



## Heartland Counties Traffic Incident Management Team

October 7, 2025  
Meeting Minutes

**Call to Order:** The Heartland County TIM Team meeting was held virtually on Tuesday, October 7, 2025, 1:00 PM. Tom Arsenault and Brandy Boccuti facilitated the meeting.

**Introductions:** The team members provided their names and agency in the chat box for introductions and meeting attendance records.

### **Agency News:**

#### **Towing and Wrecker News**

No agency updates

#### **Other Agency News**

FDOT Emergency Management:

- Monitoring several Atlantic storms; none are projected to impact the area.

FDOT Traffic Management Center (TMC):

- The new operations contract will go into effect with WSP contract starting November 1, 2025.
- New operations manager introduced: Shayla Kaliamati, with prior experience in Districts Four and Six.
- Reminder: For incident reporting, call RTMC at 239-225-1960 (24/7); they can forward info to Satellite Traffic Management Center (STMC) in Manatee County, if needed.

FDOT District Six:

- Currently promoting Crash Responder Safety Week.

Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST):

- Safety Jam event scheduled for February 28, 2026 (formerly "Bring It to Safety").
- Planning underway; vendors and food trucks are being recruited.

Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO):

- Two Safe Streets for all grants pending execution:
  - Update to Safety Action Plan and review of high-crash suburban intersections.
  - Hardee County grant for a countywide safety action plan in partnership with TPO.

- Heartland operations were praised for detailed incident reporting that supports TMC messaging and traveler alerts.

### **Update on TIM Initiatives:**

Tom Arsenault, Metric Engineering, reminded the team about the purpose of the TIM Meeting.

- TIM is the coordinated detection, response to and removal of traffic incidents as quickly and safely as possible. TIM is a coordinated effort among multiple agencies.
- The primary purpose of TIM is to reduce the duration and impact of incidents as well as to improve the safety of motorists and most importantly our incident responders.
- The TIM Meeting is to help prop up communication, coordination, and collaboration among our incident responders.

Tom Arsenault, Metric Engineering, opened the presentation on the Crash Prosecution and Lessons for Responders and provided the background to the case. The case involved a hit and run fatality from September 14, 2023, in Hendry County. Incident details are as follows:

- On September 14, 2023, a Toyota SUV traveling an estimated speed of 73 mph in a posted 35 mph zone struck a 15-year-old bicyclist on Case Road in Labelle, Hendry County, resulting in the bicyclist's death. The driver fled the scene.
- The Florida Highway Patrol located and impounded the vehicle on September 15, 2023, and arrested the driver, Hector Santiago Jr., on October 20, 2023, for vehicular homicide, leaving the scene of a fatal crash, and driving with a revoked license. He was booked into the Hendry County Jail. Jury found defendant guilty on all counts; sentenced to 30 years in prison.

Corporal Jennifer Torres, Florida Highway Patrol, joined Prosecutor Martin Stark to present Fatal Crash Prosecution and Lessons for Responders to the team. Mr. Stark further discussed the prosecution requirements of the above case, expressing the prosecution's responsibility for proving all the elements of the charges.

- Elements of the following charges were discussed: Operating a motor vehicle causing death without a Driver's license, leaving the scene of a crash involving death, and vehicular homicide
- Investigation Highlights:
  - Evidence included: crash report, vehicle damage, DNA, paint transfer, and black box data showing speed and no braking
  - Ring doorbell footage and phone records confirmed the driver's route and identity.
  - Defendant claimed he wasn't driving; defense disproved via forensic and digital evidence.
- Challenges: Time for DNA processing; coordination with FDLE; suspect fled to New Jersey before arrest.
- Additional Comments:
  - Hendry County Sheriff's Office highlighted the work of Florida Highway Patrol in investigating the case.
  - Post-crash improvements: Speed humps, street lighting, and license plate readers installed on Case and Evans Roads.
  - Community involvement and cooperation praised; neighbors provided critical tips.

Nationwide Crash Responder Safety Week is November 17–21, 2025. The campaign is dedicated to honoring men and women who risk their lives at roadway incident scenes. Agencies were encouraged to promote awareness.

After Action Reviews (AAR) provide agencies with actionable intel on an incident or event that can be used for improved strategies for future occurrences, demonstrating the benefit of quick clearance practices and improving cross-agency coordination and communication.

AARs were performed on the following recent major incidents:

05/10/2025

SR-78 S/O Old Lakeport Road Northwest (Fisheating Creek)

Incident Details:

- 5:48 PM Initial Notification
- 5:49 PM Roadway blocked
- 6:04 PM First Signal 7 confirmed
- 6:26 PM THI dispatched
- 6:33 PM Second Signal 7 confirmed
- 7:30 PM Body removal requested
- 9:50 PM Clewiston Towing dispatched
- 11:33 PM Roadway Open
- Total Closure Time: 5 Hours, 45 Minutes

05/22/2025

US-98 E/O Lakeview Blvd.

Incident Details:

- 4:11 PM Initial Notification
- 4:13 PM Roadway blocked
- 4:16 PM Signal 7 confirmed
- 6:26 PM THI dispatched
- 6:55 PM Advised body removal
- 7:53 PM Roadblock EB; debris field – dry bags requested
- 8:42 PM Artistic Towing dispatched
- 8:47 PM Artistic Towing canceled
- 8:47 PM Duck's Towing dispatched
- 9:03 PM Duck's Towing canceled – insufficient staff
- 9:04 PM Alan Jay Towing dispatched – canceled
- 9:38 PM Duck's Towing suspended 30 days (contract violation)
- 9:42 PM Precision Towing dispatched – both vehicles removed
- 11:55 PM Roadway Open
- Total Closure Time: 7 Hours, 44 Minutes

06/27/2025

Northbound US-27, Near Archibold Rd.

Incident Details:

- 5:41 PM Initial Notification/Rollover with injuries
- 6:01 PM Signal 7 confirmed
- 6:55 PM Body removal
- 7:41 PM Roadway blocked
- 7:49 PM Precision Towing dispatched
- 8:05 PM Southbound lanes blocked

- 9:19 PM Roadway Open
- Total Closure Time: 3 Hours, 48 Minutes

07/27/2025

Westbound SR-66, Near Oakhill Ranch Rd.

**Incident Details:**

- 7:13 PM Initial Notification/head-on collision
- 7:40 PM Signal 7 confirmed
- 8:08 PM Roadway blocked
- 8:18 PM AirMed on scene
- 10:46 PM Cliff's Towing dispatched
- 10:54 PM Body removal
- 1:58 AM Roadway Open
- Total Closure Time: 6 Hours, 45 Minutes

07/27/2025

Northbound SR-31 Near CR-760A

**Incident Details:**

- 7:30 PM Initial Notification
- 8:01 PM Roadway blocked both directions
- 8:11 PM Air Med dispatched
- 7:34 PM EMS on-scene
- 9:22 PM Signal 7 confirmed
- 9:23 PM THI notified
- 12:39 AM Prompt Towing dispatched
- 3:09 AM Roadway Open
- Total Closure Time: 7 Hours, 39 Minutes

**FDOT Construction Update**

The team received an update on current construction activities. FDOT District 1 weekly construction updates are available to all first responders upon request by contacting [FDOT-D1COMM@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:FDOT-D1COMM@dot.state.fl.us).

**Future Meetings:**

The next Heartland County TIM Team will be on January 6, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.

**Meeting Adjourned**

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Brandy Boccuti, Metric Engineering, Inc. at (407) 949-4283 or via email at [brandy.boccuti@metriceng.com](mailto:brandy.boccuti@metriceng.com)