TIM TEAM TIMES

31st Edition | Collier-Lee-Charlotte County Traffic Incident Management | March 2010

INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MOVES TRAFFIC ON I-75

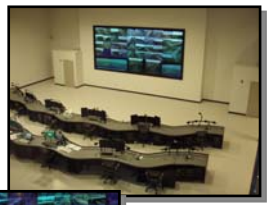
"ITS live!!!" The Florida Department of Transportation's Intelligent Transportation System in District One is bringing real-time information about interstate traffic conditions to travelers using I-75 through Collier and Lee Counties. The system went "live" to the public on January 19, 2010. ITS will help the public make efficient, timesaving transportation decisions. Dynamic message signs along I-75 now display "heads up" information about travel times, congestion, lane closures, incidents, even fog or smoke down the road.

The South West Interagency Facility for Transportation (SWIFT) SunGuide Center is the hub of real-time traffic operations for I-75 in Southwest Florida. The two story 49,800 square foot building houses the department's ITS operations staff, the team handling regional traffic and incident management, and the department's regional Office of Motor Carrier Compliance. Later this year, Florida Highway Patrol Troop F and FHP dispatch also will occupy the building which will further enhance coordination and communications regarding incident management. This new facility is designated the Joseph P. Bertrand Building, named for the FHP trooper who died in the line of duty in Fort Myers in December of 1967.

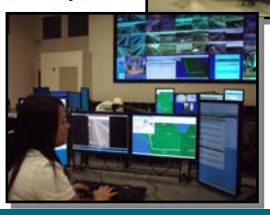
ITS Operation

Today, the SWIFT SunGuide Center coverage area includes Alligator Alley, the "east/west" segment of I-75 at the southern tip of Florida, and the interstate's north/south segment through the remainder of Collier County and all of Lee County. Alligator Alley runs through the Everglades with few interchanges. The north/south segment along Florida's southwest coast mixes urban, interurban, and rural interstate segments. Approximately 98 miles of I-75 are now instrumented with ITS in District One.

Most visibly along I-75 in Collier and Lee Counties, 26 dynamic message signs display information to drivers about travel conditions ahead.



Less noticeable to people using I-75 – but still essential field components of ITS – are 79 closed-circuit TV cameras transmitting interstate images to the video wall and monitors at operators' stations in the SWIFT SunGuide Center's control room, 111 vehicle detectors or sensors that relay data about vehicles' movement, two roadway weather information systems, and the safety cable barrier system next to the wildlife fence along Alligator Alley, now equipped with sensors that alert operators in the center if a vehicle hits it. All are controlled through the SunGuide® centralized computer system.



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Upcoming Events:

TIM Team Meeting :
NEW LOCATION!!
Wednesday
April 14th, 2010
9:30 am
SunGuide SWIFT Center
10041 Daniels Parkway
Fort Myers, Fl 33913

IT'S THE LAW
MOVE OVER
FOR STOPPED EMERGENCY VEHICLES

ITS is a 24/7 operation every day of the year. Its value is clear – enhancing safety, reducing congestion, and serving as the backbone of southwest Florida's transportation management system. Communicating real-time information about congestion, incidents, lane closures, construction, and foggy or smoky conditions, for example, gives people opportunities to make informed choices about times they travel and routes they choose. Real-time traffic information also makes drivers better prepared to react quickly and responsibly to situations on the highway. ITS enhances safety and reduces congestion.

ITS Future

District One will continue to expand the number of miles instrumented with ITS in the future. The following shows the planned dates for expansion of ITS:

- ITS operational on I-75 through Charlotte County in late spring 2011
- ITS operational on I-75 through Sarasota and Manatee Counties in late 2013

District One is proud to usher in a new era in transportation for Southwest Florida. We look forward to working with our local stakeholders and first responders to improve incident management in the area and provide motorists with valuable real time traffic information they are accustomed to seeing in other parts of the state.

This article was provided by Chris Birosak, FDOT District One. For information, please contact Mr. Birosak at (863) 519-2507 or email to chris.birosak@dot.state.fl.us. Debbie Tower, Director of Public Information for District One and John Scarpellino, Contract Operations Manager for Telvent for District One also contributed to this article.

CATT LAB—VIRTUAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TRAINING

The Center for Advanced Transportation Technology Laboratory (CATT Lab) is working with the I-95 Corridor Coalition and Forterra Systems Inc. to create an intensive training program that uses three-dimensional, multi-player computer gaming simulation technology and distance-based earning technologies to test, validate, certify and reinforce the dissemination of best incident management practices across the Coalition region.

A virtual incident management training program is being developed. The program will present typical situations and allow the participants to play out their normal roles in what is essentially a highly structured and recorded video game. In this way, traffic management personnel and incident responders can experience a wide array of realistic scenarios, analyze the impacts of their decisions, and be trained about appropriate responses and communication as well as the consequences of inappropriate responses and communication breakdowns.

The system will enable practical, scenario-based, interactive, real-time incident management training for up to 500 responders, trainers and "victims" simultaneously at a variety of locations. Participants will include state, county, and local transportation departments, toll road authorities, law enforcement agencies, fire departments, emergency service providers, medical examiners, hazardous materials handlers, towing companies, the media, and other operating agencies and entities across the Corridor. The program is designed to educate and validate quick clearance practices and related incident management techniques, but it is also designed to promote communication, coordination and cooperation among organizations involved in incident management.

The training videos, utilizing different responder perspectives and several different emergency scenarios, are available at the below website:

http://www.cattlab.umd.edu/index.php?page=research&a=00028
- Article provided by the University of Maryland, School of Engineering website, http://www.cattlab.umd.edu/

TIMe4SAFETY TRAINING VIDEO

The North Florida Transportation Planning Organization partnered with law enforcement, fire rescue, transportation and towing entities in North Florida to help protect responders and the motoring public. Together, they created a handbook and series of "roll call" training videos, designed to raise awareness among first responders about safety practices at the scene of traffic incidents.

Copies of this valuable TIM training tool are available by contacting Chris Birosak at chris.birosak@dot.state.fl.us.

New & Improved TIM Team Website! www.swfltim.org

*The **Collier-Lee-Charlotte County TIM Team** is committed to implementing the Quick Clearance principles of Florida's Open Roads Policy through the "3 Cs" of TIM: Communication, Cooperation and Coordination, and providing the public with the best real-time Motorist Information available. Team membership draws from state, regional, and local transportation agencies, public safety providers, and other organizations and companies that service the traveling public. The Teams, sponsored by the FDOT, meet bi-monthly.*

Mission

The TIM Team Program brings together all agencies involved in clearing the roadway crashes with the objective of improving detection, verification, response, and clearance times to expeditiously remove a motor vehicle crash or incident from the roadway while providing the best real-time information to motorists, resulting in a safer highway environment for both incident responders and motorists.

If you have any questions regarding this newsletter, or would like to submit an article, please contact Chris Birosak at chris.birosak@dot.state.fl.us.