



123rd Edition

Polk County Traffic Incident Management Team

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Recognition for Our FDOT District One Road Ranger	1
Road Ranger Survey Cards Highlight Motorist Feedback	1
FDOT District One Road Ranger Assists	1
Move Over Month: Supporting Our First Responders	2

Upcoming Events:

Next TIM Team Meeting
Thursday, April 16, 2026
10:00 am

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



Road Rangers Supporting Safety Across the Florida Department of Transportation District One

Road Rangers continue to play a critical role in supporting motorists and responders throughout District One. Recent recognition highlights, survey card feedback, and assist statistics reflect the professionalism and dedication demonstrated daily on our roadways. Together, these efforts contribute to safer, more efficient incident response operations.

Recognition for Our FDOT District One Road Ranger

Our District One TIM responders face daily risks and depend on coordination and communication to keep roadways safe. At times, individual actions stand out through professionalism, quick response, and dedication under challenging conditions, and those efforts deserve recognition.

Road Ranger Anthony Baldwin, who works the overnight shift along Alligator Alley demonstrated exceptional commitment during a major incident in the early morning hours of December 12, 2025. Anthony was among the first responders to arrive after heavy smoke contributed to multiple crashes involving numerous passenger vehicles and commercial trucks in both directions of travel.

As the incident unfolded Anthony assisted with roadway closures, traffic control, and coordination alongside other responding agencies.

He maintained ongoing communication with the Traffic Management Center providing critical updates on conditions and the number of vehicles involved. Throughout the response Anthony moved between crash locations to support scene management and help prevent secondary incidents.

Anthony's actions and willingness to work extended hours during this complex event reflect the important role Road Rangers play in supporting responder safety and incident operations. His dedication and situational awareness contributed to managing a difficult and dynamic response.

If you or your agency would like to recognize a responder for going above the call of duty, please contact Brandy Boccuti, TIM Coordinator, at bboccuti@metriceng.com.



Road Ranger Survey Cards Highlight Motorist Feedback



Road Ranger assistance often occurs during moments when safety, communication, and reassurance matter most. The Road Ranger Survey Cards provide motorists with an opportunity to share feedback about the assistance they receive while traveling through District One. These surveys capture real-time experiences and offer insight into how Road Ranger services support roadway safety during stressful roadside situations.

Survey responses collected throughout December 2025 reflect consistently positive experiences from motorists who received assistance such as tire changes, minor repairs, fuel support, and scene protection.

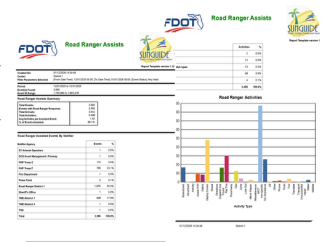
Many respondents described Road Rangers as calm, professional, and attentive while working along high-speed corridors, during overnight hours, and in congested traffic conditions. Several motorists shared that Road Rangers "knew exactly what to do" and helped reduce stress during unexpected breakdowns, while others noted that clear communication and a visible presence made them feel safer while waiting roadside.

Beyond customer experience, the survey cards support accountability and continuous improvement by documenting assistance types and overall satisfaction. This information helps FDOT and Road Ranger program partners to better understand service trends and identify opportunities to enhance training, coverage, and operational effectiveness.

Feedback collected through the Road Ranger Survey Cards reinforces the value of the Road Ranger program and highlights the important role these responders play in supporting incident response and improving safety across District One roadways.

FDOT District One Road Ranger Assists

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 Florida's roadways. To view and download the 2025 December Road Ranger Assist report, please click on the following link: [Report](#)



Move Over Month: Supporting Our First Responders



January is Move Over Month in Florida and aligns with ongoing efforts to address driver behavior and responder safety at roadside incidents. For Traffic Incident Management partners, the message extends beyond awareness and into daily operations, training, and shared responsibility. Every incident response places personnel in close proximity to moving traffic, where a single driver decision can have serious consequences.

The most serious threats facing first responders who work along the nation's roadways is struck-by incidents. These events often occur when responders are operating on or near active travel lanes, commonly during secondary incidents when traffic queues continue to build and drivers may be distracted or unaware of changing conditions. Near misses are common but often go unreported, creating gaps in data that limit opportunities to fully understand risk factors and improve roadway safety practices.

The Move Over law is one of the most effective tools available to reduce these risks. In Florida, drivers are required to move over a lane when approaching stopped emergency, service, or utility vehicles displaying warning lights. When a lane change cannot be made safely, motorists must slow well below the posted speed limit. Recent updates to Florida law expanded these protections to include disabled vehicles on the roadside when occupants are present or warning devices are in use. Despite these requirements compliance remains inconsistent placing roadway personnel at continued risk during routine responses.

Statewide Move Over citation data illustrates the scope of this issue. As shown in the graphic to the right, Florida recorded more than 17,000 Move Over citations in both 2024 and 2025, continuing an upward trend from previous years. Citations were issued across all age groups with the highest number occurring among drivers between the ages of 20 and 49. This data reinforces that Move Over violations are not limited to any single demographic and remain a statewide safety concern.

Traffic queues and sudden speed changes increase risk at incident scenes, especially when drivers fail to recognize or respond to roadway conditions ahead. Even when warning lights, signage, and responder vehicles are visible, distracted or inattentive driving can prevent motorists from adjusting

speed or changing lanes in time. Move Over compliance plays a critical role in reducing abrupt braking, unsafe lane changes, and secondary crashes that place both responders and motorists in danger.

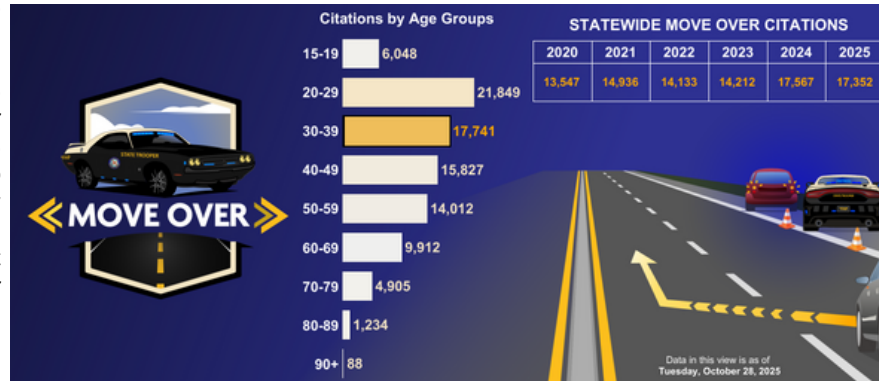
When drivers move over or slow down as required responders gain critical working space to safely manage incidents, assist motorists, and clear roadways more efficiently. Improved compliance reduces exposure time, supports quicker incident clearance, and helps maintain more predictable traffic flow through impacted areas. These benefits highlight why Move Over compliance plays an important role in overall roadway safety.

Data collection and reporting play an important role in improving responder safety. National struck-by reporting systems allow agencies to document incidents and near misses, helping identify trends and contributing factors that may not be visible at the local level. This information supports improvements in training, roadway operations, and public safety outreach, while also strengthening future prevention efforts.

Training remains a cornerstone of responder safety. The National TIM Responder Training Program, developed through SHRP2, provides practical guidance on safe scene setup, effective traffic control, and coordinated incident management. These principles emphasize proper vehicle positioning, quick clearance, and communication across agencies, all of which help reduce exposure to moving traffic and improve safety for everyone on scene.

TIM team meetings further support these efforts by providing a forum to review incidents, share lessons learned, and strengthen coordination across disciplines. Through After Action Reviews and open discussion, agencies can identify challenges, reinforce best practices, and improve future response operations.

Move Over Month serves as an important reminder that responder safety depends on informed drivers, well-trained responders, and coordinated agencies working toward a shared goal. By continuing to promote compliance with Move Over laws, encouraging reporting, and supporting training and teamwork, District One TIM partners help create safer roadway environments and reinforce the commitment to ensuring everyone returns home safely.



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

TIM TEAM WEBSITE!

www.swfltim.org

The Polk County TIM Team is committed to implementing the Quick Clearance principles of the Open Roads Policy of Florida 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 of 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.

