



# TIM TEAM



113th Edition

Polk County Traffic Incident Management Team

May 2024



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Recognition for Our FDOT District One Road Ranger 1

Elevating Highway Safety: First Responder Training 1

FDOT District One Road Ranger Assist 1

Navigating the Storm: 2024 Hurricane Season Preparedness for Florida First Responders 2

## Upcoming Events:

Next TIM Team Meeting  
Thursday, July 11, 2024  
10:00 am

Polk County Sheriff's Office  
1895 Jim Keene Boulevard  
Winter Haven, FL 33880



## Recognition for Our FDOT District One Road Rangers

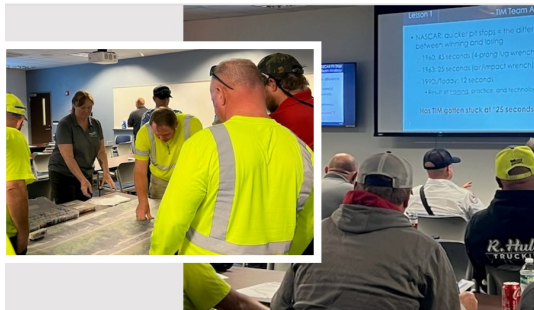
Recently at the Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Team Meetings, we had the privilege to honor and celebrate the remarkable service of some of our most dedicated Road Rangers. These individuals have not only dedicated years of their lives to this noble cause but have also displayed exceptional courage and commitment in the face of challenging situations.

Among the distinguished awardees, Teddy Figueroa stands out with an impressive 16 years of service. His commitment to the safety of our roads was further highlighted by his actions of bravery on February 27, 2024. Encountering a distressing situation on I-75 at Mile Marker 58, Teddy intervened swiftly, averting a potentially tragic incident and ensuring the safety of a motorist.

In addition to Teddy Figueroa's remarkable achievement, we also celebrated Michael Delong for his commendable 11 years of service and Christian DiMarco for his dedicated 5 years of service. Each of these Road Rangers has contributed significantly to the safety and efficiency of our roadways, embodying the spirit of public service and excellence. They are the silent guardians of Traffic Incident Management, working tirelessly to keep us all safe on the road.



## Elevating Highway Safety: First Responder Training



Tom Arsenault, Program Manager, led a training session for the District One TIM Team on April 23, 2024, at the FDOT Operations Center in Bradenton, Florida. The National First Responder (SHRP2) Training session provided over 25 participants with essential skills and strategies crucial for effectively managing highway incidents.

Combining classroom instruction with tabletop exercises, the training equipped participants with the latest tools and techniques endorsed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Through scenario-

based learning, attendees gained practical experience in coordinating multi-agency responses, clearing incident scenes efficiently, and ensuring the safety of responders and motorists.

Under Tom Arsenault's guidance, participants navigated incident scenarios with teamwork, enhancing their readiness to handle real-world challenges on the highways. The tabletop exercise served as a activity fostering collaboration and refining response protocols.

**For those interested in enhancing their team's capabilities and bolstering highway safety**, reach out to Brandy Boccuti, TIM Coordinator, at [bboccuti@metriceng.com](mailto:bboccuti@metriceng.com). **The training can be brought directly to your facility!**

## FDOT District One Road Ranger Assist



The Road Rangers play a vital role in assisting first responders on the roadways. They collaborate closely with emergency personnel, providing a valuable support system during incidents. Their tireless efforts and unwavering dedication have undoubtedly made a significant impact on improving the safety and efficiency of the Florida's roadways. The **Road Rangers assisted in more than 4,857 events for the month of May 2024.**

## Navigating the Storm: 2024 Hurricane Season Preparedness for Florida First Responders



As we brace ourselves for the upcoming hurricane season, the importance of preparedness cannot be overstated. For first responders tasked with managing traffic incidents along Florida's roadways, the challenges posed by severe weather events require a heightened level of readiness and vigilance.

First responders play a crucial role in managing traffic incidents and ensuring the safety of motorists and pedestrians, especially in the face of hurricane-related disruptions. From directing traffic during evacuations to clearing debris and facilitating emergency access, their dedication and expertise are instrumental in mitigating the impacts of these natural disasters.

The [Florida Emergency Shoulder Use \(ESU\)](#) program emerges as a vital resource for first responders. Established by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), this initiative allows designated emergency vehicles to utilize highway shoulders for improved traffic flow and expedited response times during emergencies.

The ESU program provides a designated protocol for activating emergency shoulder use, outlining the criteria for its implementation and the responsibilities of participating agencies. By leveraging existing infrastructure, such as highway shoulders, emergency responders can navigate through congested traffic more efficiently, reaching critical locations and providing assistance without delay.<sup>1</sup>

**Designated Emergency Situations:** The ESU program is activated during specific emergency situations, including hurricanes, tropical storms, and other events posing significant risks to public safety and transportation infrastructure.

**Authorized Vehicles:** Participating emergency vehicles, including law enforcement, fire rescue, and emergency medical services, are authorized to utilize highway shoulders for emergency response purposes.

**Coordination and Communication:** Effective coordination among participating agencies is essential for the successful implementation of the ESU program. Clear communication channels and established protocols ensure seamless integration with existing emergency response efforts.

As we prepare for the 2024 hurricane season, here are some essential tips for first responders tasked with managing traffic incidents along Florida's roadways:

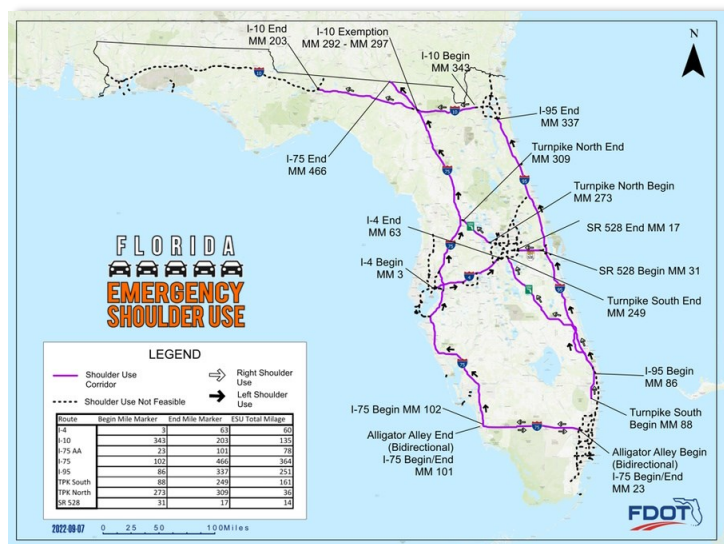
**Stay Informed:** Monitor weather forecasts and updates from reliable sources to stay ahead of approaching storms and anticipate potential impacts on transportation networks.

**Review Emergency Plans:** Familiarize yourself with emergency response protocols and procedures, including the activation criteria for the ESU program, to ensure a coordinated and effective response.

**Maintain Equipment Readiness:** Regularly inspect and maintain emergency vehicles, equipment, and communication devices to ensure operational readiness during crisis situations.

**Training and Preparedness Exercises:** Participate in training exercises and drills to enhance preparedness and coordination among first responders and partner agencies.

To further enhance preparedness, **we will be featuring presentations on the 2024 ESU plans and hurricane season at our upcoming Traffic Incident Management Team Meetings.** We encourage all first responders to attend these informative sessions, where we will share valuable insights and strategies for readiness and coordination during potential emergencies.



1) Emergency Shoulder Use. The Florida Department of Transportation. Emergency Management. [www.fdot.gov/emergencymanagement.com](http://www.fdot.gov/emergencymanagement.com). Web May 2024.

Article submitted by Brandy Boccuti, TIM Coordinator, Metric Engineering, Inc.

T I M TEAM WEBSITE!

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

