



65th Edition

Polk County Traffic Incident Management Team

November 2015



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Temporary Traffic Control	1
Farewell To a TIM Team Champion	1
Distracted Driving - A Continuing Epidemic	2

Upcoming Events:

Upcoming TIM Team Meeting:

County Sheriff's Office Comp Procop Room

1891 Jim Keene Boulevard

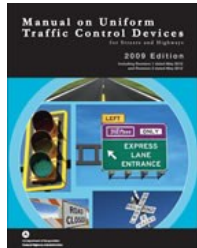
Winter Haven, FL 33880

10:00 AM

- January 14, 2016



Temporary Traffic Control



Operators working the traffic management center cameras often get a bird's eye view of our response to traffic incidents and they will tell you Motorist and Responder safety is a constant concern. This unrest is especially justified when first responders mindlessly position their vehicle once at the scene. Mindlessly, because the Maintenance of Traffic training available

gives responders best practices to lessen the chance of a secondary crash or responder "struck by" injury.

FHWA's Multi agency SHRP-2 responder training reviews the national best practices and governing documents designed to keep responders safe while working an incident. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) 2009 6-I recommends emergency vehicles be positioned so that traffic flow through the incident scene is optimized.

Responders should recognize and respect the five components of all Traffic Incident Management Areas; Advanced Warning Area, Transition Area, Buffer Space, Work Area, and Termination Area, each with a specific purpose and use for responders.

The Advanced Warning area is for the Transportation response component with their vehicle-mounted variable message sign or arrow board and cones leading into the Transition area where traffic is channeled away from the closed travel lane(s). Police are here upstream of the incident in a blocking position. The Buffer space is just upstream of the crash and should be vacant and provide an extra margin of safety. Buffer refers to the distance or space between personnel and vehicles in the protected work zone and nearby moving traffic. Speed of passing traffic and sight distance should be considered when determining the length of the buffer space.



The Work area is just downstream of the crash and is set aside for responders and equipment, citizens and other personnel. The Termination area should be clearly delineated to allow motorist easy flow back into the open lanes downstream and well beyond the end of the work area. Towing and recovery positioned in this area should be allowed ample space for the removal of the damaged vehicles.

When positioning responder vehicles one should always work under the assumption that the unit will be hit by oncoming traffic, and turn wheels so that they are NOT facing the work area. This will lessen the likelihood that it is pushed into the area where responders are working.

Responders only have one chance when they first arrive to position their vehicle in a manner that does not interfere with the established temporary traffic flow. When done incorrectly vehicle positioning causes a domino effect at a scene.

For example, when Road Rangers or Asset Maintenance responders position themselves too close to an incident subsequent responders are left to park behind their arrow board or where ever they can. Effectiveness of the arrow board is diminished and advanced warning is compromised.

Without proper and abundant advanced warning of an incident the chance of a secondary crash goes up significantly. Good TIM positioning isn't just for limited access, high speed roadways. It can be just as effectively employed on rural roadways.

- Positioning emergency vehicles to establish a safe work area is another foundational decision for responders arriving at an incident scene.
- Vehicle positioning is a critical element to protecting both emergency responders and motorists.

For more information on Temporary Traffic Control visit <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/>

Article submitted by Bill Fuller, District One Traffic Incident Management Project Manager.

Farewell To a TIM Team Champion

Bill Fuller, ITS Traffic Incident Management Project Manager, will be retiring the end of November 2015. Mr. Fuller has been a true champion for the TIM teams and we appreciate his service and dedication he has given to our District One TIM team.



At our last TIM meetings, Mr. Fuller was presented with a plaque in appreciation of his service and dedication that he has given to our District One TIM team.

On a personal note, Mr. Fuller had the following to say to the TIM team members;

"I will be retiring this November 30, 2015 and while I feel I have worked 20 years beyond the normal retirement period, I feel I have just scratched the surface of Traffic Incident Management. It has been a distinct honor and pleasure to serve as the Department's TIM Project Manager these last five years. TIM is an ever evolving science and I will miss working with you on the enhancements you will bring in the next five years." - Bill Fuller, District One Traffic Incident Management Project Manager.

We would like to leave Mr. Fuller with the following quote.

"The purpose of retirement is not simply to exist, to simply survive, but to elevate oneself in life, to have purpose, to achieve, and to conquer new horizons." - Dave Erhard

Distracted Driving – A Continuing Epidemic

We all understand the allure of utilizing a smart phone while driving; it seems to be an efficient use of time. A 30 minute drive to work seems like the perfect time to make a call, text a friend, check email, etc. And because so many people do this so often without incident, the actual and highly elevated risk is not fully comprehended or typically even considered.

Driving vehicles and traveling from point A to point B so quickly is amazing; it has transformed our economy and our personal lives. And with the windows rolled up it is sometimes hard to fathom how fast your body is traveling along the unforgiving asphalt when the speedometer says 70 mph, because the only breeze on your face is the gentle blowing of the air conditioner. So between the comfortable seats, pleasant music, and the apparently efficient access to every friend, family member, and song on the internet with a touch of a few buttons on a smart phone, it is easy to see how easily forgotten the dangers of driving really are.



Even without driving distracted, traveling high speeds on the roadway can be dangerous. Consider that the average vehicle weighs over 4,000 pounds and the average vehicle speed on the interstate is 70 mph. Using physics equations such as Newton's Second Law of Motion, the net force of a 4,000 lb vehicle traveling at 70 mph impacting anything is tremendous.

Also consider that some people who may not be experienced or competent drivers to begin with, may also be driving distracted. So whether you are driving distracted or not, the drivers in the next lane or in the lane right behind you may pose a danger to you. For this reason alone, 100% of your attention and focus really should be on the roadway and on the vehicles traveling around you. Add to that the risk of pedestrians and bikers crossing the road, the idea of accidentally committing vehicular homicide due to a meaningless text should be reason enough to put the smart phone in the glove compartment for the duration of the trip.

Driver Distractions are a major cause of roadway incidents. According to a study released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI), up to 80% of crashes and over half of all near-crashes involve some form of driver distraction just prior to the crash.¹

Types of Driver Distractions

Distracted Drivers are easy to spot on the roadways due to their poor driving behavior, which magnifies the probability of traffic incidents resulting in an increased probability of loss of lives. The list below contains some of the primary types of Driver Distractions, in no particular order. However, the last item on the list, Cell Phone Utilization, is increasing exponentially since the inception of the smart phone and the evolution of technology.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Driving Under the Influence (DUI) | 5. Smoking related |
| 2. Driving Tired | 6. Moving objects in the vehicle: Children, Pets, insects, object falling from dashboard or visor |
| 3. Eating and drinking | 7. Grooming (Hair/Makeup) |
| 4. Adjusting the Entertainment System (Radio, CD/MP3 Player, Bluetooth, etc.) | 8. Cell Phone Utilization |

More and more drivers are acquiring smart phones. More and more smart phone owners are utilizing their phones while driving. As you can see from the list above, talking on a smart phone is only one type of cell phone distraction. In addition to distracting their attention from the roadway, drivers are actually taking their eyes off the road while travel at speeds in excess of 70 MPH, in order to type a text message, surf a mobile web page, or just read a map for directions. In a world where an incident can arise in a split second, sparing 5, 4, or even just 2 seconds of both focus and eyesight from the constantly changing roadway can be the difference between life and death. The problem is that 99 times out of 100, we get away with it creating that false sense of security. But the truth is that if you Drive Distracted enough times at any probability rate other than zero, then you will be involved in an incident sooner or later.



Eliminating your own Distracted Driving and being aware of Distracted Driving by others is essential for safe transportation. Numerous States are enacting Legislation to help curb the problem, but the solution starts with you. Try minimize your Distracted Driving by making a Pledge to yourself, to your family, to your friends: "I will not use my Phone while driving." At the very least, make a pledge to not text. You don't want to be that person, who devastates a Family because of a meaningless text. Keep your eyes on the road and your hands on the wheel. Your life depends on it. Other lives depend on it. Drive safely!

¹USDOT NHTSA The 100-Car Naturalistic Driving Study (April 2006) Page 349. <http://www.distraction.gov/research/pdf-files/the-100-car-naturalistic-driving-study.pdf>

Article Submitted by Metric Engineering, Inc.. – Robert Mastascusa, P.E.

T I M TEAM WEBSITE!
www.swfitim.org

The Polk 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 bi-monthly.



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.