

FDOT DISTRICT TWO

Intelligent Transportation Systems Newsletter –
July 2010
Issue 34



The 511 traffic surveillance plane caught this shot of a crash with an overturned vehicle at I-295 and Blanding

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ITS Announcements

AlachuaTIM Meeting
Transpo 2010

FDOT Gainesville Maintenance Office
 Sawgrass Marriott, Ponte Vedra

8/11/10 10:00 a.m.
12/12-12/15/2010

Please contact the ITS Office at (904) 360-5465 if you would like to participate in the meetings.

Notes from the District 2 ITS Engineer

On the morning of June 22nd I was exposed to an event that incorporated all the training and expertise our TIM team put into place over the past several years.

An accident occurred at 9:25 AM that morning on I-295 southbound, approximately one-mile south of Blanding Boulevard. A vehicle had driven onto the shoulder and impacted the Dynamic Message Sign just south of this interchange. Although the TMC operators did not witness the crash, seconds after the accident they noticed a queue building up along this corridor and searched for the cause.

Once they located this incident they immediately called me from my office so that I could provide guidance/oversight for this very severe event. The TMC monitor displayed a ball of fire 25 to 30 feet in the air that was directly under the Dynamic Message Sign, thus generating a concern unlike anything I'd experienced in the past.

Santos Morin was supervising the TMC operators from the Urban Office and although only six months in the position coordinated the event like a seasoned professional. He utilized the services of the TMC operator and FHP TMC operator to get the proper Incident Responders to the scene as quickly as possible. I tried to help Santos by giving direction; however I quickly learned he was on top of it. The discussion went like this,

"Santos, you need to call Fire/Rescue." **"It's been done sir."** "Santos, has FHP made JSO aware of the situation?" **"Already took care of that."** "How about calling the Maintenance Office for MOT?" **"I did that a few minutes ago."** "Have the Road Rangers been contacted to set-up preliminary MOT at the scene?" **"A unit is on the way."**

This discussion went on for several more seconds before I realized Santos had a grip on things. I then went through some scenarios for this very unusual event in my mind. Some concerns were heat stress to the structure, the internal components of the sign melting or catching on fire, possible burning sign debris falling on the roadway, the structure collapsing due to the impact, possible live voltage on the ground risking the lives of the responders and impacts on traffic at this very busy interchange.

My first call was to the Bridge Department to let them know that this structure had been hit. The goal was to get someone from their office to inspect this DMS as soon as possible, just in case we needed to have our ITS Maintenance contractor dismantle the structure immediately.

My next call was to the FHP dispatch center. I wanted to alert them that accident investigators needed to proceed with caution since there could be 220 volts on the ground at the location. My

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Notes from the ITS Engineer continued

final call was to our media liaisons so that the word could be spread to motorists about anticipated impacts to traffic along I-295.

After finishing up the calls I rounded up the ITS staff so that we could continue with an assessment of the situation by viewing the monitors. It was 9:40 AM and we noticed that JSO, FHP and Fire/Rescue had reached the site. We saw that the DMS pole mounted cabinet was on the ground, the fire had shifted to just behind the DMS, traffic build-up was approximately two-miles upstream of the accident site, traffic on Blanding Boulevard was building exponentially and Fire/Rescue had closed two lanes. By 9:45 AM we decided the best thing to do was to go there so that we could provide assistance to the Incident Responders. I had Jason (Network Administrator), Donna (TIM PM), John (ITS Construction PM) and David (ITS Maintenance) go with me to the accident site since each could provide services for their area of expertise.

Upon arrival we determined that there could be a risk of high voltage on the ground so we shut the power off at the main breaker. We also noticed that Fire/Rescue remembered the numerous debates held during the TIM meetings and reduced their lane closure to one. The Road Ranger had already completed his MOT for the one lane and began to position himself upstream of the accident site in hopes of alerting motorists

about the pending traffic congestion. His goal was to help us avoid a secondary accident that would make the situation much worse. While FHP proceeded with their investigation I decided to take a look at the structure with John to determine if there was a possibility that it would collapse. Luckily, we found no damage to the foundation, structure or DMS so we felt everything would be fine until the Bridge Department had a chance to inspect for any damages.

About ten minutes after our arrival a Bridge Maintenance crew pulled up to the accident site to lend a hand. They were already doing inspections on the I-295 structures and decided to come to this location at once due to the severity of the accident. Likewise, the Roadway Maintenance representative also showed up to the site so we had the opportunity to hold mutual discussions with both parties. We had David coordinate with everyone so that they could begin the inspection as soon as the accident site was cleared. Their objective was to determine if this structure had to be disassembled due to structural damage. If so, David could get a crew out that afternoon to begin the work with the hope that everything could be addressed before sunset.

At 10:10 AM the County Coroner arrived to begin their investigation. Unfortunately, two lives were lost in the accident due to the impact and explosion therefore their job was to gather as much evidence

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Notes from the ITS Engineer continued

as possible prior to moving the bodies. The TIM team had spent the last couple of years working closely with the County Coroner on expediting response times; however this went beyond our wildest imagination. By 10:20 AM we felt everything was under control, thus the group decided to head back to the office. On the way back I decided to take I-295 northbound to get a different view of the MOT, Incident Responder activities, congestion at Blanding Boulevard and the traffic queue on I-295 southbound. To my amazement, the responders were already wrapping things up, congestion on Blanding was non-existent and the traffic queue was ½ mile at most in the southbound lanes.

When we returned to the office I decided to recap the morning's events with the TMC operations and ITS staff with the hope of gaining some lessons learned from our mistakes. Unexpectedly, I found that we actually did everything as best we could and nothing had fallen through the cracks. Even though this event was very rare everyone held their own during a strenuous situation, performing admirably under pressure. The one-lane was not cleared within the desired 90-minute Open Roads goal however for this situation I would make the exception. My thanks go out to everyone who assisted with this incident since it shows that we have made extraordinary progress within our TIM program.

Pete Vega
ITS Engineer

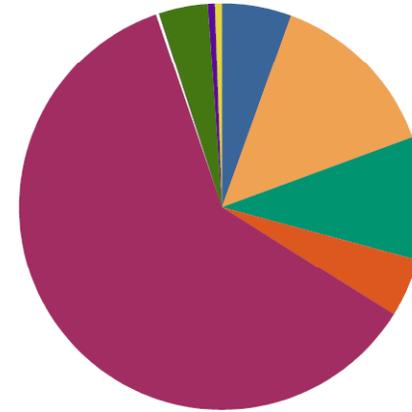


Fatal crash and proximity to DMS on 6/22/10 (screen shot)

Performance Measures

Now that the new version of SunGuide has been installed, updated SunGuide reports are now available. The following data was found for the month of July. Note that there have been 1,951 events entered in SunGuide thus far for the month of July.

The pie chart illustrates the ratio between the number of events by type and the total number of events. The table below shows the duration times calculated with the data available thus far for the month of July. The data in the table incorporates all events included in the Performance Measures, which would be those of relevant event types that had lane blockage. As you can see the Open Roads Policy was met on average by a significant margin.



Abandoned Vehicle	5.5%
Congestion	14.0%
Crash	9.6%
Debris on Roadway	4.6%
Disabled Vehicle	60.9%
Emergency Road Work	0.1%
Other	0.1%
Police Activity	0.1%
Scheduled Road Work	3.9%
Special Event	0.1%
Vehicle Alert	0.6%
Vehicle Fire	0.5%
Total:	100.0%

	July
Events included in Performance Measures	128
A. Notification Duration (min.)*	0.0
B. Verification Duration (min.)	0.2
C. Response Duration (min.)	2.9
D. Open Roads Duration (min.)	47.6
E. Departure Duration (min.)	7.0
Roadway Clearance Duration (min.)	50.7
Incident Clearance Duration (min.)	57.7

*FHP Data is not available for Notification Duration

Jill Dawson
Metric Engineering

Construction

The month of July has been very active with work on the arterial roadway ITS deployments. The State Road 21 project from Collins to Old Jennings is going full steam ahead at this point. All the Drilled Shafts for the DMS should be completed during the last week of July. We expect the installation of the tri-chords and DMS to occur in mid-August. This is the final piece of the puzzle prior to the contractor, Miller Electric, beginning system integration with the Clay County Traffic Signal office. Training should be available in September for their staff and contractors.

The State Road 15 project from Collins to Creighton has been moving along steadily with the level of service the next thing to be performed. The Design/Build team discovered a communication issue between the existing traffic signal system and the Town of Orange Park Police Department. An investigation was performed July 23rd and repairs are scheduled for July 28th. Once these repairs have been completed the Design team can finish the plans for this system and construction can commence in the next 60-days.

The Philips Highway project has hit a snag and we are awaiting the final decision from the Legal Department on a protest received for this low-bid Design/Build contract. It does not look like this

project will be completed by the holidays as we'd hoped but we can still shoot to get the work done by next Hurricane season. This is a critical corridor that can be utilized to shift traffic during Interstate incidents and this project is a key component toward getting it accomplished but we must follow due process prior to commencing with any work.

The status of the Interstate projects has not really changed over the past month. There were some slight modifications to initial plans along the Phase VIII project on I-295 but it is all for the better as we try to capture arterial roadway information within the design. The time was right to expand our horizon on ITS deployments thus incorporating the alternate arterial routes will be a key component to managing traffic from a regional perspective.

John Kell
District 2 ITS Construction Project Manager



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Marketing

July has come and gone. It seems like this summer is just flying by. And with that, we have our sights set on the big "Back to School" extravaganza at the Teacher Supply Depot next month. But that's next month, let's give the teachers a few more weeks to catch up on their rest and relaxation. No more mention of "school" for now.

This month, we had the privilege of visiting Nemours Children's Clinic. We set up our 511 booth in the lobby and talked to doctors, nurses, family members and other visitors during our brief stay. We received a warm welcome and made lots of new friends that day. A big thank you to the staff at Nemours Children's Clinic. They're truly making a difference in hundreds of lives across the First Coast each and every day!

On Saturday, August 7th we'll be heading out to The Avenues Mall to team up with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office for the 13th annual Shadco Safety Fair. We'll be joined by more than 60 other vendors, including Wolfson Children's Hospital, the US Secret Service, the American Red Cross and a host of others! Stop by to receive free electronic fingerprinting and photos, free children's bicycle helmets and MORE. Again, the event is Saturday, August 7th from 10am – 2pm at The Avenues Mall. And remember to look for the 511 booth. We'll see you there!

Sherri Byrd
511 Marketing Manager

RISC (Rapid Incident Scene Clearance) Update

Since December 18, 2010, we have not had an incident that required the services of our Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC). Our Contractors, Southern Wrecker and Recovery, LLC., Walt's Wrecker Service, John's Towing Auto and Truck Services, Inc., and University Towing and Transport, Inc. – are ready to be activated if the need arises.

Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Update

ALACHUA TIM TEAM UPDATE

The Alachua Traffic Incident Management will hold its team meeting on Wednesday, August 11th at the FDOT Gainesville Maintenance Conference Room, N.E. 39th Avenue at 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

FIRST COAST TIM TEAM UPDATE

The First Coast Traffic Management Team met on Tuesday, July 20, 2010, at the Florida Department of Transportation's Urban Office Training Center at 10:00 AM. The following agencies were represented: FHP, City of Jacksonville Traffic Operations, Metric Engineering, FDOT Traffic Operations, FDOT ITS, FDOT PIO, FDOT EOC, FDOT Maintenance, SmartRoute Systems, DRMP, FDOT District 5 ITS, St. John's County, Jorgensen, Nassau County Sheriff's Office, DBI Services, St. John's County Sheriff's Office, First Coast Road

Traffic Incident Management (TIM) continued

Rangers, and Jacksonville Transportation Authority. After incidents were discussed, Peter Vega gave a report on the upcoming FDOT Bridge Monitoring Project.

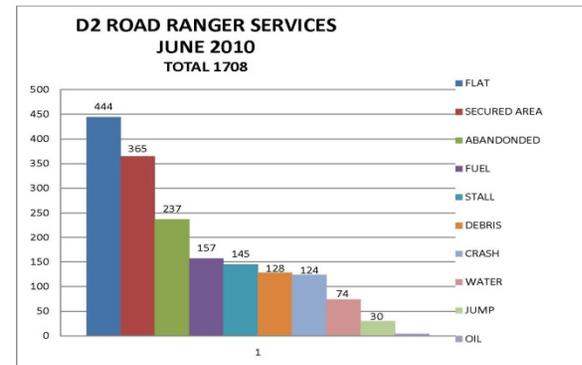
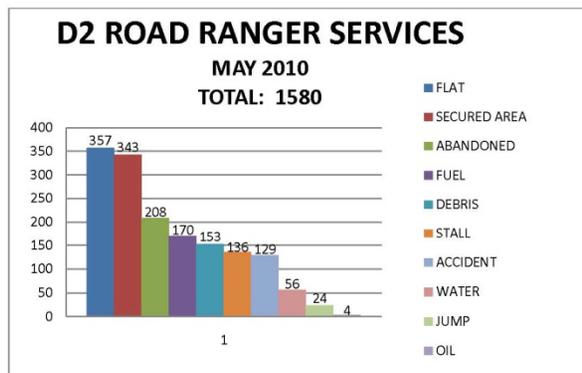
D2 TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM MISSION: *The Florida Department of Transportation District Two's Traffic Incident Management Teams through partnering efforts strive to continuously reduce incident scene clearance times to deter congestion and improve safety. The Teams' objective is to exceed the Open Roads Policy thus ensuring mobility, economic prosperity, and quality of life.*

D2 TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM VISION: *Through cooperation, communication and training the Teams intend to reduce incident scene clearance times by 10% each year through 2015.*

Road Ranger Update

On July 1, 2010, our District 2 Road Ranger Service Patrol Contract began with 7 new Operators. Matt Halliday, Walt Peters, Tracy Hale, Mike Hicks, Barry McCance, Hugh Becca, and Aaron Smith have joined Ernie Nixon, Bonn Arenas, James Williams, Jeff Salyers, Phil Jensen, and Lewis Lee Lambertt in assisting stranded motorists on our interstates. Jamie Scarberry has taken the position of Road Ranger Supervisor for First Coast Road Rangers, LLC. The service area and hours remain the same - 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM, Monday through Friday on I-95, I-295, 9A, I-10 and J. Turner Butler. Safe tows will continue as needed. Our current Road Ranger Operators assisted 1708 stranded vehicles in the month of June. The Road Ranger Service Patrol Program continues to be a great asset to our District 2 Traffic Incident Management Program.

Donna Danson
District 2 ITS Operations
Program Manager



Maintenance

The month of July has been quite challenging to say the least. Lightning has wreaked havoc on the equipment and associated power supplies. The decoders and switches appeared to be the most vulnerable of the group, with the RTMS vehicle detectors running a close third.

TCD is continuing with its assessment of grounding on the initial three ITS projects since rod deterioration may be the cause of several issues. Also, the life cycle is being reached for the power supply units on the Phase III and Phase IV Dynamic Message Signs. Each of the fifteen DMS has four batteries within the power supply unit that keep LED boards operating on the display but we are now down to less than half of the batteries. An order has been placed with the manufacturer to replace all of the power supplies since the four year life cycle is about to be reached.

Work is nearly completed on the connection to the Department's Maintenance office off Ellis Road. The Contractor hired to do the directional bore has been stuck in Atlanta for the past several weeks but they have now returned to complete this assignment. So far, half of the work has been finished and we anticipate that everything should be operational by the first week of August. Training for the Maintenance staff will commence by the second week of August.

The TCD fiber splicing specialist is in Jacksonville for the next few weeks finishing up work to integrate the City of Jacksonville's communication network onto the Department's fiber trunk line on the Interstate. There are several interchanges that need to be completed with some associated trouble shooting anticipated along the way. Once this work is finished the City of Jacksonville can reduce its reliance on phone communication to the Master Hub as well as reduce the amount expended for this phone service.

Locations where TCD is performing work are Dunn Avenue, Atlantic Boulevard, State Road 13, Saint Augustine Road, Blanding Boulevard, Roosevelt Boulevard, McDuff Avenue and 103rd Street. More locations are expected to be scheduled during the Fall months.

TCD is still awaiting delivery of the I-10 DMS from Skyline Products. Even with the delay the sign will not be installed until the PM for the I-10 Widening Project gives us the approval to proceed. It is expected that we will be allowed to enter the work zone in October to complete the installation. Until then we are keeping TCD busy with preventive maintenance duties, small task work orders and daily troubleshooting.

Kevin Jackson
District 2 ITS Field Specialist

Operations

Merriam- Webster defines **Experience** as “practical knowledge, skill, or practice derived from direct observation of or participation in events or in a particular activity.” Building a staff has to start somewhere, but it is critical to development to retain your employees. Employees’ “work experience” is invaluable and expensive (and timely) to replace. Employee retention is a sensitive balancing act weighing such things as positive work environment, being challenged, opportunities for growth and work/life balance among other things. It also helps dealing with such strong partners and other responding agencies. The TMC has found a nice balance and the TMC Team has benefited from all of the experience it has on staff.

Between the 21 people currently staffed in the TMC (part-timers to fill-ins to full-timers) they have a combined 58 years of experience in the Jacksonville TMC alone (almost 3 years of experience/person).

That experience makes the Jacksonville TMC one of the leaders in the State. Experience helps with getting the most up to date, real time traffic out there accurately, standardized and promptly. Getting event data to motorists via the web or phone in the timeliest manner saves the people of North East Florida time and money and reduces secondary crashes. A big thank you to all who make our Team a success.

<u>Years of Experience</u>	<u>Number of Employees</u>
Less Than 1	6 Employees
1-3 Years	5 Employees
3-5 Years	4 Employees
5+ Years	6 Employees

So what has this experienced Team been doing? Summer has officially settled in but the TMC has kept busy with the afternoon storms and new traffic patterns. The total number of events has stayed consistent the past several months while we were operating at 6 Road Rangers. The past quarter each month has been right around 2,200, June being 2267. Lane blocking events over that period continue to rise, going from 281 to 364 to 429 in June. The roadways continue to be patrolled by the Road Rangers Monday through Friday 630am to 630pm. The past month they assisted on 1517 events performing 2100 activities.

In areas without ITS, the TMC depends on FDOT and FHP personnel to give us traffic information reports. You can reach our 24/7 line at (904)301-3700 extension 122 or our work day line at (904)360-5465. You can now also leave feedback on the Next Generation 511 system about road conditions and bugs you may find in the system that is relayed to our operators in real time.

Remember: Know Before You Go! Dial 511.

Ryan Crist
Lead TMC Supervisor

North Florida TPO Update

The North Florida Transportation Planning Organization projects are briskly moving along and have kept the ITS staff very busy over the past month. One project in particular that appears to be very challenging and exciting is the Road Weather Information System (RWIS) effort on the area bridges. As mentioned in last June's newsletter Central Office was very interested in this project as a pilot test for their joint effort with NOAA. Basically, they were looking for a District that was willing to work with existing government infrastructure that would help in keeping operational costs low. Since the NFTPO had already invested time and money into a study that involved an RWIS deployment this seemed like the perfect location for Central Office's investment.

A meeting was held in July between Central Office, the NFTPO and District Two to discuss certain aspects of their project. Basically, Central Office has received permission from NOAA to communicate with their three satellites over the Gulf of Mexico. The Department will be allowed to transmit weather data from various bridges via satellite antennae to NOAA's aerial satellites.

This data will then be shot back to Central Office's satellite dish in Lake City. Once this information is captured it would be placed on the Department's ITS WAN for use by District Two.

The NFTPO's RWIS project incorporated a standardization process for Law Enforcement on the opening/closing of bridges during high wind conditions. The objective was to be fair and consistent in the way this region handles such events. The study they conducted determined a two tiered approach to bridge closures, separating the categories into low and high profile vehicles (i.e. cars and large trucks). This study should be completed and available for distribution in the next few months, thereby being a guide that can be used by local agencies. This study will be used to determine prioritization of RWIS deployments and schedule.

Once this schedule is completed the team will begin to examine communication needs to send data to the NOAA aerial satellite. This involves sizing the antennae and power supply requirements. The RWIS devices that will be used shall be NOAA approved, thus making the transmission of data a proven and reliable component of the project. After all of this is completed it will be a matter of procurement and deployment of the devices. The anticipated start date is next January with a goal of completing the work by March. This will give the region a few months to test and troubleshoot the system prior to the onset of the 2011 Hurricane season.

North Florida TPO Update continued

Something we have learned from Central Office and the NFTPO study is that this project will be the first of its kind in the country. Use of the NOAA communication system for this transportation application has never been done before. Likewise, being able to track and utilize data to determine bridge closures and openings is something that is unique to the industry. The hardest task will be tying all of the components together in a sensible fashion so that we do not shoot ourselves into a corner. With the cooperation of Law Enforcement the NFTPO could once again find itself in the National spotlight, just like it did with the Time4Safety video that is used as a training tool for MOT during incident management.



Spotlight on...Jamie Scarberry

Meet Jamie Scarberry, First Coast Road Rangers Supervisor for District Two. Jamie is one of the newest members of the team, but undoubtedly one of the most dedicated. He's only been on the job for 3 months, but it only takes one look at his job history to know he has a proven track record. That's because he's been promoted to management in every job he's ever held.

When Jamie was in high school he worked for a steel fabrication shop, and during his last 3 years of high school, he learned how to weld and build just about everything under the sun. This experience opened the door for all kinds of future opportunities.

After graduating, he went to work for a construction company. "I ran equipment and also hauled all the equipment the company owned. This was when I knew my calling was to be in transportation," Jamie says. "Soon after starting with that company, I was put in charge of 16 crews and all the transportation."

From there, the same story began to unfold wherever Jamie went. He started out on the bottom rung of a heavy haul and wrecker company. Within a few weeks, he was promoted to Assistant Operations Manager. The same thing happened when he went to work for a local crane company,

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Spotlight on...Jamie Scarberry continued

company, quickly working his way up from Transportation Manager to Assistant Operations Manager. The downturn of the economy and subsequent collapse of that business brought him to where he is now.

"I've only been with the First Coast Road Rangers for about 3 months and I can say I enjoy my job and the people I work with more than any other company I have worked for in the past. Everyone I work with is great and they care about what they do, so that makes my job that much better," says Jamie.



Jamie Scarberry,
First Coast Road Ranger Supervisor

Jamie's strong work ethic and big heart extend beyond the work place. He and his wife, Angela, have 2 sons. Hunter is 9 and Austin is 21. While Hunter is their biological son, Austin is the son who found his way into their hearts and home 10 years ago quite unexpectedly.

"We adopted Austin when he was 11 years old. We took him in and treated him as if he were our own son. Austin came from a home where there were drugs and other unsafe things going on. He has turned out to be a good hard working young man, and we are very proud of him," Jamie says warmly, adding that his family is "the best a man could ever ask for!"

So what advice helped launch Jamie's career? "Learn everything you can, no matter what it is. You never know when you will need it," he quotes.

But life is not all work and no play. Jamie has another famous quote he lives by... "Life is too short, so have fun. Do not let the small things get you down. Nothing is that bad."

Photo Gallery



511's visit to the Sea Star Line last month

Tune in next month for pictures from Jill Dawkins mission trip to Nicaragua!

Contact Information

Donna Danson
ITS Operations Project Manager
 904.360.5635
 Donna.Danson@dot.state.fl.us



Kevin Jackson
ITS Field Specialist
 904.360.5454
 Kevin.Jackson@dot.state.fl.us



John Kell
ITS Construction Project Manager
 904.360.5455
 John.Kell@dot.state.fl.us



Peter Vega
District 2 ITS Engineer
 904.360.5463
 Peter.Vega@dot.state.fl.us



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TMC Desk at FDOT **360-5465** Mon-Fri 6a-6p
 TMC Desk at FHP - ***FHP (301-3700) x 122** -24/7/365
 Penny Kamish, Project Manager
 Ryan Crist, TMC Lead Supervisor
 John (Sean) Wilcox, TMC Supervisor
 Jason Summerfield, Network Manager
 Santos Morin, TMC Assistant Supervisor
 Derrick Odom, TMC Assistant Supervisor
 Sherri Byrd, 511 Marketing Manager

D2 Day Operators

Jesse Gilmour
 Jessica Lakey
 Adam Page

D2 Night & Weekend Operators

Jason Evans
 David Rolfe
 Rebecca Reid
 Tyler Sowers

D3 Day Operators

Santos Morin
 Adrienne Catapano
 Jessica Vazquez
 Ed Capps

511 Probe

Sherri Byrd
 Michelle Warren