



15<sup>th</sup> Edition

Charlotte-Sarasota-Manatee Traffic Incident Management Team

July 2007



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#### Upcoming Events:

TIM Team Meeting – August 14, 2007  
TIM Team Meeting – October 9, 2007



The initiative to enhance field response and procedures guidelines with respect to appropriate authorities, effective command, and coordination is identified as a major objective in the TIM Team development strategy. The Regional Strategy, published in the Semi-Annual Addendum to the TIM Team Times, titled, "Unified Incident Management System @ Level III Incidents" is not entirely indicative of the Unified Command concept. This article generated tremendous concern and inspired comments that we found to be very valuable. Don Olson stated, "I was not correct in my interpretation of Unified Command structure and concept of operations." We should, as a team, adopt an approach similar to the US DOT model as follows:

## Unified Command: Multi Agency Traffic Incident Management

In the spirit of the National Unified Goal, cooperation and collaborative advantage have proven to be the "Best Practice" when professionally managing incidents on Florida's roadways. TIM Teams embody this very principle ... and Florida has emerged as a national leader, due entirely to the commitment of the TIM Team members. The Unified Command empowers each responding agency to take the leadership role to achieve simultaneous, but diverse objectives.

Under the Unified Command structure, members must coordinate their activities through the Operations Chief, and as a team, jointly determine objectives, strategy and priorities. Additionally, step-by-step, one of the members is identified as a "Primary" member to complete their priority objective. As an incident progresses, the primary member will change as the emphasis of the incident changes. For example, the Fire / Rescue may be elected as the primary member to extinguish vehicle fires and extricate trapped victims. The EMS professionals move in to ambulate victims for emergency medical treatment. As investigation, scene control and body recovery

### 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.*

become the major concerns, Law Enforcement could take over command. Finally, as attention turns to vehicle and debris clearance, the professional wrecker operators and asset maintenance personnel take command. All agencies remain represented for the duration of the incident, in a capacity of assisting agency or supporting agency. Vehicle positioning and repositioning, maintenance of traffic, advance warning to motorists and scene safety are only achieved through a cooperative initiative with all responders taking an active role as a supporting agent.

Under the Unified Command structure, the incident commander may be identified on the basis of greatest jurisdictional involvement, first arriving command officer, existing statutory authority, or by mutual knowledge of an agency commander's qualifications, certifications, experience or availability.

TIM Teams have created a forum to develop and implement the Unified Command concept through communication, cooperation, and coordination. In the spirit of the National Unified Goal, cooperation and collaborative advantage have proven to be the "Best Practice" when professionally managing incidents on Florida's roadways.

(US DOT Simplified Guide to the Incident Command System for Transportation Professionals – Federal Highway Administration)

## TIM Team Objective—Incident Review Process

On March 29, a large cargo vessel under way in the channel of Tampa Bay lost steerage and headed for the shallows. The ship's captain ordered the ship's crew to release the anchor, rather than risk running into the Sunshine Skyway Bridge. The ship came to rest about 500 feet east of the bridge structure with the anchor holding secure and the ship grounded in the shallow water north of the main channel.

The occurrence of a catastrophe such as the one that took place when the ship Summit Venture collided with the Sunshine Skyway Bridge on May 9, 1980, is very difficult, if not impossible, to predict. In most cases the possibility of such an occurrence is so remote that it is not considered in the design of structures such as the Sunshine Skyway Bridge. However, when such an accident does occur, attention is sharply focused on the future prevention of another accident.

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## Incident Review Process *(Continued from page 1)*

The U.S. Coast Guard notified the Florida Highway Patrol of the immediate threat to the bridge and requested closure at 5:23A.M. The USCG stated that the vessel was “drifting” toward the bridge. The authority to shut down traffic on the bridge rests with FHP, who assumes incident command, and handles all notifications through the FHP communications center. The Sunshine Skyway Bridge was re-opened after the USCG advised FHP that the ship was secure. The incident duration was approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes.

Process Improvement opportunities were identified as follows:

- FDOT Maintenance contractors to pre-stage MOT trailers for rapid deployment at the bridge.
- MOT set-up and traffic plan should be produced for prompt motorist and responder safety.
- Immediate notification to T I M Team member agencies including Toll Booth supervisors.
- Emergency lights should be kept in working order, through routine preventive maintenance.
- Toll Booth traffic lane lights should change from “Green” to “Red” to communicate lane closure.
- Toll Booth operators should not allow traffic to continue to pass the toll plaza North and South.
- Sheriff’s Office can assist with highway closure and detour to support FDOT contractors.
- All T I M Team members added to FHP/ FDOT Regional TMC incident notification systems.
- Incident Command via multi-agency radio communications system or mutual aid channel.
- Implement and exercise the Unified Command Structure for Traffic Incident Management.
- An annual drill or mock incident should be conducted, with all stakeholders participating.
- An annual incident review should be facilitated to continue process improvement and training.

Immediate incident notification and an effective, coordinated response can be achieved through collaborative plans, common communications and practiced procedure. The objective of T I M Team incident review exercises is to improve the process of traffic incident management and further develop the process of working together as a multi-agency response team to mitigate negative consequences and generate the best possible outcome for all.



### Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this newsletter, or would like to submit an article, please contact Don Olson at don.olson@dot.state.fl.us.

*The Charlotte-Sarasota-Manatee 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.*

### [www.southwestflorida511.com](http://www.southwestflorida511.com)

#### 511 statistics for June, 2007

Website: Number of page views	22,413
Telephone: Number of phone calls	1, 734

#### Incidents entered into 511 system

Total	1140
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