TIM TEAM TIMES

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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 # 1125A

IT'S THE LAW MOVE OVER FOR STOPPED EMERGENCY VEHICLES

April 2011 Polk TIM Team Meeting Maintenance of Traffic Table Top Exercise

Please join us at the April 2011 Polk TIM Team Meeting for a Maintenance of Traffic Table Top Exercise to promote a universal understanding of proper responder vehicle placement and positioning. Both the Collier/Lee/Charlotte County, and the Sarasota County TIM Teams participated in four informative table top exercises of which each table represented a different type of roadway segment, and a specific type of crash. Using model cars, crashes were simulated to which participants had to take on roles that were outside of their normal roles, i.e. Law Enforcement became Road Rangers, and Towing Operators became Firefighters. In each scenario emphasis was placed on the need for good communication between responders, the need for proper emergency vehicle parking/positioning, and traffic control.

Come to the next Polk Tim Team Meeting in Lakeland on Thursday, April 14th 2011, 10:00 AM at the USF Polytechnic Campus LTB Building , Room 1125A, 3433 Winter Lake Road Lakeland, FL 33803, where the attendees will have the rare opportunity to switch roles and participate in an exciting exercise. North Port Fire Department found this training so educational they have requested a session, at their agency for this May.

Updated Spill Mitigation Guidelines

The updated Spill Mitigation Guidelines are now available on the TIM Team website. The guidelines were initially developed by the statewide TIM Team in 2004. The Spill Mitigation Guidelines were prepared to outline steps that can be taken by initial responders motor vehicle crashes to reduce the delays in re-opening the roadways when spilled vehicle fluid is involved. The intent of the document has remained the same as initially developed but all document and manual references have been updated to reflect the current requirements. Please visit the Tim Team website for the full report: http://www.swfltim.org/default.htm

TIM Team Network

The TIM Network is a function of the National Traffic Incident Management Coalition (NTIMC). The goal of the TIM Network is to connect TIM Professionals (especially those from different disciplines), to each other, provide a method for TIM Professionals to escalate issues and provide a way for the NTIMC to validate suggested practices. Essentially the TIM Network is the equivalent of a national TIM Team. To sign up for the Tim Network please follow the following link: https://sites.google.com/site/timnetworksite/?&ResponseID=68330

Road Ranger Survey for Incident Responders

The 2011 Road Ranger Survey for incident responders is now available. Please take a few moments to fill out the survey. The web survey will be available until March 31, 2011. Road Ranger Survey for Incident Responders is available by clicking the following link:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/roadrangersurveyincidentresponders

Management of Fog and Smoke Incidents

On March 1st, the I-75/US-27 Task Force held a weather visibility meeting at the SWIFT SunGuide Center to discuss the effects of fog and smoke on highway safety and plans for closure a of Alligator Alley and/or US 27. FHP representatives Timothy Culhane, Warren Fast, and John Tower facilitated the meeting, which was also attended by task force members representing FDOT District 1, FDOT District 4, Collier County Traffic, Department of Forestry, District 1 Road Rangers, DBI Services and FDOT consultants AECOM, Metric Engineering and Telvent Farradyne.

Background: Poor visibility due to fog and smoke can cause severe crashes along portions of US 27 and Interstate 75 in Broward, Palm Beach, and Collier Counties. Recent closures have highlighted agency coordination issues that could be improved. Forest fire smoke in the past has caused closures and tapped maintenance of traffic (MOT) resources. Law enforcement presence is needed at key closure points, as well as locations where commercial vehicles stop in travel lanes waiting for highway re-openings. Many local law enforcement agencies are not aware of FDOT resources or how to contact these agencies for support.

Mission Statement: [1]The task force's primary mission for managing weather related visibility incidents is *"Unified cooperation between law enforcement, incident management and traffic control organizations to improve safety and to reduce or eliminate primary and secondary crashes due to poor visibility"*

Goals: The initial goals set forth in this meeting are:

- Pre-defined activation plans will be distributed to allow for quick action, notification, and implementation of resources to affect road closures and inform motorists, commercial vehicle operators and traffic media.

- Once FHP determines the need for a closure, all agencies will have standard operating procedures to enact ramp or highway closures and activate message systems (Dynamic Message Signs, Highway Advisory Radio, 511 Advanced Traveler Information Systems).

- Post incident analyses will be conducted as needed to improve the process and determine any concerns or problems.

- All agencies will appoint a primary and secondary representative for Task Force meetings. Agency reps will provide input and report back to their respective agencies.

- Traffic incident management principles and procedures will be utilized from the National Unified Goal, Unified Command and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

The need for such coordination and pre-planning is clearly demonstrated by the events of a serious crash on I-4 in Polk County in January 2008. [2] On a Tuesday morning around 10:00 AM, the staff of the Hilochee Wildlife Management Area started a controlled burn on 10 acres along I-4, as part of an effort to clear land for better wildlife habitat. Somehow it turned into a 400 acre wildfire. By Tuesday evening, signs were posted along heavily traveled I-4, warning the 75,000 motorists who use that stretch daily about the fog and smoke. On Wednesday morning, the scene became one of chaos. The Highway Patrol logged the first I-4 crash at 5 a.m., and noted that because of the mingled fog and smoke there was "zero visibility" between mile markers 43 and 49. In the fog, a chain-reaction of crashes among 70 vehicles killed at least four people, sent 38 more to three hospitals and led officials to close indefinitely a 14-mile stretch of Central Florida's main east-west highway.

It is unclear exactly how many of these type incidents occur each year in Florida or just how much damage and injuries result. What is clear is that the task force is right to be taking proactive actions to mitigate the impact. Their plans may well save lives during the next occurrence. There are numerous ITS tools at their disposal such as early warning sensors as part of a Remote Weather Information System (RWIS), Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), and Trailblazer Signs for alternative route directions. But the number one tool in any critical incident will always be the "coordinated" efforts of a Team with thoughtful pre-planned policies and procedures in place.

[1]Meeting minutes ,

[2]St Pete Times, January 10, 2008

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.