



The time is getting closer. Stay tuned for the reveal of the long awaited, brand new, state of the art, Regional Traffic Management Center.





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

On Thursday, September 10th, I had the honor and privilege of attending a beloved friend's funeral who passed after an extended illness. Mr. Virgil Manning had an outstanding 44-year career with the Florida Department of Transportation and was actually one of the founding fathers of our State Road Department (pre-FDOT). Virgil was on my staff when I began working for the Department in 1993 and from the onset I considered him a valuable mentor who helped shape who I am today as a manager. He, along with Martin Cole, Floyd Norman, JC Jordan, Steve Canaday and CR Griffiths, took me under their wings from day one to insure I "survived" what I was about to encounter.

I was never sure if it was because I was an oddity or if it's because I came in with an open mind and willingness to make things better. You see, all of these gentlemen were "good old boys" from farms outside of Jacksonville who each had nearly 30 years under their belt when I came through the door. I still recall my first staff meeting where CR asked "listen hear boy, we's were wonderin' what Island you's come from. My guess is somewhere with those Filipinos but Martin thinks you's come somewhere from Cuba or Miami." With a spurious laugh only Santa Claus could deliver Virgil almost fell to his knees trying to keep his composure and fessed up by saying "we're only messing with ya." At that point I realized I was part of the team and it was time to deliver.

On a weekly basis Virgil and I used to take long rides throughout FDOT roadways in Duval County. During these rides he'd share the experiences he had during his career with the Department and would impart words of wisdom

that stick with me to this day. Virgil was a straight shooter who explained everything I needed to know about Safety, Signage, Pavement Markings and Traffic Control Devices. He'd say things like "You see these trees along the shoulder. Every one of them should be chopped down and we should pour concrete from right-of-way line to right-of-way line." Of course, I had to ask "why?" His response was "without trees the only thing a stray motorist can hit is that cheap ass fence we put up. At least that won't hurt or kill them." As I stared at him in shock he'd again break off into that Santa Clause chuckle and say he was just kidding with me.

During one ride it hit me that I'd never know exactly what Virgil was trying to share with me until I walked in his shoes. On one of our rides I told Virgil that I wanted to "gear up" on a weekly basis to work with field crews under my supervision. He smiled, gave me a little laugh and then said that I was out of my freaking mind because those boys and girls would eat me alive. After a few minutes of silence he turned to me and without hesitation said "That's a great idea Pete. They need to know you care so with you putting your life in their hands it may pick up the crews' morale. Just keep your hard hat on and an eye on the Grader operator. I'd hate to see him take you out since I'm just getting to like you."

I worked closely with the other staff supervisors mentioned above but always ended up getting teamed with Virgil during emergency events like roadway flooding or hurricane evacuations. The most memorable experience sort of led to the relationship we've had over the next twenty years. It was during a month when we had

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

heavy rains in North Florida. Every road we maintained seemed to be taking on water, so our job was to install warning signs on the roads that were impassable. At some point during our field assessment Virgil had to relieve himself from the 64-ounce cola he'd been drinking. While he was in the convenience store I decided to call into the maintenance office to let them know our status. During the call this tall, slim and heavily scented person came up to start a discussion. Realizing the situation I tried to end my call as fast as possible but Virgil had come out of the store a few seconds before and wanted to join in on the discussion.

I quickly hung up the phone, grabbed Virgil by the arm and began guiding him to the truck. Virgil fought valiantly, trying to continue the conversation with this person on my behalf. When we got to the truck he began to smile and said "Pete, I think you have a chance with that girl!" I politely thanked him and pointed out the Adam's apple on this person. Virgil turned as white as snow, hollered for me to "get in the truck" and sped off like we'd just robbed the convenience store. About two blocks down Virgil had to pull over because he was laughing so hard and turning red as a Beet. The next words out of his mouth were "Pete, we've got to find you a nice country girl to settle down with so this doesn't happen anymore!" During the next week he'd left about 10 phone numbers on my desk with eligible women who lived in the Baker and Columbia County areas.

At times during these weekly rides our discussions revolved around the future of my career and the Department. During these talks we would often speak about the benefits of having Dynamic Message Signs for emergency events. This led to the possible capabilities for

use of these signs on a daily basis. We'd always end the conversation with the conclusion, "it'll never happen in North Florida" and proceeded to discuss topics like employee morale and behavior. I think that was one thing that made our relationship so strong. Virgil always knew I tried to be fair and just to everyone, no matter their position in the organization or their socio-economic situation.

A couple of years into our working relationship I encountered one of the toughest calls presented to a manager. We had an employee complaint submitted against Virgil and some of the other supervisors about the treatment being given to a select number of staff. During my investigation there were numerous interviews conducted and shockingly most of the accusations were true. I tried to give these supervisors the benefit of the doubt so I called them in for a fact finding session. To my amazement none of them denied these accusations and said it's been part of the culture since they first began their career in the Road Department. Knowing right from wrong I had to make one of the toughest decisions of my FDOT career and spent numerous sleepless nights pondering what to do.

Virgil noticed the impact this situation had on me so he came into my office and asked for permission to close the door so that he could speak freely without interruption. The first words out of Virgil's mouth were "we were wrong and you need to do what's best for the office and Department." I was shell-shocked but looked him straight in the eyes and said "you know this will be the first reprimand you've received in your thirty plus years with the Department." With that Santa Claus chuckle Virgil said "I know but YOU HAVE TO DO YOUR JOB!" We then



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

proceeded to discuss my future with the Department and how this event was a building block that would make me a better manager for years to come.

I had to hand it to Virgil on sticking up for me throughout the weeks following the reprimand. It caused quite a stir throughout the District with many calling for my ouster. Through it all Virgil spoke loudly and clearly that I was doing my job and he (they) were to blame since they should have known better. As time passed so did the backlash from this situation. In hindsight, it brought Virgil and me closer together than we could have ever imagined because it strengthened our belief in each other.

A year or so later I decided to venture to greener pastures at the St. Augustine Maintenance office. The day before leaving I'd just finishing packing when Virgil came to my door. He said he wanted to personally thank me for three of the best years he'd enjoyed at the Department and wanted to wish me well. As he began to get emotional he asked if he could close the door to share one last moment with me. That "moment" lasted for hours as we reminisced from my first day to the last. To set the stage, Virgil is a big old country boy who was built like an ox. As tears began to drip from his eyes he wished me well and said "now don't become a stranger because you're like family to all of us." He then shook my hand, I gave him a hug and we both knew it was time for the mentor to say "so long" to his student.

Over the years Virgil and I kept in touch, even after he retired from the Department. As his health got worse we often talked about me

visiting him at his home. Each time the plan had to be changed because of his worsening health condition and conflicts in my work schedule. The night before he passed we received a call from his wife Evonne letting us know that Virgil was in the ICU. I realized that this may be my last chance so I cleared my schedule to make sure I could visit. The next morning Evonne called to let us know he'd passed away. Fortunately, prior to the funeral I had a chance to spend a moment with Evonne and we spoke about his last moments.

I mentioned to Evonne that I was guilt stricken with the fact that I'd missed many opportunities to share time with Virgil. Through the tears she smiled and said to me "You were always there! Virgil always talked about you like you were in the room. You were like family to us and he'll always be grateful for your friendship." As I walked away I realized I'd been blessed with one of the best mentors a person could have in their career. Virgil may be gone but will forever be with me until the day I pass.



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

I realize this article had little to do with ITS, but we'd all be wrong. The three years spent working with my mentor, Mr. Virgil Manning, were the stepping stones to the program I've helped build over the past 12 years. Everything I do while running the ITS program is for the good of the Department, the motorists and community as a whole. I base decisions off of common sense, fiscal responsibility and value. All of these qualities were based off of lessons learned from Mr. Manning and I will forever be in debt for the time and patience he gave to me during my three years under his mentorship. Hopefully, each of you will find as good a mentor at some point in your career.

Pete Vega, District 2
TSM&O Manager



**NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS
ENGINEER**

A couple of weeks ago, I had the pleasure of attending FDOT's Freight and Logistics Academy taught at the University of North Florida. Aside from being in a classroom environment again, complete with the excitement of learning new things and going on great field trips, we students were able to gain a very important perspective on logistics and how goods move from supplier to customer. This is useful to us at the department as we strive to make our transportation network the best in the country for freight. Doing so will not only attract new business here, but make us the most

desirable state to ship through once the expansion of the Panama Canal is completed and the movement of international freight is forever changed.

In the world of logistics, time is money, every single second of it. Carrying one's inventory for the shortest time possible is key to having a successful business model, as is meeting the demands of customers. This is becoming immensely more important in our connected world where we have come to develop great expectations, such as being able to buy a product off of Amazon and have it to our door in two days or less, free of shipping charges. The market has become complex and competitive in an effort to source the best, least costly, and most reliable products and get them to the customers as quickly as possible. Many companies have consultants upon consultants that help them build and maintain their logistics network to hone their competitive edge and keep their customer base happy.

Ironically, as I was in the class, District 2 ITS was busy partnering with our Planning staff to program four projects that will directly benefit freight through the use of our tools. The first project will install the typical ITS suite of devices around the Dames Point and Blount Island terminals to inform truckers of the state of traffic around Jacksonville before they even leave the port. This will be done through MVDS, Bluetooth devices, cameras, DMSs, and even CCTV monitors at the terminal gates that will give the truckers the information they need to make an informed decision upon their route. The signals around the port area will also be upgraded to the adaptive systems in order to more efficiently serve the demands of the port traffic.

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NOTES FROM THE DISTRICT 2 ITS ENGINEER continued

We have another project that will perform a similar function at Heckscher/ Zoo Parkway and I-95, giving truckers the option to determine whether to detour their route at I-95 and US 17 in response to traffic. A third project proposes the same type of system along MLK Expressway and Talleyrand that, in Pete’s words, will “improve movement of freight within the area and throughout the North Florida region since advanced information can be utilized by shippers to reroute, reschedule or change movements in the North Florida region.

Catching this freight early enough will improve efficiencies, reduce fuel costs and improve the overall performance of the roadway system within the region.” The fourth project proposes a truck parking lot and system outside the Talleyrand Terminal that will relieve a years-long issue with trucks lining down the local streets while waiting their turn to get through the terminal gates.

These projects, along with our continued development of a statewide Truck parking Availability System (TPAS), that will give drivers information on availability of public parking along interstates and more, are some of the ways that ITS is working hard to enhance the efficiency of freight movements throughout District 2 and the state. This gives our state, and its ports and resident businesses, the competitive edge in the international freight and logistics market.

Josh Reichert
ITS/TMC Program Manager

NORTH FLORIDA TPO

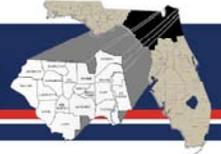
During this month’s newsletter I want to share what the NFTPOT has done for the program by supporting efforts to build the new RTMC. I am going to rehash the past while looking at what we

will have in the future. As you read this section please understand that I am trying to reflect back on a 12 years plus effort to get this multi-agency facility up and running. Hopefully, you will see the big picture when I am done.

I began my career in the ITS office around the end of April 2002. My first reaction when entering the existing TMC was “wow, lots of TVs.”

Unfortunately, this first impression went by the wayside about six-months later after seeing what a “real” RTMC should look like for proper traffic management. I was fortunate enough to attend the annual ITS America conference in Minneapolis and took a tour of their recently opened RTMC. In this facility there were multiple agencies including DOT TMC operators, State Highway Patrol dispatchers, local agency signal operators and the media. Even though this was a two-story facility all of the operations staff were located on the first floor of the RTMC with each agency adjacent to one another. It sort of made our North Florida TMC look like small potatoes, however it provided me with a vision that’s led to what we designed for our new RTMC.

I’ve toured over 19 TMCs during my tenure, considering the good with the bad features at each location. I took this knowledge and began with a blank sheet of paper for the initial design. I learned that in Florida, most of the newly constructed RTMCs only had two agencies on the floor. It was either FDOT TMC operations sharing space with FHP or with a local agency. The only location that came close to a multi-agency design was the Tallahassee Safety Complex. Unfortunately, they decided to build the facility with separate work areas for each agency, thereby defeating



NORTH FLORIDA TPO continued

the concept of multi-agency communication within the same floor space. In my opinion they might as well have been in separate buildings based on the operational concept they incorporated.

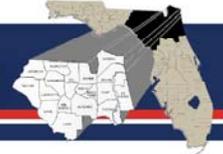
The existing TMC was well-designed within the 2000 square foot space but our program quickly outgrew the accommodations. Over the past five years we've had to stick ITS personnel in spare offices outside the TMC as well as the second floor of the FDOT Urban Office due to our increased operational responsibilities. Likewise, when the three screen rear projection Barco video wall went "kaput" we decided to go old school by installing twenty-four television monitors in its place. Many colleagues told me we were insane and would have to replace these monitors every year due to burn-in and such. Well folks, we are in year ten using these same monitors with only one going out over that time due to a power supply. Once the Barco video wall was replaced we had to come up with a new method to control the streaming video images so we decided to have our software vendor, SWRi, develop one in SunGuide.

When the opportunity first arose to build a new facility in 2007 using funding provided by Governor Bush I took every bit of knowledge I'd gained during my tours of multiple TMCs and approached our partners in law enforcement, fire/rescue, city traffic signals, transit, seaport operations and the airport. At first we had limited interest but after explaining the benefits of a multi-agency RTMC the floodgates sprung open.

You'd think that was a good thing but this response overextended my budget, thus some major decisions had to be made. The easiest way to determine who was serious was to put a price tag on the participating agencies. This reduced interest somewhat but I was surprised by the number of agencies who were still interested. Once the recession hit and we lost Governor Bush's funding the RTMC project was mothballed until a future opportunity arose.

That's where the North Florida TPO stepped in to rescue the effort. I went back to the drawing board with the funding they provided and sought serious participation from our partnering agencies (i.e. supplemental funding). When the dust settled we figured out a way to include some Sheriff and Fire/Rescue dispatchers who would join the Department, FHP and COJ Traffic Signal Operations staff in the new RTMC. For transit we found a unique way to interconnect our systems and actually found space for one of their dispatchers on the RTMC floor who will share a spot with us during major events. Once the pieces fell into place a plan of action needed to be developed.

FHP Captain Keith Gaston and I took the lead on the initial design. Keith provided the "must haves" due to Homeland Security and FHP requirements while I focused on the lessons learned during my tours of multiple RTMCs. I also included some features in an attempt to get some LEEDS certification points. Some of the items that were a must include dual security access to the RTMC, showers in the bathrooms for 24/7 emergency operations, windows for ambient lighting, a



NORTH FLORIDA TPO continued

“quiet room”, a generator that would run the facility for seven straight days, a bullet proof safe area for smokers, ergonomic workstations with individual thermal control for operators and other must have items to make this effort worthwhile. Some things that I excluded were a two story building (elevators are a pain!), rear projection video walls, separate data centers, multiple conference rooms, an exclusive media room and items that did not add value to the facility. Keith and I approached the design seeking quality, efficiency, practicality and productivity, thereby putting our desires for flashiness on the back burner.

With this information the first design concept I presented to the architect was a rectangular one-story building that was about 25,000 square feet. Of course, I was ridiculed by the architect for this initial concept and at our first meeting it was pointed out by the firm that I was an engineer and they were the architects so they'd deliver a product that met our expectations. First design they presented was nixed because it was a two-story facility. The second design had multiple conference rooms and a section for the media.

After the third design was presented they sensed my frustration and returned with a fourth option which was a rectangular 25,000 square foot RTMC. After Keith and I looked at this fourth design we realized it would be more space that needed so we worked with Jeff to carve out space of 5,000 square feet for the NFTPO staff. This agreement led to a multi-purpose board room that could be used for their monthly Board meetings, staff training and an EOC for major events.

We decided to go all out on technology at this facility since this would be our one and only chance to include the tools necessary to be successful for years to come. I would be cheating you if I tried to explain what technology has been included in the RTMC so you'll just have to come visit to see what's been done. I will give you one teaser in that several years ago at an ITS America conference I saw a computerized monitor used by the military to plan out a response to major events. This monitor could be used as a tablet whereby you could draw, write and color out a plan, then ship it to whomever to execute your directions. Well folks, we pinched our pennies and were able to include this state of the art technology in our facility.

I guess I could go on-and-on about what we've accomplished over the past few years but it would be an injustice. We plan to hold an invite only ribbon cutting ceremony on November 12th but will also hold several open houses soon thereafter. If you have interest in coming to one of these open houses please reference October's newsletter for potential dates. I thank everyone that has kept up with this never ending saga that....has finally reached an end! Let's just hope that I don't forget to pay the light bill on November 2nd or it will be one hell of a disappointing ribbon cutting ceremony.

Pete Vega, District 2
TSM&O Manager



CONSTRUCTION

American Lighting and Signalization is currently completing the conduit work and beginning to install the fiber optic cable on the Phase 9 Project (I-295 from the south I-95 interchange to Atlantic Boulevard). Device testing is scheduled to begin next month and continue into November. Final system integration and testing will extend into December with the project being fully operational by the end of the year.

Dragados has continued work on the I-95 St. Johns County fiber project with project limits from US 1 in south St. Johns County extending north to the CR 210 Rest Area. The contractor had wanted to be completed with this work by the end of September, but the excessive rain has slowed their operations and delayed them several weeks. Once this project is complete, a second project will begin to install ITS devices throughout the project limits beginning early next year.

The ITS Project on I-75 and US 441 in the area of Paynes Prairie is nearing completion. Hinson Electric has completed all of the device handover testing and the Systems Manager is in the process of final integration and testing of the devices. Work still remains to be completed by the contractor but the devices should be ready for use by mid-October.

Highway Safety Devices has started work on the I-75 project with limits from SR 24 in Gainesville extending north to the Georgia state line. The contractor is currently working on installing their Maintenance of Traffic signs and erosion control. They plan on having three different sets of crews begin work on three different sections of the project to install conduit, fiber pull boxes, and fiber splice vaults. This project is scheduled for completion in late 2016.

Kevin Jackson
ITS Construction Liaison

MAINTENANCE

The maintenance crews have continued to work on items at the new RTMC facility throughout the month of September in preparation for us moving in to the building next month. Personnel completed all of the runs of Cat 6 communications cables to the ITS and FHP offices and operator consoles on the RTMC floor. They also ran a new 144 strand single-mode fiber optic cable from the communications hub on I-95 to the new building and a 48 strand single-mode fiber optic cable from the microwave tower near the old building to the new building. Crews continue to do work to help finish the communications infrastructure within the data rooms and in the mechanical yard area.

Besides the work at the new RTMC, crews have been doing their normal maintenance activities for damaged equipment. The summertime storms have let up some over the past month which has resulted in less lightning related damage, but the maintenance staff has still remained busy with the daily repairs. The maintenance contractor has also started replacing all of the older analog CCTV cameras with newer digital CCTV cameras. These new cameras have better picture resolution and are capable of High Definition video streaming. The digital CCTVs also do not have a separate video encoder, which means there is one less point of failure within the camera system. Historically, we have seen a significant amount of lightning damage on the video encoders within the cabinets, so by changing to the digital CCTVs we are anticipating less maintenance related to the video systems in the field.

Craig Carnes
Metric Engineering



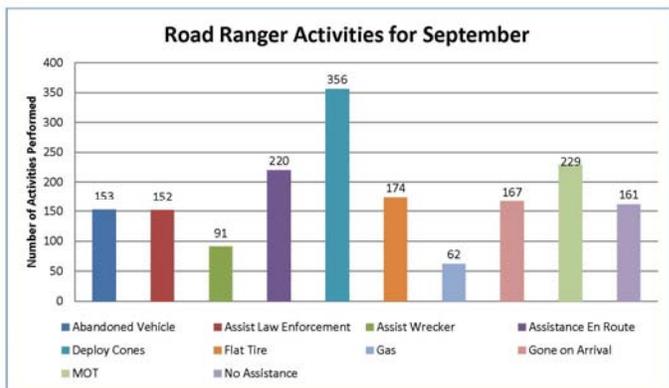
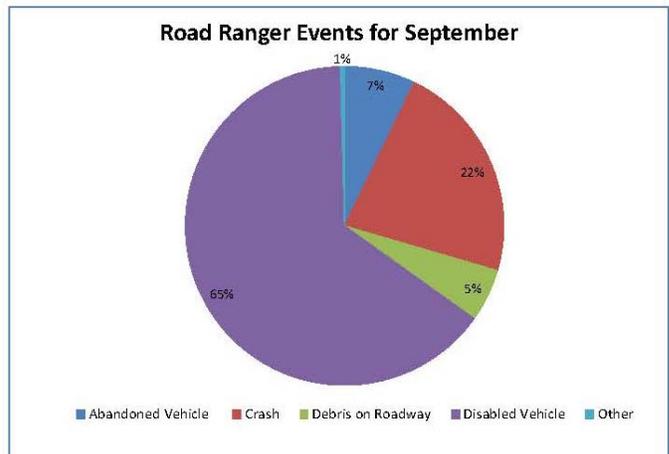
ROAD RANGER UPDATE

The First Coast Road Rangers operate a fleet of dedicated vehicles and play a crucial role in Incident Management here in District 2. They assist the TIM Team Partners and motorists traveling on our roadways.

The Road Rangers held their monthly safety meeting on Wednesday, September 2, 2015 at 11:30 AM at the FDOT Urban Office.

These meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month to help the Road Rangers improve and learn from one another. They go over key issues that help them develop into the best Ranger that they can be while at the same time providing an excellent and efficient service to the traveling motorists. At these meetings, the Rangers also reflect on incidents that can be used as a learning experience for the benefit of the group.

As you can see from the following charts, the Road Rangers have been very busy the past month. The Road Rangers have responded and performed many different types of activities and events so far in September through the 18th. Our Road Rangers continue to work extremely hard to help keep our roadways clear and limit the number of incidents. They have helped motorists with various activities ranging from assisting law enforcement to providing assistance to drivers in dangerous situations. They have also helped over 750 disabled vehicles and assisted in close to 300 crashes so far in the month of September and are projected to help so much more throughout the remainder of the month.





RISC – RAPID INCIDENT SCENE CLEARANCE - UPDATE

District 2 has not had any RISC incidents for the month of September but our RISC Contractors remain alert and ready to respond if needed in an event. Our RISC program comprises nine counties and covers major incidents along our interstates. These interstates include I-75, I-10, I-95, I-295, SR 9A and J. Turner Butler Boulevard. We are very fortunate to have our RISC Team here in District 2 and are very thankful that they are always prepared to respond.

FIRST COAST TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The First Coast TIM Team held its bi-monthly meeting on **September 15, 2015** at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center, 2198 Edison Avenue at 10:00 A.M. Ms. Donna Danson kicked off the meeting by welcoming everyone and reminding everyone that these meetings are held to bring together all of our Incident Management Teams so that they can learn from one another.

The meeting started with an update of the construction in the area, which includes the Overland Bridge Project. The project seems to be progressing though there is still a lot of work to be completed. There was some setback due to a crash that took out one of the barrier walls on the Atlantic Boulevard exit ramp, but Mr. Bill Kays assured everyone that crews are working their hardest to finish the construction in a timely manner.

Mr. Craig Carnes provided the ITS project updates. Some of those include the Phase 9 Project on the southeast quadrant of I-295. This project will be the last ITS project along the I-295 Beltway. Another project that is underway is the installation of ITS along I-75 to the Georgia Line,

which is broken up into two phases. The first phase of this project just went into construction and the second phase is currently in design and should start next fall.

The TEAM also reviewed several major incidents that occurred over the past couple of months and there was input from all TIM members due to the severity of the incidents. The TEAM discussed, at length, the need for our Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) program seeing as some of our major interstates were shut down for long periods of time during these incidents. One incident, in particular, involved a tractor-trailer carrying a load of lumber that overturned mid-morning on I-95 near Myrtle Avenue. The resulting mess blocked all through southbound lanes until about 1 p.m and lasted over eight hours. It is essential for all of the members to be aware of the RISC program and the benefits it provides.

Ms. Donna Danson would like the TEAM's input in reviewing the current TIM Team Mission and Vision statements. If you have any suggestions or comments that you would like to provide, please email Donna at Donna.Danson@dot.state.fl.us. We will be going over all of your suggestions at the next TIM meeting.

If anyone is interested in the SHRP2 Incident Management Training Course, please contact Craig Carnes at ccarnes@metriceng.com or Misha Gonzales at melder@metriceng.com /904-260-1567.

Craig is more than willing to work with any agencies' schedules; including nights and weekends to make sure the course is available for groups of ten or more trainees.



ALACHUA BRADFORD TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The next Alachua-Bradford Traffic Incident Management Team meeting will be held **October 14, 2015** 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. Your presence helps the TEAM build together and become stronger as a unit.

There is an upcoming SHRP2 training on October 7, 2015 at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center at 2198 Edison Avenue from 1:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.. Please e-mail Misha Gonzales with your name, phone number, and company if you would like to attend. There is also a Train the Trainer course on October 26, 2015 from 8:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M., which will certify you to provide the four-hour trainings. Train the Trainer class registration is at: <https://fhwatimtraining.wufoo.com/forms/national-tim-ttt-registration-jacksonville-fl/>. This class will also be held at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center.

The First Coast TIM Team will hold its next bi-monthly meeting on November 17, 2015 at the FDOT Urban Office Training Center, 2198 Edison Avenue at 10:00 A.M. Please mark your calendar to attend this meeting. Your attendance is important to the continued success of the TEAM.

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.



Donna Danson
District 2 ITS Program Manager



PERFORMANCE MEASURES

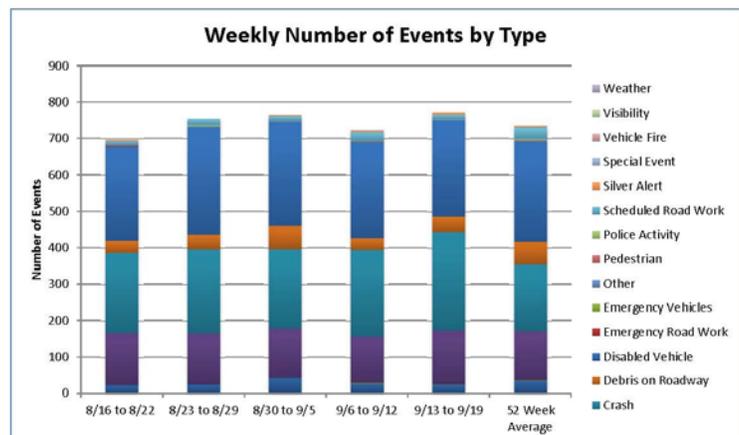
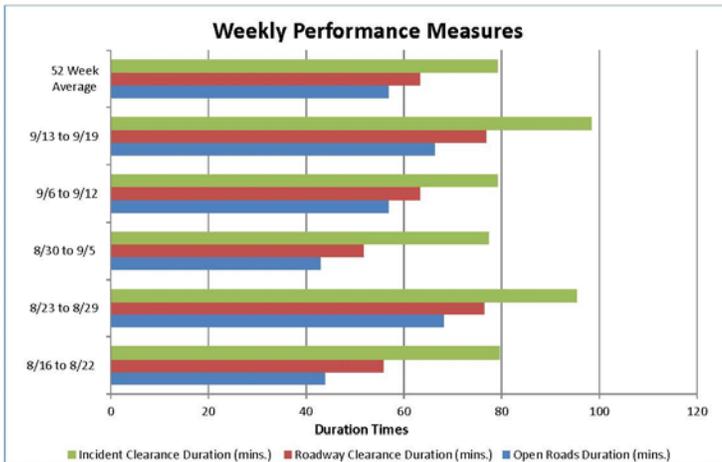
This past weekend I was able to visit Hotlanta! While driving through downtown it was amazing to see their interstate systems and it was honestly a bit scary to see these 6 lane highways with everyone weaving in and out. I swear we almost got hit like 50 times. It was also interesting to see how they let the public know that there is construction up ahead. Of course, this was obviously a mistake but as we can see from the picture, the sign was supposed to be a "Road Work Ahead" sign ...

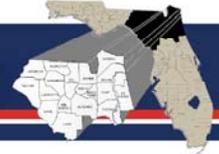


Over the past several weeks, we have had some crazy incidents here in District 2. From frozen chicken and lumber strewn all over I-95 to an FHP Trooper being struck by a motorist while working a traffic stop. Thankfully the FHP Trooper is doing well but these incidents have created a spike in clearance duration times in several of the weeks for the past month. Even though our clearance times were higher than our typical average for several of the past five weeks, we are still under our goals with our Incident Clearance duration average at 86 minutes and our Roadway Clearance duration average at 65 minutes.

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

Sherrell Lall
Metric Engineering





OPERATIONS

I joined the Metric Engineering team in January of 2014 as a Feedback Operator, and in the ensuing months I had the opportunity to take on a variety of roles and job functions. In that time I did all that I could to learn as much as possible about my position with the company, and the day-to-day operations of the Transportation Management Center. In August of this year the TMC Supervisor position opened up, and I was given the chance to put all that I had learned into practice. This is not my first time in a leadership role, however it has been the most challenging to date. It has also given me the chance to learn what it takes to transition from an employee to a supervisor, and what it required of me in order to take that next step.

I have taken a leadership role in both the military and civilian capacity, and there is an irrefutable difference between the two. In the military management comes more in the form of issuing orders, as soldiers are required to follow those orders with little room for deviation. On several occasions the lives of my fellow soldiers were in my hands, and mine in theirs, and that kind of responsibility cannot be taken lightly. The difference is that because you have so much authority over your subordinates you also have a responsibility to exercise that authority responsibly.

The time that I spent in retail management also helped to prepare me for handling personnel, and my approach to motivation and discipline. Unlike the military where resigning is not an option, civilian employees are free to leave as they please, and as a result managing them is more of a challenge. My style is one of keeping my responsibility to both my superiors and subordinates in mind while doing my best to motivate employees who are only invested 1 or 2 days a week to the TMC. The challenge that comes with achieving that balance is something I have dealt with previously, and I see as an

area of strength that I bring to the table. I have already been exposed to that in my new position here at the TMC and look at it from the side of an Operator and how to handle it as a Supervisor. Getting the most out of our staff is my main responsibility moving forward.

Though training on TMC Operations is standardized through the TMC Certification Program there is still room to make sure personnel receive the best I have to offer. Steps are included for a reason and making sure the Operator understands not only what to do but why we are doing it is important. Thorough training will lay the foundation of confidence for personnel to make timely, accurate decisions. Staff members understanding our program, as a whole, will bring those Operators more into the fold and build that investment they have in us. I know personally that the more I was educated on what we were doing, the importance and motivation grew. There is a lot of hidden value in what the TMC does and how even tedious tasks can reap large dividends in the long run.

The transition from an Operator to a Supervisor has been laid out for me and the steps have been gradual. There is a large ITS boom on the horizon with the new RTMC, Express Lanes, Phase 9, the Gainesville ITS deployment, I-10 and I-75 coverage and the First Coast Outer Beltway to name a few. I am happy to be a part of this program and pleased I am transitioning now and not in a year or two when our Operations will almost quadruple.

As the new TMC Supervisor I am looking forward to working with all of you. Being a part of the Metric team has been an incredible experience so far, and I am eager to see what the future will bring!

Jake Wilson
TMC Supervisor



MARKETING

Once things are for sure, the Marketing Team never plants its feet in one place for long. We like to stay true to the 511 slogan, "Know Before You Go and... Keep Moving!"

First stop, City Hall in beautiful downtown Jacksonville where we met with representatives from Forever Fit 50 and Beyond. This annual competition is sanctioned by the Florida Sports Foundation and sponsored locally by the Senior Services division of the City of Jacksonville. It features Olympic style events for athletes who are "young at heart...but fit for life!" Athletes compete in everything from power lifting to swimming to track and field events. My personal favorites...line dancing and pickleball. And something called Chinese Mah Jong. Just because I like the way it sounds. 511 is proud to be partnering with these "seasoned athletes" (as they call themselves). They certainly set the bar high for other "youth" in our city, and they're helping us carry the 511 torch to every corner of Northeast Florida.

Also, kudos to our 511 Traffic Team. Our 511 Road Reports, which can be heard locally on WOKV radio 104.5 FM and AM 690, received high marks from Cox Radio Executives in Atlanta with comments like, "The 511 road reports add value to the Traffic Team"... "These reports provide credibility, reliability and accuracy"... "The reports are delivered with enthusiasm." These comments reaffirm our mission of providing accurate and timely traffic information to motorists, while simultaneously helping motorists stay safe on Florida's roadways. We take these comments to heart. And as always we'll continue working hard, "getting stuck in traffic so you don't have to!"

A few other things to note as we flip the calendar page. We've been offered free booth space at

three October events. Free booth space always excites us because then we can focus our energy on doing what we do best; handing out 511 literature and educating motorists about the benefits of using the 511 program.

First on the list, a visit to Deutsche Bank's Employee Health and Vendor Fair. This event will take place the first week in October. Next up, we'll head downtown to set up shop on the third floor of the beautiful Hyatt Regency. Last time we were in their conference center, we were treated to spectacular views of the St. Johns River and the Main Street Bridge! Finally, we'll wrap up the month by Trick or Treating on the Street. Our friends at Hemming Plaza have agreed to lend us a spot next to Vagabond Coffee so we can shine the spotlight on 511. Feel free to stop by Friday, October 30th from 11:30am-1:30pm and Trick or Treat on the Street...with us!

Oh, one more thing, we tag teamed with Ron Tittle, Public Information District 2, to do an interview on WHJX's Hot 99.5FM (formerly 106.5FM) and 106.1FM. The interview aired Sunday, September 27th, and sound bites from the interview could also be heard the following week during the Tom Joyner Morning Show.

Remember to include 511 in your fall travel plans. Perhaps a trip up north to see the leaves change colors? You can dial 5-1-1, visit www.FL511.com or download one of our free 511 Traffic Apps available for Apple and Android devices. Know Before You Go and Keep Moving!

Sherri Byrd
Marketing Manager



SPOTLIGHT ON...THE “OLD” TMC

This month's Spotlight feature is a bit different. Pete Vega challenged the staff to write a story about our “soon to be semi-mothballed TMC”. He added that he would take the winner out to lunch. Sherri Byrd and Penny Kamish were to be the judges. There were three submissions, all with a different viewpoint and writing style. After a lot of difficult deliberations, Craig Carnes prevailed and his story follows. The stories of the two runners-up can be found at www.Jax511.com, the first button on news just below the banner.

I was born in April 2002 in Jacksonville and have spent my entire life here. I love living here in Jacksonville, but that may be because I've actually never been anywhere else. I'm the oldest of my brother and sister TMCs here in Florida and actually the smallest of the family, which has often been pointed out by others when they first meet me. Being the oldest TMC in the state, I've seen a lot of things in my 13 years. It's been exciting to be able to see all of the changes within the ITS Program in the state.

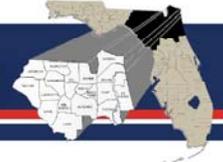
Like many youngsters, I had some issues early in life that required me to have some “surgeries” to get me in tip-top shape. One such issue was my video wall. My video wall was thought to be cutting edge when I was born, but as time went by those first few years, it kept having issues and costing a lot of money to maintain. Thanks to Peter Vega, my old video wall was replaced with a new video wall of Plasma televisions. Since then I've not had any more issues with my video wall, other than the two broken monitors you can see in my picture. Because of the reliability of this new video wall District Two has not had to spend any money on maintenance since it was installed. Thanks Mr. Vega.



I've accomplished quite a few things that I'm proud of in my life. I was the first TMC in the state to use SunGuide® software, which is the software that is used throughout Florida to monitor and operate the ITS Systems. I guess it's in my nature to try new things, because I've actually been the first TMC to have many of the new versions of SunGuide® implemented.

Although many of the new versions have caused me to have issues, Jason Summerfield and the people from Southwest Research Institute, the creator of SunGuide®, and FDOT Central Office have always been very proactive in making sure the issues were resolved as soon as possible.

Another thing that I am proud of is being here to see the growth of the District Two ITS Program and being able to be a big part of its success. I was born during the construction of the first large ITS Project in District Two and since then have watched another six large ITS Phases constructed. Each of these phases added more and more capabilities to the ITS System and provided the Operations personnel with more devices to help them do their jobs. In a few months, the Phase 9 Project will be completed, which will complete the ITS System



SPOTLIGHT ON...THE “OLD” TMC
continued

on I-95 and I-295 in Duval County. You can't imagine how wonderful it has been to see ITS grow; it's as if it were my own child growing up before my eyes.

The one regret I have is that by the very nature of TMC Operations staffing, I have seen a lot of friends come and go throughout my life. I have been used as a stepping stone for many of my friends, as they used their time with me to go to college or to seek other opportunities. I hold no grudges against those friends, as I am proud that I could help them prepare for their future. Other friends however, have stayed with me to this very day. People like Donna Danson, Penny Kamish, Ryan Crist and Jason Evans have been around since my birth and have helped me to get where I am today. To those friends and everyone else who has been a part of my life, I say thank you.

As you can tell, I'm getting a little emotional. The reason is that District Two is about to give birth to a new TMC. The new TMC will be filled with the latest technologies, will be much bigger than I am and will house multiple first responder agencies. It will be the center of activity for Traffic Incident Management in the north Florida area and will allow first responders to respond to incidents quicker and clear the incident from the roadway faster than ever before. I must say, I'm a bit jealous, but I understand that my size has limited my ability to provide the capabilities that the new TMC will provide because it is over 20,000 square feet.

So, in order for the ITS System and the Traffic Incident Management capabilities to grow, I must take on a new position. As of October 8th I will begin my new role as back-up TMC. In this new role, I will support ITS and the new TMC on

an as needed basis. Just like a back-up quarterback on a football team, I know that the starter can go down at any time, so I will keep many of my current capabilities and will be ready to step in should the new TMC have any issues performing its duties.

Thank you all for your friendship and all I ask is that once I take over my new position, my friends come by every once in a while to say hello and see how I am doing. I'd hate to fall in the middle of the night and break a server rack and have nobody find me until it's too late.



Sadly, one of the TMC servers won't be making the move to the new RTMC.
RIP- Larry the Server, gone way too young.



Photo Gallery



Last week, representatives from the Colorado Department of Transportation, FHWA and the Colorado State Police participated in a peer-to-peer exchange here in District 2. The group visited the RTMC to learn more about the integration of CADD, integration with other agencies, communication protocols and dispatch roles. Attendees also visited Walt's Wrecker service to learn more about RISC (Rapid Incident Scene Clearance).





Traffic Incident Management
2015 Meeting Schedule

First Coast TIM Team

FDOT Urban Office Training Center
2198 Edison Avenue, Jacksonville
904.360.5400

November 17, 2015

Alachua/Bradford TIM Team

FDOT Gainesville Operations Office
5301 NE 39th Avenue, Gainesville
352.381.4300

October 14, 2015

December 9, 2015

FDOT DISTRICT 2 ITS STAFF



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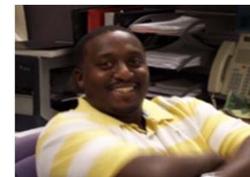
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