



## Collier-Lee-Charlotte Traffic Incident Management Team

December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
Meeting Minutes

### Attendees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Frank Gentilquore	Alligator Towing	Ray DeGiovine	FDOT
Glen Fox	Alligator Towing	Richard Beveridge	FDOT
Raul Corbo	Anchor Towing	Thomas Curran	FDOT
Bud Gruber	Bald Eagle Towing	Wayne Harstein	FDOT
Dan Popoff	Bald Eagle Towing	Tim Culhane	FHP
Dwain Naftal	Bald Eagle Towing	Mark Perez	Hoffer & Associates
Thomas Lewis	City of Punta Gorda	Ron Hoffer	Hoffer & Associates
HM Domond	Collier County	Brian Raimondo	Lee County MPO
Ben Ybarra	DBI Serivces	Charles Stratton	Metric Engineering, Inc.
Jason Hughes	DBI Serivces	Scott Agans	Metric Engineering, Inc.
Richard Fimbel	DBI Services	Joe Saladino	Prompt Towing Service
Gary Millsaps	Delcan Corp	Patty Hill	Red's OK Auto & Truck
Teresa Zilko-Miller	FDEP	Dan Sieber	San Carlos Park Fire & Rescue
Chris Birosak	FDOT	Kevin Burrass	SCPFD
Kevin Salsbery	FDOT	Gene Rogers	South Trail Fire District
Michael Leis	FDOT	Jay Anderson	Stay Alive Just Drive
Paul France	FDOT	Jim Scollen	

**Call to Order:** The Collier-Lee-Charlotte TIM Team meeting was held on Wednesday 8, 2010 at the SWIFT SunGuide Center located at 10041 Daniels Parkway Fort Myers, FL 33913. Charles Stratton, Bill Fuller, Ted Smith, and Gary Millsaps facilitated the meeting.

**Introductions:** Team members introduced themselves and the agencies they represent.

### Agency News:

#### Towing and Wrecker News

Mr. Ted Smith reported that the PWOFF submitted a package regarding rewriting current wrecker rules for review. The package is currently under review by the committee. The accreditation board will allow new rules to be written once committee has approved the package. The package contains current constraints on Class C wrecker issues. The committee may establish a new wrecker class (light duty). Also drivers may elect to have their own towing company to remove their vehicle after FHP approval. Dialog within the legislature is on going.

SWIFT SunGuide Center

No updated information was provided by the TIM Team

Training

Mr. Gary Millsaps provided a *Public Safety* video by Cobb County, Georgia. Video informed TIM Team on 3 traffic control safety principles: 1) Traffic Control 2) Leave Space 3) Be Seen. Presentation materials will be available on the TIM Team website located at <http://www.swfltim.org>.

Central Office has provided computer-based MOT training for TIM Team Members. This training is for incident responders, but will not make an individual MOT Certified. The MOT training has informational videos all online and can be found at <http://wbt.dot.state.fl.us/ois/MOTTIRCBT/index.htm>.

Road Rangers

Bill Fuller informed TIM Team, all Road Ranger Field personnel are in the process of receiving special training to the use of department radio system. This training provides drivers with the skills to communicate with confidential information which is transmitted on these systems.

Bill Fuller spoke about the Crash Response Time Statistics. He will expand and provide additional crash data if asked. The data provided was only for I-75 for crashes. These statistics will be expanded for fire, EMS, DOT and other agencies if asked.

Other National, State, and Regional Items to Note:

Mr. Ted Smith presented on hydrogen sulfide suicide awareness for first responders. A new trend of chemical suicides that began in Japan a couple of years ago is now spreading throughout the United States. Recently, first responders in St. Lucie County learned the potentially fatal consequences caused by hydrogen sulfide. The process involves mixing a sulfur-based material with hydrochloric acid. The result is a chemical reaction that releases large quantities of deadly hydrogen sulfide gas. The victim is rendered unconscious and usually succumbs to exposure. In some cases, victims have chosen to commit suicide within their motor vehicles. The windows are shut to concentrate the gas. In the St. Lucie County incident, the victim placed a written warning on the dashboard, advising of the danger of the hydrogen sulfide gas. However, that may not always be the case and this is why first responders need to be extremely diligent in approaching vehicles along the roadside or in a rest area or service plaza.

There are specific warning signs:

- Vehicle occupant may appear to be unconscious or slumped over the steering wheel
- A strong, pungent odor (like rotten eggs) may be evident
- A large bucket or container, such as a 5 gallon bucket, and smaller containers (acid bottles, sulfur packages, etc.) may be on the floor board or seats
- A warning sign may be placed in the window or windshield, but do not rely on it being there

Only trained hazardous materials personnel with appropriate level personal protection equipment (PPE) should attempt vehicle entry. There have been instances in which the victim first made a suicide call to 911. If 911 operators have any indication that toxic chemicals may be involved, they need to relay that information immediately to first responders. Mr. Ted Smith provided TIM Team with a handout providing additional information on this subject.

Mr. Bill Fuller and Mr. Ted Smith presented on Member agency communications of critical incident information. The presenters wanted to clarify the role of the SWIFT SunGuide Center. One responsibility of the Swift SunGuide Center is to provide accurate and dependable traffic condition information to the motoring public, aimed to reduce incident congestion and secondary crashes. However, not *all* response agencies have been providing critical incident information. We need your help to alleviate this problem. It is impossible to report any traffic condition accurately with limited information. The following are two MAJOR incidents where notification was not given to the SWIFT SunGuide Center; thereby, eliminating any advance warning for the motoring public:

- *Gas Explosion SR 82* - In Fort Myers, a backhoe hit an 8 inch gas line at the Colonial Boulevard expansion, near SR 82. The accident happened around 1:45 p.m. Flames could be seen up to 50 feet in the air. During the event a construction worker was critically injured. If the incident was reported to the SWIFT SunGuide Center a floodgate message would have been posted to FL511 to inform traveling public. Mr. Smith asked the TIM Team if they had a system in place to react to this type of incident.
- *Chemical Spill SR 29* - In Collier County, a truck carrying 500 gallons of ammonia was spilled at 925 New Harvest Road just after 2:15 pm. All employees nearby were evacuated. During the incident, SR 29 was shut down in both directions for a couple of hours. Immokalee Fire and North Naples HAZMAT responded to the scene.

During these incidents, critical event information must be documented. At a minimum the information needed is:

- Injuries
- Hazardous materials involved
- Number, Type, and Tag of vehicles involved
- Which lanes are closed
- Which shoulder areas are closed
- What notifications have already been made
- Any damage done to structures or to facilities

Mr. Bill Fuller asked the team to provide information on who he can talk to for a notification system. He wants to include the SWIFT SunGuide and Manatee SunGuide Centers. Mr. Charles Stratton mentioned the Notification Guide. Mr. Ted Smith stated the Notification Guide is in process. Compact discs will be provided along with yellow pages for incident management assistance. Mr. Fuller also requested a call if any person had specific questions and to send questions about hydrogen sulfide to Mr. Smith. Mr. Fuller also requests to be placed in contact with individuals who can change their current department's incident response procedures.

For incident / traffic response; please use the following SWIFT SunGuide Center email: [swiftsunguidecenter@swiftsunguide.com](mailto:swiftsunguidecenter@swiftsunguide.com).

Carlos Bonilla clarified SWIFT SunGuide information. He asked members to report incidents to the Center in order for them to be placed on 511 and the 511 website. Carlos asked that the SunGuide Center be included on communications in order for the Center to be effective. If the Center is not informed, neither will the traveling public. He also mentioned that the SunGuide Center is responsible for incident reports which are forwarded to Tallahassee and FHWA. This information has a direct effect on future monies for the District. Mr. Fuller asked that any information to be forwarded to Delcan or himself. He feels that everyone including him can do better.

## **Review of Recent Major Incidents**

### I-75 NB just north of Exit 141 – SR 80, Palm Beach Blvd – RISC Event # 32297

Monday evening November 1, 2010 at approximately 6:30 PM (18:30) during a heavy rain a Mustang, an SUV, and a tractor trailer car hauler were involved in a crash on the approach to the Caloosahatchee River Bridge. The truck, loaded with cars, jack-knifed blocking both NB travel lanes.

FHP dispatch in Fort Myers was contacted at 18:33 reporting a semi sideways on the bridge. Lee Control was contacted along with the FDOT RTMC at 18:35. The RTMC posted messages about the event on several upstream permanent Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) and the operator then called the call taker for the asset management company DBI at 18:39.

A Lee county Sheriff's unit arrived on scene as the first responder at about 18:39, followed by Tice Fire-Rescue and Lee County EMS about 18:41. They found three injured who were treated and prepared for transport. Fire reported no hazards found and remained on scene to provide assistance with traffic and to assist with loading three patients.

The FDOT PIO was notified about the full closure at 18:43. There were no Road Rangers on duty to assist with scene traffic control, but motorists were finding their way off the interstate using the exit ramp for Palm Beach Blvd. FHP Trooper 1258 arrived on scene at 18:46.

Carlos Bonilla of FDOT who had been contacted by the RTMC authorized the activation of RISC and the RISC contractor Prompt Towing was contacted at 18:49. Prompt towing advised that their estimated time of arrival was 30 to 45 minutes. Efforts were underway to notify other TMC's in South Florida at the Turnpike, Fort Lauderdale, and Miami.

At 18:59 a secondary crash with property damage was reported in the traffic being diverted on to Palm Beach Blvd. There was also a secondary crash about 19:26 in the queue of traffic just north of Lockett Rd. with a woman complaining of neck pain. There was a third minor secondary crash reported at about 19:37, again near the diversion point at exit 141.

At about 19:02 units controlling traffic were observed stopping traffic on the exit ramp to evacuate traffic that was trapped between the exit and the crash scene. The mainline traffic was again allowed to divert traffic off at the Palm Beach Blvd exit. FHP contacted Prompt Towing at about 19:08 with instructions as to how to respond to the crash scene. They are advised to enter the NB lanes by entering at Bay Shore Rd and driving south in the north bound lanes over the bridge.

The RTMC makes a notification to Mike Myers at ICA at 19:17 since bridge structures are maintained by their company. The RTMC indicated that they were still waiting to hear from DBI.

Prompt Towing is observed backing SB in the closed lanes over the bridge. The tow equipment, two heavy duty wreckers and a MOT truck, are verified on scene at 19:34 and the notice-to-proceed (NTP) is given by FHP at 19:45. There is some indication that activity by the towing personnel began work upon arrival. The RTMC was not advised of the NTP which is a key milestone for RISC incidents.

The jack-knifed semi was quickly straightened out by one of the heavy tow trucks. Two additional light duty trucks are requested and were in route for the Mustang and the SUV involved in the crash.

Heavy congestion is observed at 20:14 in the NB lanes to Lockett Rd. RTMC log at 20:16 indicates that they have not received confirmation from DBI confirming that they are responding to the full closure of the travel lanes by the incident. \*

Communication from the scene indicated that the car hauler was being cleared from the scene at 20:17. The wrecked car and SUV are loaded on the flatbed tow trucks and debris is being cleared from the pavement. The wreckers proceeded from the scene to an area near the Bay Shore Exit Ramp.

The left lane is open to traffic at 20:27 and all lanes are reported at 20:37. All remaining response vehicles leave the scene by 20:38. All congestion cleared and the roadway was recovered at 20:54.

\* It should be noted that during discussions with a DBI representative while preparing this summary they indicated that they had responded and their representative on scene reported in with the Sheriff's unit at 19:05. The responsibility for establishing TTC for the closure needs to be discussed.

#### Other Incidents to Note

On November 1, 2010 an incident with a tractor trailer was dispatched to Alligator Towing. Once the truck was moved the gas tank was ruptured. Hazmat was not initially dispatched as a third-party Hazmat company was provided by the responsible party. FHP was notified and traffic was detoured. Although FHP feels that a RISC dispatch was not necessary they feel this was a missed opportunity. FHP feels miscommunication was the issue and may go away due to the co-location at the SWIFT SunGuide Center. The initial towing companies were sent away. Since fuel was spilled the incident responders needed approval to open the roadway and deem safe for public to travel. Chris Birozak stated there is a stop time within an incident. If the roadway is not safe, then time is stopped. When a gas tank is ruptured, time will stop until the fire department on-site deems the site is safe and then time will resume. The safety of all incident responders is top priority. FHP informed towing company to remind the trooper on scene about the stop time because he/she are also gathering information about their investigation and may not remember.

### **2010 Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Program Self Assessment**

#### TIM Team Goals – Areas of Improvement

1. Update Incident Response and Clearance resource books so that a list of towing, recovery and hazardous materials response operators (including operator capabilities and special equipment) is available for incident responders and clearance.
2. Utilizing traffic control procedures for the end of the incident traffic queue.
3. Roadway and Incident Clearance Times – Establish targets (i.e. time goals) and routinely review whether progress is made in achieving the targets.

#### **Action Items**

1. Bring contact information and any other special contact names and/or procedures that can be included in the TIM Team Resource Book. (*Ball in Court: TIM Team Members*)
2. Review incident roadway/clearance MOU's (Local Open Roads Policy) between Collier and Lee County – Strategic Parking. (*Ball in Court: FDOT*)
3. Possibility of the Central Office providing MOT training for TIM Team Members (*Ball in Court: FDOT, closed: training link provided under "Training"*)

**FDOT Construction Update****Active Construction:**

- I-75 Charlotte County Freeway Management System Project – Currently under testing phase of the project.

**Completed Construction:**

- No completed construction projects were discussed.

**Anticipated Future Construction:**

- No anticipated future construction projects were discussed.

Additional construction information is available on the FDOT Road Watch website located at <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/publicinformationoffice/construct/constmap/d1.shtm>. This resource is updated on a weekly basis.

**Open Forum**

A Team member asked that DMS Signs provide a message of abandoned/disabled vehicles. Carlos Bonilla stated that is applicable to the traveling public. There are Road Rangers consistently monitoring roadway for these vehicles. Once a vehicle is disabled the owner has a 6-hour window to remove their vehicle off the roadway. After the time has expired FHP will have the vehicle towed.

A Team member asked what the best number for responders to contact the SWIFT SunGuide Center. Carlos Bonilla gave the Team the number (239-225-9860) which is only to be used by responders. This number should not be shared with the public. The public should dial \*FHP for assistance.

Mr. Fuller asked the team if they have traveled more than an hour to attend meeting. He also asked that the local sheriffs attend the meetings.

Members were encouraged to visit [SafeHighways.org](http://SafeHighways.org). Team members can sign up for the newsletter and read the article "Safe Highway Matters".

**Future Meetings**

The next The Collier-Lee-Charlotte TIM Team meeting will be held on Wednesday February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at SWIFT SunGuide Center located at 10041 Daniels Parkway, Fort Myers, Florida 33913.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the District One TIM Team Manager, Mr. Bill Fuller at (239) 225-9815 or via email at [William.fuller@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:William.fuller@dot.state.fl.us).