



Polk County Traffic Incident Management Team

January 13, 2011
Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Bruce Hutcheson	DBI Services	Gary Millsaps	Delcan
Chris Birosak	FDOT	Charles Stratton	Metric Engineering, Inc.
Bill Fuller	FDOT	Scott Agans	Metric Engineering, Inc
Greg Losey	FDOT	Crystal Delo	Navtaq
Gentry Richardson	FDOT	Michael Blaze	Polk County
Kevin Salsbery	FDOT	Harry Whitney	Polk County Road Rangers
Bruce Surrency	FDOT	Dean Empie	Transfield Services
Eddy King	FDOT Bartow Ops	Phil Houston	Transfield Services
Patricia Kirby	Florida Highway Patrol	Tom McMullins	Transfield Services
Michelle Venero	Florida Highway Patrol		
Jim Hilbert	Florida's Turnpike		

Call to Order: The Polk County TIM Team meeting was held on Thursday, January 13, 2011 at 10:00 AM at the University of South Florida Polytechnic, 3433 Winter Lake Road, Lakeland, Florida. Charles Stratton, Bill Fuller, and Gary Millsaps facilitated the meeting.

Introductions: Team members introduced themselves and the agencies they represent.

Agency News:

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.

Bill Fuller spoke about the Crash Response Time Statistics. He will expand and provide additional crash data for the Polk County area of I-4. The data provided was only for I-75 for crashes. These statistics can be expanded for fire, EMS, DOT and other agencies if requested.

Newsletter

Bill Fuller encouraged all attendees to verify and update, if necessary, all of the contact information on the sign-in sheet in order to ensure that all attendees will receive the newsletters or any TIM related email news.

Towing and Wrecker News

No new information was discussed.

Training

Mr. Gary Millsaps provided a *Public Safety* video by Cobb County, Georgia. Video informed TIM Team on three 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.swftim.org>.

Update on TIM Initiatives:

Other National, State, and Regional Items to Note:

Mr. Gary Millsaps 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 of 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. Gary Millsaps provided TIM Team with a handout providing additional information on this subject.

Mr. Bill Fuller and Mr. Gary Millsaps 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 FL 511 to inform traveling public. Mr. Millsaps 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. Gary Millsaps 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. Millsaps. 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.

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 Luccett 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 made 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 was observed backing SB in the closed lanes over the bridge. The tow equipment, two heavy duty wreckers and a MOT truck were verified on scene at 19:34 and the notice-to-proceed (NTP) was given by FHP at 19:45. There was 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 was observed at 20:14 in the NB lanes to Luccett Rd. RTMC log at 20:16 indicated that they had not received confirmation from DBI confirming that they were 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 were 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 was open to traffic at 20:27 and all lanes were 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 did report 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

The top-three goals previously identified during the 2010 Self Assessment was:

1. Develop multi-agency agreements/memoranda of understanding detailing resource sharing (facilities, services, personnel and budget)
Team Members will provide Bill Fuller with current operating procedures and any multi-agency agreements or memoranda of understanding for the Team to review and analyze.
2. Establish targets for roadway incident clearance times and routinely review whether progress is being made towards achieving the targets.
TIM team members were asked to understand the difference between roadway clearance and incident clearance. The Team was asked to quickly move any accidents to the shoulder to reopen the roadway and clear debris at a later time if possible.
3. Utilize transportation resources to conduct traffic control procedures for various levels of incidents in compliance with the MUTCD.
Possibility of using the TIM Team Resource Book which includes typical traffic control scenarios.

FDOT Construction Update

High Speed Rail

The High Speed Rail project from Tampa to Orlando has been “fast-tracked” with an anticipated completion date in 2015. The construction will be happening in two phases: median clearance and rail construction (at grade, with barrier wall separation). It is anticipated that the project limits are from the Orlando International Airport to downtown Tampa, with a stop in Lakeland. No crossovers will be designed due to the special use lanes. Additional information may be found at <http://www.floridahighspeedrail.org>.

Active Construction:

- No active construction projects were discussed.

Completed Construction:

- No completed construction projects were discussed.

Anticipated Future Construction:

- CSX Rail Road has scheduled replacement of ties and new track beds on their main line that starts in Auburndale and runs west to the Sykes Boulevard overpass. The work will also include reconstruction of the railroad crossings along the line of track. Each railroad will be closed for approximately two weeks with all efforts made to open the crossings as soon as possible. Detour routes will be marked to the closest open crossing.

Additional construction information is available on the FDOT website located at <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/publicinformationoffice/construc/constmap/d1.shtm>.

Open Forum

No open forum items were presented.

Action Items for Future Meetings

1. TIM Team Members will provide any multi-agency agreements/memoranda of understanding to FDOT. (*Ball in court: TIM Team Members*)

Future Meetings

The next Polk County TIM Team meeting will be April 14, 2011 at 10:00am at the University of South Florida Polytechnic, 3433 Winter Lake Road, Lakeland, 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.