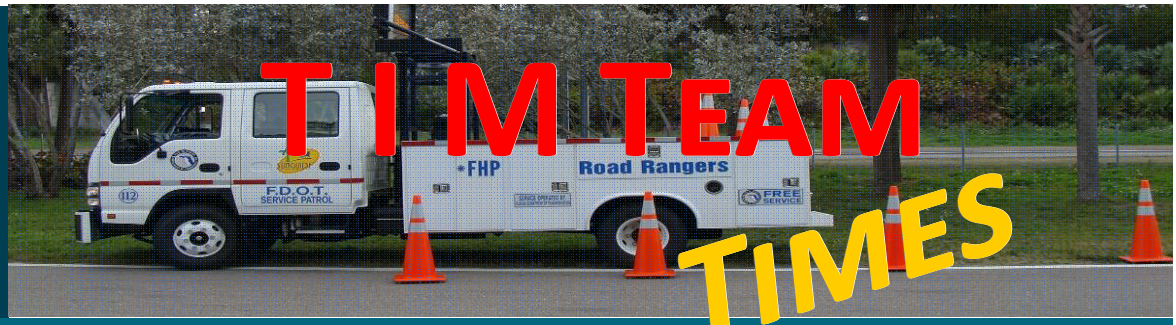


36th Edition

Polk County Traffic Incident Management Team

January 2011

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Upcoming Events:

TIM Team Meeting :

Thursday
April 14th, 2011
10:00 am
University of South Florida Polytechnic
3433 Winter Lake Rd
Lakeland, FL 33803
LTB Building
Room # 1104

Florida Highway Patrol Moves into the SWIFT SunGuide Center

Foggy conditions on highways throughout southwest Florida during the early hours of January 20, 2011 kept things busy at the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) SWIFT SunGuide Center in Lee County. The ITS staff had their hands full managing events. However, that morning was different because the FHP's Fort Myers district headquarters for Troop F which is commanded by Captain Tim Culhane ,and the regional communication operations center's Captain, Terry Davis, were now co-located inside the SWIFT SunGuide Center.

With the addition of FHP to the RTMC inside the SWIFT SunGuide Center, the team is now operationally complete. FHP's communications center in Fort Myers is one of seven regional FHP communication centers in Florida. It provides support for ten counties in southwest Florida: Manatee, Sarasota, Hardee, Desoto, Highlands, Hendry, Glades, Charlotte, Lee, and Collier. There are 185 sworn law enforcement positions assigned to Troop F to patrol the 1,313 miles of state roads, the 8,576 miles of county roads, and the 180 miles of interstate highways.

FHP communication operations is staffed with one captain, one lieutenant, four duty officer supervisors, 28 duty officers, and one clerk. They will be the telephone contacts with the public and other law enforcement agencies for both emergency and non-emergency situations. Among their responsibilities are dispatching services for emergency and non-emergency calls and conducting computer inquiries for wanted persons, vehicles, registrations, and driver's licenses.

The process of combining state law enforcement communication resources into the Regional Traffic Management Center (RTMC) started in 2008 and is more cost effective for Florida's citizens. Bringing these resources under one roof with staff managing the Intelligent Transportation System also enhances and streamlines coordination, which translates to more efficient response times to incidents on the state's highways, fewer secondary crashes, and faster restoration of normal traffic flow.

The RTMC at the SWIFT SunGuide Center is located on Daniels Parkway just east of I-75 (exit 131) in Fort Myers. Its mission is to enhance the safety, security, and efficiency of southwest Florida's transportation system through leading-edge technology and interagency coordination.

As a side note, the traffic on I-4 in Polk County west of US 27 is monitored by the FDOT District Seven Tampa Bay SunGuide Regional Traffic Management Center located in Tampa. The traffic on I-4 east of US 27 is monitored by the Florida Department of Transportation District Five Regional Traffic Management Center in Orlando. Each of the areas regional communication centers for FHP are co-located in these centers with the FDOT.

Emergency Vehicle Visibility and Conspicuity Report

The United States Fire Administration (USFA), in partnership with the International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA), announced the release of the *Emergency Vehicle Visibility and Conspicuity Study*. The study report highlights the results of a U.S. Department of Justice - National Institute of Justice (NIJ) supported project intended to enhance emergency vehicle and roadway operations safety for firefighters, law enforcement officers, and other emergency responders. This report discusses best practices in emergency vehicle visibility and conspicuity, including cutting edge international efforts. This report may be viewed and downloaded from the USFA Web site: http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa_323.pdf

Computer Based Training for Maintenance of Traffic for Incident Responders in Florida

The objectives of the course is to provide training for incident responders on the proper use of Temporary Traffic Control (TTC) at traffic incident scenes. Each person who works in or near moving traffic should receive appropriate training for their job. For further information please visit the link below.

http://wbt.dot.state.fl.us/ois/MOTTIRCBT/index.htm

Advanced Traffic Management Systems (ATMS)

Our past newsletter covered the subject of ICM (Integrated Corridor Management), which allows a regionally coordinated view and action plan to better manage traffic during incidents and planned events. This time we would like to look at one of the baseline technical tool kits that make ICM possible. From this perspective of incident management, ATMS is just that, a tool kit. The forward thinking of plans and actions of the TIM team determines the level of success in managing traffic during incidents and events. The ATMS System can provide a huge advantage to the team members in affecting the outcome. The better the information you receive, the better decisions you can make. Also, the more information you provide back to other agencies and the traveling public, the better decisions they will make. The more knowledge you posses of the current and historical traffic data of the affected area, the better you can manage the impact of the incident.

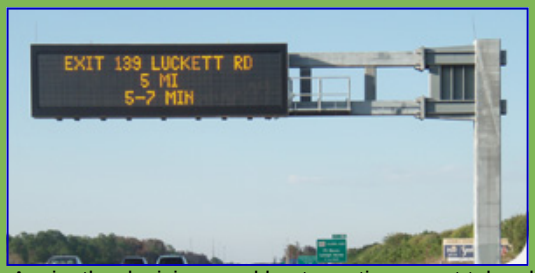
Let's break the components of ATMS into functional sections. You may notice that some components may occur in more than one functional section since they provide more than one function. (1)

The first section provides real-time information on weather, traffic conditions, etc.:

- Remote Weather Information System (RWIS), which can provide real time wind speed and direction, road temp, air temp and precipitation; This type of information can assist you in selecting alternative routes, since a detour across a long, high deck, bridge would not be advisable during high wind conditions for an example.
- Vehicle Detector Stations that provide real time volume and speed data. These detector stations can consist of inductive loop detectors, micro-wave radar detection or video detection.
- CCTVs used for monitoring traffic as well as unplanned, temporary road obstructions such as debris.
- Traffic Management Centers (TMC) that provide a system for monitoring and reporting the data received from the field

The second functional section consists of Detection and Verification systems:

- Automated Crash Notification Systems (ACNS). These may include in-vehicle collision systems or roadside audio collision detection systems. In 2007, the ITS Deployment Survey reported that law enforcement agencies in 16 U.S. metropolitan areas and fire and rescue agencies in 6 U.S. metropolitan areas had access to data from ACNSs to speed incident detection. (2)
- Motorist Reporting Systems including Enhanced 911 and Motorist Call Boxes
- CCTVs used for verification of location and severity of reported incidents
- Road Ranger or maintenance crew reporting of incidents
- Interagency communications systems
- TMC's which monitor, display, and evaluate the field data.



The third functional section is made up of the systems that allow you to provide information to other agencies and the motorists in order to quickly implement the management strategies you have selected for the incident, such as alternate routes:

- Dynamic Message Signs
- Trailblazers
- 5-1-1 Systems
- Media Partnerships
- Traveler Information Websites

Again, the decisions and best practices must take place at the TIM member level, but you greatly enhance your chance for success when you know and leverage the tools at your disposal. Learn more about Florida's ATMS systems at http://floridaits.com

(1) Best Practices in Traffic Incident Management September 2010 http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop10050/ch2.htm

(2) ITS Deployment Survey 2008. http://www.itsdeployment.its.dot.gov.

Article by Steve Johnson, Metric Engineering

T I M TEAM WEBSITE!
www.swfltim.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.

If you have any questions regarding this newsletter, or would like to submit an article, please contact Bill Fuller at william.fuller@dot.state.fl.us.