



## Collier – Lee - Charlotte Traffic Incident Management Team

October 14, 2009

Meeting Minutes

### Attendees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Mark Perez	A.C.T. Response	Don Olson	FDOT
Glenn Fox	Alligator Towing	Kevin Salsbery	FDOT
Raul Corbo	Anchor Towing	John Scarpellino	FDOT
Lourdes Daniel	Anchor Towing	Terry Davis	FHP
Steve Horton	Andy's Towing	Linda Higbee	FHP
Bud Gruber	Bald Eagle Towing	Bill Rippy	FHP
Glenn Bond	Charlotte County	Paul France	FHP
John Davenport	Charlotte County SO	Tim Culhane	FHP
Mike McClead	iROX Service Patrol	David Parks	Global-5
Les Williams	Collier County	Michael Myers	ICA – I-75 Maintenance
Eugene Calvert	Collier County	Robbie Brown	Lee County
Dan Anderson	Collier County SO	Krystle Davis	Lee County
Sandra Betts	Collier County SO	Brian Raimondo	Lee County MPO
Mark Milligan	Collier County SO	James Drzymala	Lee County SO
Bruce Hutcheson	DBI Services	Charles Stratton	Metric Engineering, Inc.
Mark Anderson	DBI Services	Shawna Kennedy	Metric Engineering, Inc.
Moises Sumoza	DBI Services	Linda Sposito	City of Punta Gorda
Ted Smith	Delcan Corporation	Bob Diezi	FDOT Road Rangers
Carlos Bonilla	FDOT	David Tarquino	S&T Towing of SW FL, Inc.
Thomas Curran	FDOT	Phil Blanc	San Carlos Park Fire Rescue
Jen Eversole	FDOT	John Gibbons	SW FL Regional Planning Council
Chuck McGinness	FDOT		

**Call to Order:** The Collier-Lee-Charlotte TIM Team meeting was held on Wednesday, October 14, 2009 at 9:30 AM at Florida Highway Patrol, 4700-3 Terminal Drive, Ft. Myers, Florida. Don Olson and Ted Smith facilitated the meeting.

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

### Update on TIM Initiatives:

#### Newsletter

Don introduced Metric Engineering, Inc. as the new District One Traffic Operations Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Consultant. Although the previous consultant turned over all the contact lists, Don encouraged all attendees to verify and update, if necessary, all of the contact

information on the sign-in sheet in order to ensure that all attendees will receive the newsletters. Don encouraged everyone, even as they have move to higher positions, or if they have move on to different agencies, to stay abreast of what is happening with the Southwest Florida Traffic Incident Management Team through the use of the newsletter. TIM Teams in SW FL are an industry leader, address topics that impact myriad stakeholders and publish valuable information. The most recent newsletter included information about domestic security roles and initiatives with an excellent article about intelligent transportation systems that was submitted by Andy Núñez. TIM Team members are encouraged to submit articles for publication in the newsletter.

### 511 Next Generation

A South Florida newspaper reporter recently published an article related to perceived “bugs” in the 511 system based on an initial negative experience. Don emphasized that the computer had some problems in detecting the speech patterns from the reporter within the system, which can be influenced by wind noise, heavy accents, etc. After clarification, the reporter was then satisfied with the 511 system, but declined to recant the article.

### SWIFT SunGuide Center

The SWIFT SunGuide Center, a regional transportation management center, will become operational late this year, housing many of the essential emergency management personnel across several entities. Carlos Bonilla stated that part of the project was accepted on September 30, 2009 and he has received the keys to the building. Operational testing for ITS devices along I-75 will begin on Monday. Additionally, the interview process has begun for staffing the facility. Don anticipates being able to hold the next TIM meeting in the new facility. (On 10.21.2009 the FDOT announced that the next TIM Team meeting will not be held at the new SWIFT SunGuide Center.)

### Road Rangers

The Team reviewed a recent incident in which FHP dispatched a call for an incident at MM 105, slightly south of the interchange ramp. The DAV vehicle was beyond the believed service region for ICA Asset Maintenance, the iROX service patrol provider. Additionally, due to past experiences of the FDOT Road Ranger personnel being requested to vacate the iROX project area, response was deferred by the District-wide service patrol supervisor. Don decided that, in the future, if there is an incident falling within a questionable territory, the District-wide service patrol provider shall respond. The logic follows that; the iROX service patrol is limited to the project limits, while the District-wide service patrol is unlimited to boundaries. This contract provides service on the ramps, at interchanges, and anything affiliated with serving the public as needed and approved by the FDOT. Don also stressed that if a service provider is in doubt, to “serve first and ask questions later”. Don also reviewed the priorities of the Road Rangers. The priority is to respond to traffic crashes and support scene safety. Other incidents include degree of lane blockage priorities.

Over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend, at the request of Major Coates, the District will be utilizing all available (13) Road Ranger resources to enhance and extend coverage until midnight beginning Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving. These two holiday travel days typically experience the most traffic of the year. Additionally, the District will enhance and extend coverage during peak travel days for the winter holidays in late December. A schedule will be developed and forwarded to Major Coates for approval. Additional feedback is welcome. Also during this time, AAA has several of their providers on “stand-by” during the season, and they will be enacting the “Tow To Go” program.

### Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC)

Prompt Towing is the current RISC provider for Charlotte, Sarasota, and portions of Lee County, but Don also mentioned there is an open and on-going Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) advertisement for the RISC program should any professional tow operators wish to participate.

The Department's goal by the Thanksgiving travel period is to be fully prepared to activate a Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) response will not be realized. A new goal has been set for February 1, 2010 in concert with the SWIFT SunGuide Center operations plan. RISC contractors will be responsible for clearing the roadway upon notice to proceed by the incident commander on-scene. Although the contractor will be receiving their compensation from the responsible party, they will be entitled to an extra bonus if the scene is cleared within a 90-minute period; a time-frame established by the Open Roads Policy. Until the new SWIFT SunGuide Center is operational, the commander on-scene will be responsible for informing the FHP Communications Center in Ft. Myers for time-tracking purposes. Multiple companies can qualify for the same area of coverage and be on a rotation schedule for activation.

Ted clarified that the basic selection process for the RISC contract inspects required equipment, including the three required response vehicles: a rotator, a 35-ton truck, and a support vehicle (traffic control, etc.) Operators also must have access to other pieces of equipment, like a front-end loader and a sweeper-truck, but the RISC contract may not be subcontracted. Additionally, the RISC contractor must be capable of cleaning up non-HAZMAT spilled diesel fuel situations. Don also mentioned that a kick-off meeting regarding RISC will be forthcoming.

Benefits are being seen in similar programs with Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (showing a 97% incident response goal achieved) and in the Atlanta, Georgia area (94%).

### Training

Currently, there is not a training certification program available through the Professional Wrecker Operators of Florida, Inc. (PWOFF), but a certification program is available through the Towing and Recovery Association of America (TRAA) <http://www.towserver.net/certification.htm>. The Turnpike Enterprise and I-95 contracts are currently requiring the TRAA certification.

Ted mentioned the Statewide TIM Team is looking at developing a certification program for all responders. A similar program is set up in Virginia. Virginia Department of Transportation, in conjunction with Virginia Tech, has set up the Transportation Emergency Response Institute (TERI) – an intensive seven-day training program for Department representatives. The TERI certified personnel then become qualified as a Duty Officer, a single-point of contact for any transportation emergency (situation awareness) in their assigned region. Once all Department representatives are trained, they are looking toward training fire and police personnel.

As a part of the TIM in '10 Initiative, the North Florida TPO has partnered with law enforcement, fire rescue, transportation and towing entities in north Florida to jointly develop a module-based training DVD and handbook named *TIMe4 Safety*. This training contains five modules, approximately five to ten minutes in length. Topics include Traffic Control, Scene Safety, and Incident Management. The TIM in '10 Initiative goal is to have every responder go through this video and text-book training. Desire has been expressed to facilitate production of training material funded through cooperation with the local District MPO organizations similar to that of North Florida's. The TIM Team watched the Introduction module of the video, and Don would like to continue to have each TIM Team view one module per TIM meeting. The video will also be available on the TIM Team website located at <http://www.swfltim.org>.

**Other National, State, and Regional Items to Note:**

Florida's Turnpike Enterprise has become an experimentation test-bed for the future implementation of policies. The RISC program is a direct result of such experimentation. Currently the Enterprise is seeking to test an alternative to the current rotation system for tow provider response. Beginning in June 2009, the Enterprise rolled out the Towing and Roadside Repair (TARR) system that, through the competitive bid and qualification process, designates a tow company for assigned sections of roadway. The company's individual performance is being monitored in conjunction with law enforcement and Florida's Turnpike Enterprise. If the selected towing firm is not performing to acceptable standards, their designated road section contract is re-advertised. The TARR program has already seen an 84% on-time response rate, and is a follow-up program to the previously developed RISC program. After meeting certain selection criteria and submitting their firm's proposal for permit fees and response times, the tow company becomes the single point of contact for the designated section of roadway, for both the Turnpike and AAA. Ted anticipates providing a presentation at the December TIM meeting.

October 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> will be the dates for the Metro Atlanta TIME Task Force Conference in Lake Lanier, Georgia. This conference is free to public agency employees. Additional information may be found at [www.timetaskforce.com](http://www.timetaskforce.com).

The State of Indiana is coordinating with local agencies, having them sign Memorandums of Understanding, on their Quick Clearance laws. Indiana is very involved in TIM Teaming.

The State of Washington has begun using a program similar to RISC in the larger metropolitan areas, that they call *BlockBuster*. Although Washington doesn't have a Road Ranger or Service Patrol program, they have trained in TIM and provided fully-equipped vehicles to volunteer State Traffic Operations employees.

The State of Missouri has become the first state to receive funding for a separate "Truck Only Highway" on I-70 in central Missouri east of Kansas City. A video regarding the "Truck Only" lanes constructed in the median of I-70 was presented and will be available on the TIM Team website located at <http://www.swfltim.org>.

**Review of Recent Major Incidents**

No major incidents in District I were presented for review, however Chuck McGinness, the Treasure Coast (TC) TIM Team Coordinator for Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River Counties in District IV, provided a presentation regarding the TC Team's first experience with RISC. Presentation materials will be available on the TIM Team website located at <http://www.swfltim.org>.

Following the presentation, the floor was opened to questions. Don posed a question regarding the RISC situation presented and the fuel containment clean-up associated with the response. Ted suggested that additional support could have assisted with handling the fuel, especially considering the inclement weather. Chuck also mentioned that the RISC responder was deemed qualified to receive the performance bonus.

A member of the team stressed the necessity to notify State Warning Point ((800) 320-0519) after the 25 gallon threshold has been exceeded, and when the spill went into water run-off facilities, the appropriate authorities must be notified. Chuck assured the team that DOT was present on-scene to handle these notifications. Discussion occurred regarding the use of the contractors already on-scene versus having to call the Department's contractor. Also Ted

discussed the Department of Environmental Protection's abilities approve a contractor to expedite clean-up and mitigation immediately and underwrite payment for situations where the responsible party will not accept responsibility for payment for these clean-up services.

Don clarified that A.C.T. Response is DBI Services contractor for cleaning-up incidents such as this one.

### **Presentation**

Dan Anderson of the Collier County Sheriff's Officer, assigned full-time to the SW FL Regional Domestic Security Task Force, provided a presentation regarding Domestic Security. Presentation materials will be available on the TIM Team website located at <http://www.swfltim.org>.

Ted and Don followed up after the presentation and emphasized the importance of domestic security with respect to the local region and local bridge structures or other critical infrastructure (dams, etc.). Also emphasized were the economic and commercial impacts of these domestic losses. Don additionally reviewed some of the current literature that has recently been published regarding domestic security and critical infrastructure.

### **Strategic Direction for TIM Teams 2010**

Don welcomed ideas regarding the future of the TIM Team website. "Move-IT Laws," "Open Roads Policy," "Move Over Law," "Safety," and the SWIFT SunGuide Center were all mentioned as a possible links. Also, Don would like to add a "Flash" of pictures of response vehicles. Future TIM Team meetings will continue bi-monthly, as will the Newsletters. Don requested participants advise him of any incidents, training opportunities, or other materials that can be communicated Team-wide.

One suggestion by a Team member was the creation of a page within the website specifically for responder education. This would help facilitate communication, education, and training refreshment within the individual responder's entity, especially with respect to rules and laws.

### **FDOT Construction Update**

#### iROX – I-75 Road Expansion Project

iROX is beginning the final phase of construction. Friction course pavement is being laid, with the northbound lanes anticipated for completion by the end of November, and the southbound lanes anticipated to be completed by the end of the year. Uneven lanes are to be expected until all paving is complete. Emergency Stopping Sites are complete in most locations, and are for the use of motorists and responders alike. The iROX project is anticipated to be fully complete by April 2010. Additional information can be found at <http://www.irox75.com>.

#### Other Construction Includes

##### **Active Construction:**

- I-75 Milling and Resurfacing between the Toll Plaza and Golden Glades Parkway in Collier County – No anticipated completion date was provided.
- SR 84 in Collier County Widening – No anticipated completion date was provided.

**Anticipated Future Construction:**

- Kings Highway widening in Charlotte County – No anticipated construction dates were provided.
- I-75 Freeway Management System (ITS) in Charlotte County – No anticipated construction dates were provided.

**Open Forum**

Ted mentioned that construction companies are experiencing losses with battery theft from the portable message signs. It has been requested that law enforcement be vigilant in monitoring the signs within their area.

Ted also stressed, per Federal regulation, that all responders are required to wear the Type II or Type III approved safety vests when working at a traffic incident scene. This requirement is to enhance safety and mitigate risk of personal injury. FHP indicated that they are not able to be remove towing and recovery operators from rotation for this infraction. The LE community does not anticipate an initiative to request non-compliant responders to leave the incident scene unless further direction is provided from Tallahassee.