednesday, August 9th, 2023**, at 10:00 AM. The TIM meeting kicked off with introductions , followed by a reminder of the primary objective of our TIM Team meeting, which is to continuously reduce incident scene clearance times to alleviate congestion and enhance safety . The meeting also emphasized the significance of cooperation and communication among TIM members while operating on the roadways to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

The meeting then proceeded with the Emergency Operation Update, given by Lola Butler, who stated that there has been a slow start to the hurricane season so far, but the Emergency Operations Center is keeping a close watch for any potential storms. She then continued by stating that construction on the D2

EOC has been completed, and the facility is functioning and operational. Staff from the RTMC visited the EOC to complete training, while also providing training for the EOC staff.

Carrie Stanbridge then provided the maintenance operations update by stating FDOT has been coordinating with Georgia DOT regarding major bridge replacements on US-17 parallel to I-95. GDOT plans to close three bridges on US-17 for replacement, meaning US-17 North traffic will be diverted onto I-95. Work is scheduled to be completed within the next year and a half. She concluded by stating that during the Statewide emergency management meetings, one of the topics of discussion has been HAZMAT reporting to understand who is responsible for what, and who needs to be contacted when an incident regarding HAZMAT occurs.

Jason Evans then jumped right into the ITS/511/RTMC updates where he informed the group that the new rest areas at the Suwannee/Columbia County Line were opened, with the Truck Parking Availability System (TPAS) being tested. Information from TPAS is posted onto signs and FL511. Additionally, the Road Weather Information System (RWIS) in Paynes Prairie is almost 10 years old, and they were working on replacing it in the near future. He concluded by stating the RTMC has been keeping a close eye on the Tropics.



ALACHUA BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE
continued

Dee Dee Crews concluded the meeting by stating the Road Ranger vehicles are now equipped with rear-facing lights on all of their trucks, and advised the Team to let her know if the lights make the vehicles more visible at night when stopped. She stressed that these lights were only to be used when the vehicle was stationary.

The next Alachua-Bradford Traffic Incident Management Team meeting is scheduled to be held in-person on **December 28th, 2023**, at 10:00 A.M. If any changes are made prior to the next meeting we will send out an email notification to all of our TIM partners.

If you are unable to attend, please feel free to send someone else who could represent your agency. We thank you for your participation.

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

We continue the process of updating the TIM Team meeting process and strongly encourage all TIM members to send in suggestions for

agency topics to be discussed during the meeting. All ideas are welcome and you can send them to Dee Dee Crews at DeeDee.Crews@dot.state.fl.us.

TIM TEAM MEETING SCHEDULES

First Coast TIM Team
Regional Transportation Management Center
980 N. Jefferson St., Jacksonville, FL
904.903.2000
10:00am-12:00pm
November 21, 2023

Alachua/Bradford TIM Team
FDOT Gainesville Operations Office
5301 NE 39th Avenue, Gainesville, FL
352.381.4300
10:00am-11:30am
December 28, 2023

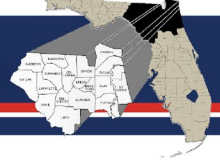
TEAM MISSION:

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

TEAM VISION:

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

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



ROAD RANGER UPDATE

As we transition out of the summer season, the District 2 Road Rangers persist in showcasing their steadfast dedication in assisting motorists on our roadways. The Road Ranger Program continues to be a vital component of incident management, offering invaluable assistance to both drivers and local agency partners. As integral members of the Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Team, they hold a pivotal position in delivering immediate updates to the Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) regarding accidents, traffic congestion, disabled vehicles, and debris on the roadways. Their unwavering commitment ensures the efficient flow of traffic and elevates overall road safety within the District.

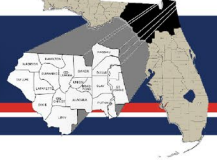
The Road Rangers operate eighteen routes in District 2, including seven routes that provide 24/7 coverage across the district. During the period of July 1, 2023, through September 30, 2023, the District 2 Road Rangers provided assistance to an average of 3,673 events per month, slightly surpassing the average of 3,493 events recorded in the previous quarter.

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

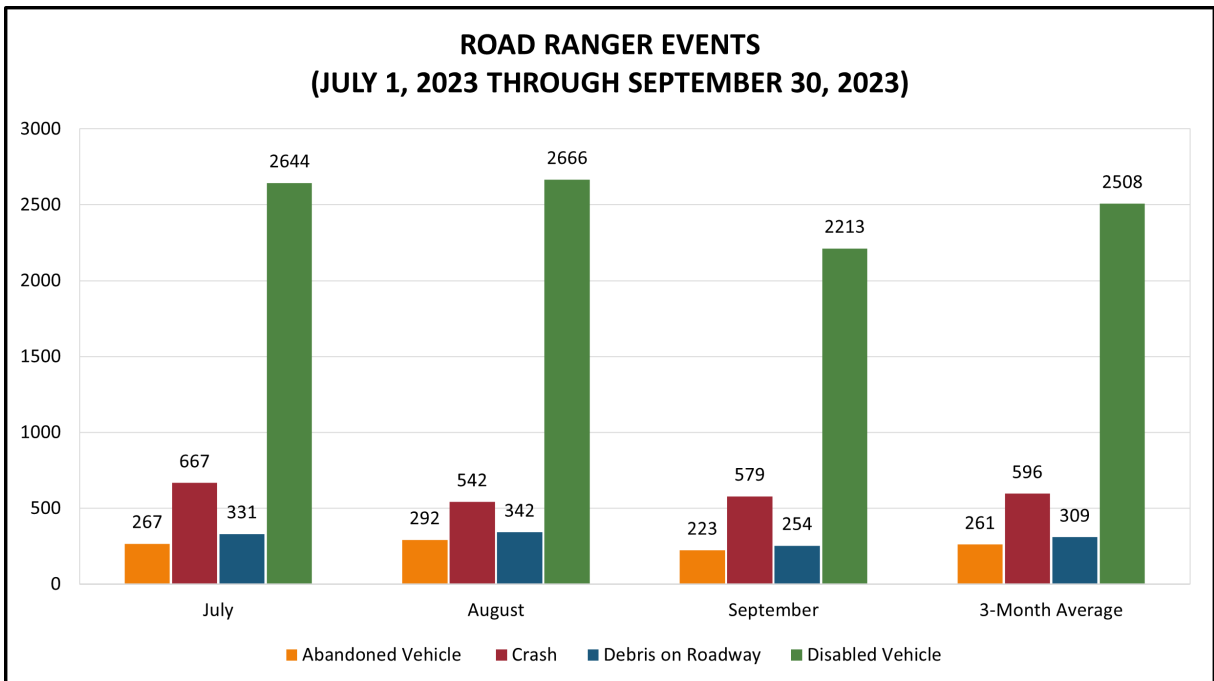
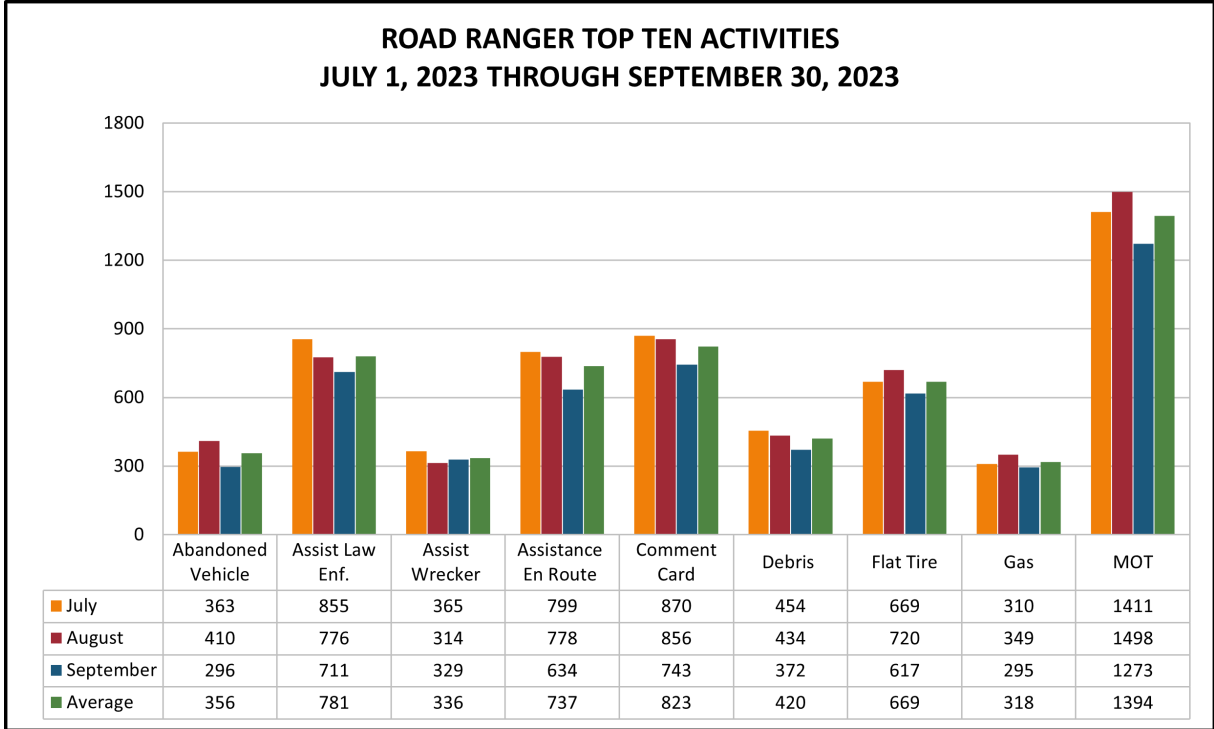
their work and the high exposure on our interstates, it is of utmost importance to prioritize the well-being and safety of our Road Rangers and the motoring public alike during their travels.

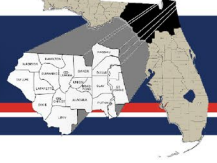
The Road Rangers offer assistance in various situations, including fuel provisions, tire changes, minor emergency repairs, and short-term maintenance of traffic. From July 1, 2023, through September 30, 2023 the average Roadway Clearance Duration was approximately 57.7 minutes, the Incident Clearance duration average was approximately 75.4 minutes, and the Open Roads Duration averaged approximately 50.5 minutes.

The following charts depict the range of event types to which the Road Rangers responded between July 1, 2023, and September 1, 2023, along with some key activities performed. Their primary focus was on addressing crashes, debris events, disabled vehicles, and abandoned vehicles. Primary activities provide Maintenance of Traffic (MOT), assisting motorists with flat tires, clearing debris, and aiding local law enforcement. The data indicates that the Road Rangers responded to an average of 16.2% crashes, 68.3% disabled vehicles, 8.4% debris events, and 7.1% abandoned vehicles. Overall, there was a slight decrease in the number of crashes and debris on roadway events attended to by the Road Rangers, while there was a slight increase in the number of abandoned vehicles and disabled vehicles requiring their response.



ROAD RANGER UPDATE continued





RISC – RAPID INCIDENT SCENE CLEARANCE - UPDATE

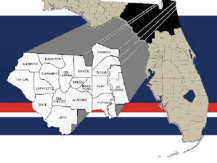
The Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) program represents an incentive-based approach that corresponds with the Open Roads Policy in Florida, which aims to swiftly clear major highway incidents and truck incidents in 90 minutes or less. Under this program, the RISC Contractor takes on the responsibility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

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

Over the past three months, District 2 has only utilized RISC one time. This program holds immense value and is vital for reducing roadway clearance times, particularly during high-traffic periods. Below, you will find specific information regarding the RISC event that occurred within District 2 from July 1, 2023, through September 30, 2023.

Date	Time	Location	Description
9/13/2023	9:12 PM	I-10 EB at MM 350, Duval County	Crash involving two semi-trucks; the first semi was loaded with 25,000 lbs. of shampoo, and the second semi was loaded with fuel. The fuel tank of the second semi-truck ruptured and began spilling an unknown amount of HAZMAT onto the roadway. All lanes blocked.

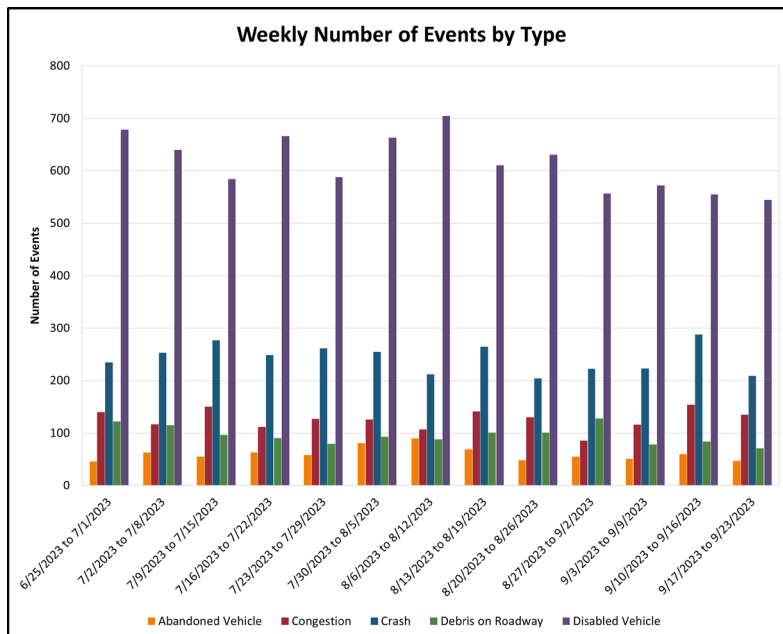
**Dee Dee Crews
Project Manager
District 2 ITS Operations**

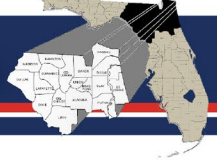


PERFORMANCE MEASURES

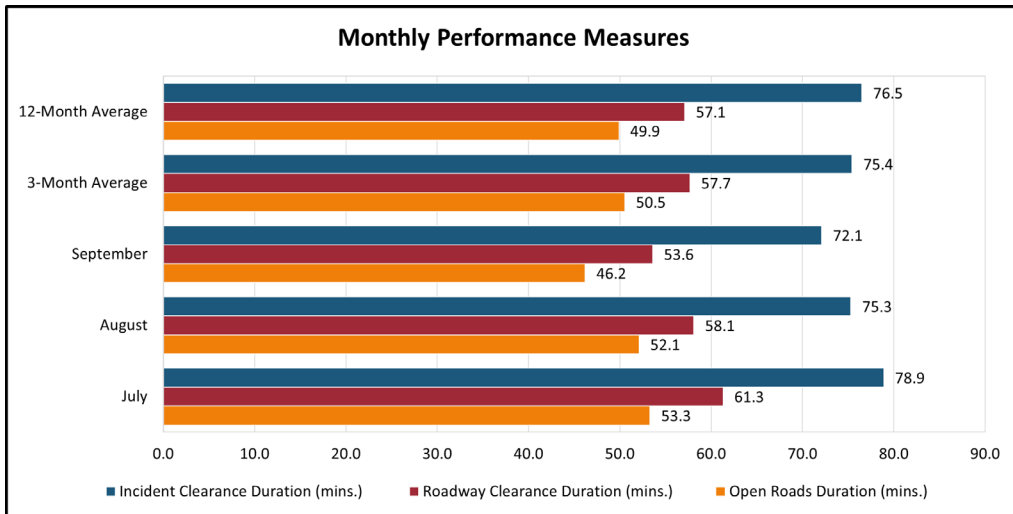
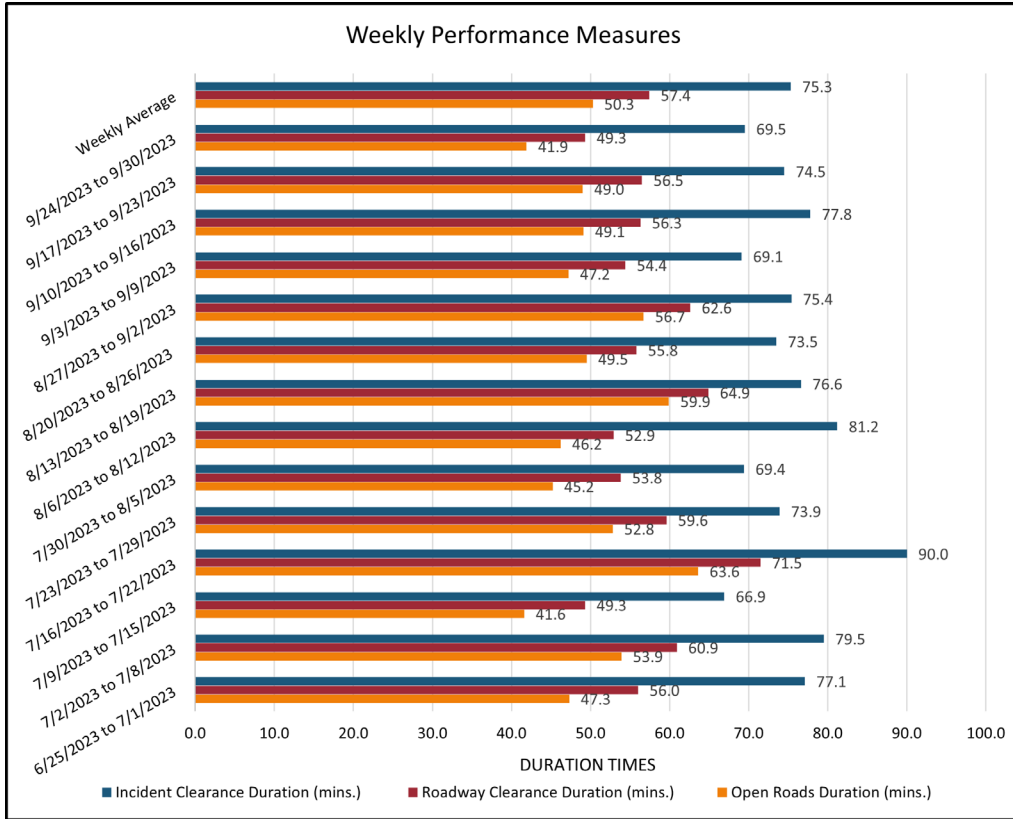
After examining the Road Ranger Event Summary, it can be noted that, during the period from July 1, 2023, to September 30, 2023, the Road Rangers were dispatched to an average of 596 crashes each month within District 2. This figure represents the average number of crashes that received Road Ranger response, which is slightly lower than the previous quarter’s monthly average of 634 crashes. From Quarter 2 to Quarter 3, there was also a 33.16% increase in the number of Abandoned Vehicles that Road Rangers responded to, increasing from 196 to 261. Additionally, based on the Weekly Events Summary, the First Coast Road Rangers (FCRR) also responded to an average of 60 abandoned vehicles, 129 congestion events, 95 debris on roadway events, and 608 disabled vehicle events per week, on average, during the third quarter of 2023.

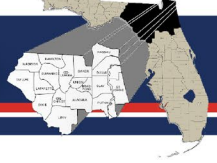
Monthly Performance measure data was compiled from July 1st through September 30th, providing information regarding the Open Roads Duration, Roadway Clearance Duration, and Incident Clearance Duration at events. The Open Roads Duration is calculated from the time the first responder arrives on scene until all travel lanes are cleared, with a goal of less than 90 minutes per event. For Quarter 3, the average Open Roads Duration was well below the 90-minute goal at 50.5 minutes, and 49.9 minutes for the past 12 months. Roadway Clearance Duration is calculated from the first notification of an event to all travel lanes cleared. The average Roadway Clearance Duration for Quarter 3 was 57.7 minutes, and 57.1 minutes for the past 12 months. Incident Clearance Duration is calculated from the first notification of an event to the last responder departure time. The average Incident Clearance Duration for Quarter 3 was 75.4 minutes, and 76.5 minutes for the past 12 months.





PERFORMANCE MEASURES continued





MARKETING

Recently while attending a wedding, I was reminded just how much technology and transportation color our world. What I assumed was the buzzing of a large insect turned out to be a drone capturing the bride and groom's special day. Earlier, on our way to the wedding, my husband and I plugged the venue coordinates into the FL511 app. This was one of those typical farm venues we'd never had any occasion to visit before, so making good time on the interstate was crucial to getting a good seat inside the barn. Yes, barn. You've probably been to one or two of those weddings yourself. At least there were real seats instead of hay bales.

Where would we be without technology? Drones. Travel apps. From workday commutes to special celebrations, we depend on technology and transportation to help us stay on schedule. When I attend area marketing visits, the FL511 app and time management are two topics that go hand in hand. Motorists primarily think of getting from Point A to Point B on time. Not a minute late. While inside our operations center we also rank time management high on our list, but more importantly, we're thinking safety; both for the motorist and our first responders. National Crash Responder Safety Week is coming up the week of November 13-17. As a nod to the Move Over Law, you'll hear from Action News Jax Traffic Anchor, Marithza Ross, later in our spotlight feature. Her traffic reports are often accompanied by safety messages. In her spotlight feature, she includes a story detailing why this message is so important to her.

We will continue to spread the message of safety and efficiency through the available FL511 platforms. Next month we'll visit FSCJ's downtown campus for their semi-annual faculty and student fair. And recently we made stops at both Kesier University and JAXPORT.

Throughout the fall and winter months we look forward to partnering with even more local organizations to promote the many resources available through FL511.



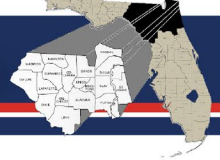
Dee Dee Crews, Project Manager, District 2 ITS Operations joined Sherri Byrd at JaxPort's Employee Health and Wellness Fair to promote FL511

If you're heading north to watch the leaves change colors, make sure your trip begins and ends with FL511. From our operations hub inside the Regional Transportation Management Center, we'll keep you up-to-date on current road conditions. FL511 is available in a variety of platforms. You can log onto [FL511.com](https://www.fl511.com), download one of the free FL511 Mobile Apps available for Apple and Android devices, or visit us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Connect. Know. Go!

What are you waiting for?

Sherri Byrd
Metric Engineering
Marketing Manager



SPOTLIGHT ON...MARITHZA ROSS
ACTION NEWS TRAFFIC ANCHOR

Your job is such a fascinating one, and I'm sure most Jacksonville residents are familiar with you, but for those who aren't, give us a little background. Your job title and station affiliation?

Hi there! I'm Marithza Ross, originally from South Texas, but I've been calling Northeast Florida home for the past decade. I studied meteorology during my undergraduate years and earned a master's degree in organizational development. I began my career as a reporter and have since worked in various roles within the local TV industry. Beyond my professional life, I'm a wife and a proud girl-mom.

How long have you been in your current role and what other jobs have you held?

Over the past six years at Action News Jax, I've held various roles, including meteorologist, anchor, reporter, and my current position as the traffic anchor on the morning show. I find the traffic segment enjoyable because, similar to the weather segment, I can be creative, create my graphics, and present ad-lib. You can't plan a traffic incident, so there's always something different to talk about every day. Most recently, I've also taken on producing and anchoring news briefs in Spanish for our new Telemundo Jacksonville station.

Where were you born/raised and what led you to Jacksonville?

I was born and raised in the Rio Grande Valley, I'm a proud Texan and also proud of being a first-generation college graduate. I attended the University of the Incarnate Word and after several years of working in various parts of

Texas, I relocated from San Antonio, Texas, to Gainesville, Florida, to pursue a career opportunity at the University of Florida. However, after the birth of our daughter, my husband and I built our home in Nocatee, where we have been living ever since.

Since you're a recognizable media personality, when you're out and about, how often do you get stopped? And how in the world do you ever finish a sandwich at a restaurant?

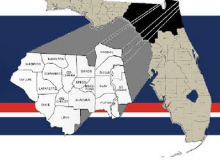
Oh, well, you know, it does happen from time to time! People are very sweet, but most of them will wait until I finish my sandwich and then maybe ask if I'm on TV or for a picture. I just always think/hope there's no lettuce in my teeth. :D

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

Learn to play pickleball.

Have you always known you wanted to be on TV? Standing in front of a mirror with a hairbrush in your hand doubling as a microphone perhaps? (or what DID you want to be growing up?)

Growing up without cable TV, my childhood was filled with the simple joys of public television – watching news programs and spending countless hours outdoors. Among those shows, my favorite program was "Texas County Reporter," where the host traveled around Texas, interviewing and sharing people's stories. I was fascinated with the production, and while I had no clue what that



SPOTLIGHT ON...MARITHZA ROSS
ACTION NEWS TRAFFIC ANCHOR
continued

job entailed, I knew it was something I wanted to do too. I never really gave it much thought after that; I had a very one-dimensional way of thinking, like, "That looks like fun, I want to do that." So I aspired to be a reporter and then a Meteorologist.

What do you love most about your career in the media? (whether it's connecting with viewers, comradery with your colleagues, etc.)

What I love most about my career in the media is the chance to share stories that inform and hopefully inspire. I'm very fortunate that I've been able to do this in several different ways. From severe weather coverage to major traffic stories or an event for a cause happening over the weekend. I truly love the local in local news so when I get to talk about what's happening where we live, my job feels fulfilling and rewarding.

When it comes to roadway safety and traffic, what is the key message you hope to get across to viewers?

Early in my career, I reported on a story about a young man who was killed by a car while towing a vehicle on the shoulder of the highway. It was a tragic story that profoundly impacted my driving habits. Whenever I encounter any vehicle on the side of the road, I immediately move over, and I always remember to share this important message: "Move Over or Slow Down."

In your partnership with FDOT, what tools and resources do you rely on most to deliver your daily reports?

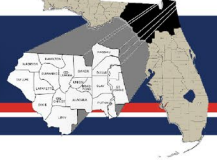
The FL511 website is Awesome! Its clean interface is easy to navigate and understand. I couldn't do my job without it. The significant distinction lies in the cameras; in Florida, we're fortunate to access real-time road cameras on FL511. This enables us not only to read about incidents but also watch them in real time. I can get a better idea of how long the scene will last because of this feature. The route feature also helps me double-check our in-house First Alert Traffic data. Together with FL511 the drive times are more precise.

Everyone's had a bad day at the office. Do you have any funny stories relating to your career? A foot-in-mouth moment? I'm sure there are no shortages when it comes to "Live On-Air TV."

Correct, there is no shortage of content here, (LOL) from ants biting my toes on a live shot to laugh or cough attacks, forgetting the day of the week, or the worst is when I've had something to eat and I think I'm going to finish it quickly and I end talking with food in my mouth.

Tell us a little about your family. (husband/daughter/extended family back home)

My husband and I met while I was working in San Antonio doing a weather live shot at the PGA Tours Valero Texas Open. We ran into each other on different days, and that was it. :) We got married, had our daughter, and traveled all over the country until she started grade school. Now that she's in school and we



SPOTLIGHT ON...MARITHZA ROSS **ACTION NEWS TRAFFIC ANCHOR** **continued**

both have “regular” jobs, we enjoy spending time playing pickleball, and golf, and doing the pool and beach thing.

You’ve been gifted with 12 glorious hours of uninterrupted freedom? It’s the weekend. How would you spend it?

I would play pickleball, maybe take a nap, but then wake up and go play again!

Cook at home or eat out? Either way, what’s your signature dish?

Cook at home, I like to be comfy and I love the smell of the house when there’s something yummy cooking. My signature dish is a true mom’s accomplishment. My daughter usually avoids her greens, but I rebranded my chicken pesto pasta as “dinosaur pasta” for her, and she loves it! I’m not sure if she thinks it’s food coloring, but I’ll never tell her that she loves spinach and garlic.

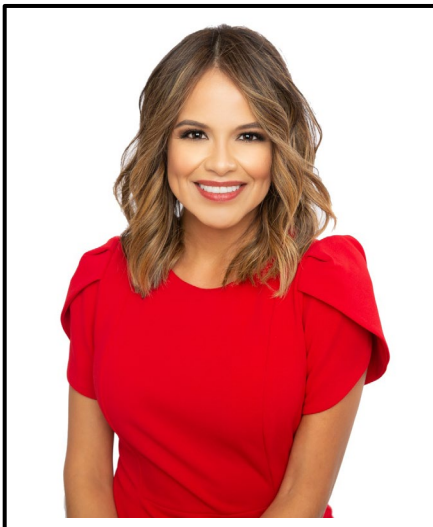
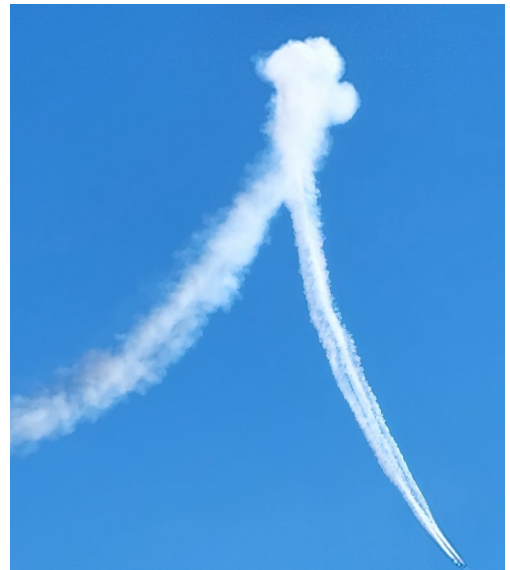


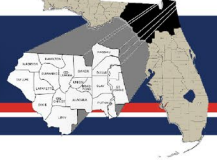
PHOTO GALLERY

On October 21-22, the Sea & Sky Spectacular returned to the Beaches. Just a few pictures if you weren’t able to make it!



Blue Angel Version of Breast Cancer Ribbon





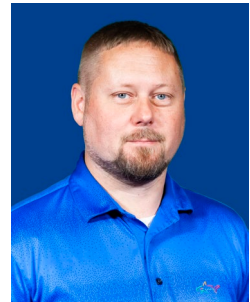
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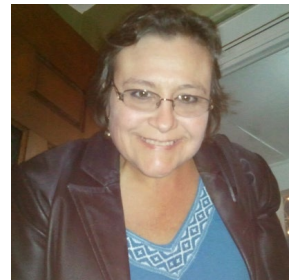
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