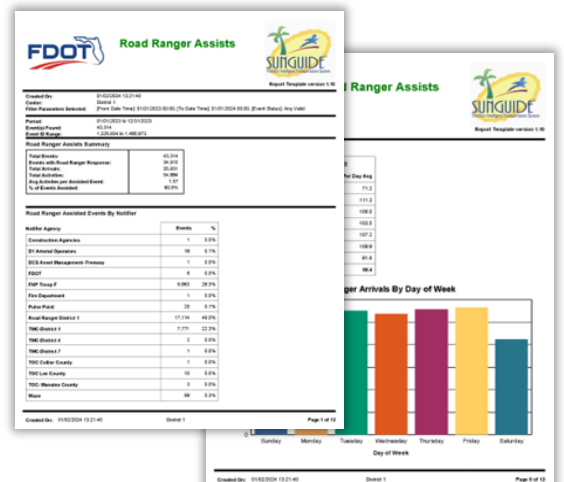


January 2024



## The First 15 Minutes at a Traffic Incident



In the realm of traffic incident response, the first 15 minutes are a critical window where strategic decisions and actions can significantly impact the overall outcome of the situation. The on-scene responders play a pivotal role during this timeframe, engaging in a series of key steps that set the stage for a well-coordinated and effective response.

**Size-Up the Incident:** The initial step involves a rapid and comprehensive size-up of the incident. This includes assessing the nature of the incident, potential hazards, and the extent of injuries. This information forms the foundation for subsequent decision-making.<sup>1</sup>

**Determine Move or Work It Strategy:** The on-scene commander must make a crucial decision regarding whether to move vehicles involved to a safer location or conduct on-site operations. This determination shapes the overall strategy for managing the incident.

**Assess Resource Needs:** Identifying additional resources needed is imperative in the first 15 minutes. Promptly recognizing the requirements for medical personnel, fire services, hazmat teams, or law enforcement is crucial for a well-coordinated response.

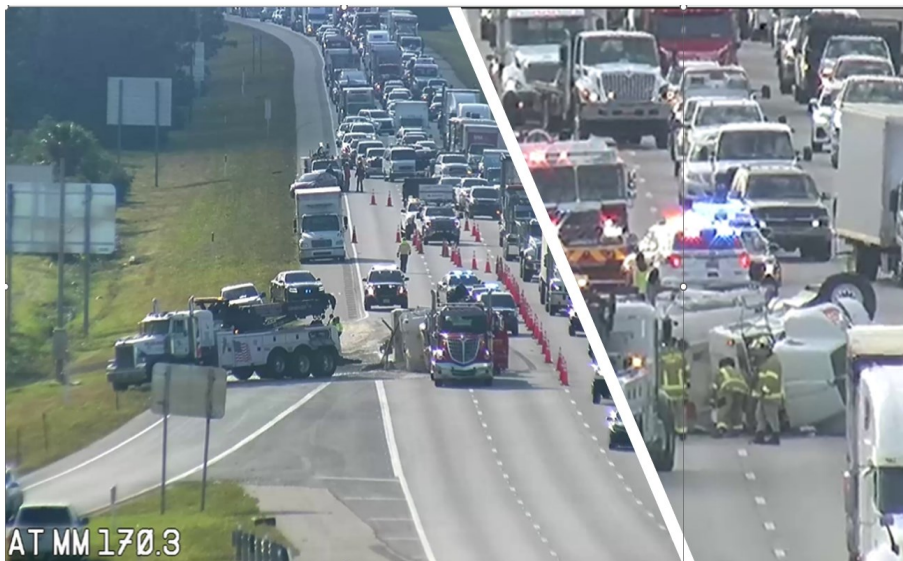
**Effective Communication with Dispatch and Agencies:** Clear communication is the backbone of successful incident management.

**Establish Traffic Control:** Protecting the work area and guiding oncoming motorists are paramount.

**The Impact of Early Resource Calling:** Calling in needed resources early in the response process has significant benefits. It decreases clearance times, minimizing exposure to roadside hazards for both responders and the public.

**Effective Communication for Proper Operations:** It ensures that proper operations are carried out, and the required resources are readily available.

**Setting up Traffic Incident Management Area:** Early and proper setup of a traffic incident management area is crucial. It reduces the likelihood of secondary incidents, contributing to the overall safety and efficiency of the response. Traffic control measures implemented early on create a secure working environment for responders.<sup>1</sup>



**Planning and Communication:** Planning the response starts as soon as the call is received. Providing detailed information to dispatch communications is essential. This includes incident location, involved vehicles, reported conditions or hazards, responding units from various agencies, and available additional resources. Continuous communication with other responding agencies ensures a cohesive and multiagency response.

In the dynamic and multifaceted realm of traffic incident response, the first 15 minutes are undeniably critical. The on-scene responders' decisive actions during this timeframe set the tone for an efficient and coordinated response. From effective communication and resource assessment to traffic control and early incident operations, each step plays a vital role in mitigating risks, ensuring the safety of responders and the public, and ultimately achieving a successful resolution to traffic incidents.

**Make sure to participate in the upcoming TIM Team meetings, where Tom Arsenault, TIM Program Manager, will deliver an in-depth presentation on this topic.** The meeting will offer a **unique opportunity to hear and engage with other first responders** on the valuable insights shared on the topic.

(1) The First 15 Minutes at Roadway Incidents. Respondersafety.com. Web November 2023. [http://ntimc.transportation.org/Documents/12.13.10\\_laneDesignation-2pg-printer.pdf](http://ntimc.transportation.org/Documents/12.13.10_laneDesignation-2pg-printer.pdf)

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T I M TEAM WEBSITE!

[www.swfltim.org](http://www.swfltim.org)

*The Heartland 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 quarterly*

### 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*

