



## Sarasota - Manatee Traffic Incident Management Team

December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
Meeting Minutes

### Attendees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>
John Brown	City of North Port	Thom Scrivner	FDOT
Gilbert Fernandez	City of Sarasota	Thomas Przbylowicz	FHP
Richard Fimbel	DBI Services	Charles Stratton	Metric Engineering, Inc.
Richard Schuldt	DBI Services	Scott Agans	Metric Engineering, Inc.
Ted Smith	Delcan Corp	Aaron Nick	North Port Police Dept.
Gary Millsaps	Delcan Corp	Hank Whitney	Road Rangers
Bill Fuller	FDOT	Claudia Leonard	Sarasota County
Kevin Salsbery	FDOT	Gary Spraggins	Sarasota County
Paul Clark	FDOT	Jerry Palmer	SQG

**Call to Order:** The Sarasota-Manatee TIM Team meeting was held on Tuesday, December 7th, 2010 at 1:30 PM at Sarasota County Public Works, Sarasota, Florida 34240. 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

No updated information was provided by the TIM Team

#### 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 the TIM Team that all Road Ranger field personnel are in the process of receiving special training regarding the use of the Department radio system. This training provides drivers with the skills to communicate with confidential information which is transmitted on these systems.

Polk County Road Ranger Supervisor (Harry) spoke about current events on his portion of I-4. He stated that one of his drivers was struck. When the wrecking companies arrive on the roadway they are not wearing their safety vest while working on the roadway. The TIM Team discussed having non-compliant wrecking companies removed from the rotation. Everyone should address all people on the roadway will wear appropriate PPE on the roadway. This includes any media personnel on the side of the roadway, which was discussed at the last TIM meeting.

Another issue is the wrecker company's on-site do not ask for assistance from the Road Rangers for traffic control.

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).

### **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.

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

### **TIM Team Goals – Areas of Improvement**

1. Develop multi-agency agreements/memoranda of understanding detailing resource sharing (facilities, services, personnel and budget)
2. Utilizing traffic control procedures for the end of the incident traffic queue
3. Establish training goals (NTIMC and other areas of interest)

### **Action Items**

1. TIM Team Members will provide Bill Fuller with the end of traffic queue standard operating procedures that involves the use of Community Service Officers. The Team will review and analyze this procedure. *(Ball in court: TIM Team Members)*
2. Re-evaluate the 70 mph speed limit on I-75 through the construction from North of River Road to North of SR 861. *(Ball in court: FDOT/BF, closed)*
3. Media crews being on-site after scene clearance. *(Ball in court: D1 PIO, closed)*
4. TIM Team Members will provide any multi-agency agreements/memoranda of understanding to FDOT. *(Ball in court: TIM Team Members, closed)*
5. Invite the I-95 Corridor Coalition to D1 TIM Team Meetings. *(Ball in court: FDOT/Metric Engineering)*
6. Address complaints of sugar sand on the shoulder of I-75 from North River Road to SR 681. *(Ball in court: FDOT/BF, closed)*
7. 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)*
8. Review incident roadway/clearance MOU's (Local Open Roads Policy) between Collier and Lee County – Strategic Parking. *(Ball in court: FDOT)*
9. 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 from North of River Road to North of SR 681
- 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/construc/constmap/d1.shtm>. This resource is updated on a weekly basis.

### **Open Forum**

There was a concern expressed about the incident clearance on I-75 Southbound at exit 176. No fuel, Hazmat, or injuries were reported. The contractor (DBI) asked FHP if they were able to hook a chain and clear the roadway. Mr. Fuller stated to ensure that everyone who is on-site on an incident to make contact with other responders.

North Port Police Department praised contractors on roadway clearance and installing MOT when being asked. The officer appreciated the contractor being proactive. The contractor stated that his lane closures are for EMS/Law enforcement. When individuals park behind the contractor's vehicle, it reduces the effectiveness of his MOT.

Mr. Ted Smith informed the TIM Team that communication systems need to be re-evaluated. He stated communications is becoming an issue due to FDOT and contractors are losing their emergency pagers and cell phones. Mr. Fuller stated that individuals should call the RTMC so that the FDOT on-call officer can be dispatched.

Road Ranger surveys are here again. The survey will contain 13 questions and will possibly be automated and online.

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 Sarasota-Manatee County TIM Team will be February 8, 2010 at 1:30pm at the Manatee County Traffic Management Center, Public Safety Building, 2101 47<sup>th</sup> Terrace East, Bradenton, Florida.

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).