



120th Edition

Polk County Traffic Incident Management Team

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Upcoming Events:

Next TIM Team Meeting
Thursday, October 16, 2025
10:00 am

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



Empowering Champions: Advancing Safety Through Training, Teamwork, and TIM Excellence

In this edition we shine a spotlight on the people and programs driving safety and performance across District One. From impactful training sessions to the recognition of Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Champions, these efforts reflect our shared mission to protect responders, reduce roadway clearance times, and strengthen collaboration across all agencies.

Training Reinforces Safety and Unity Among District One Responders

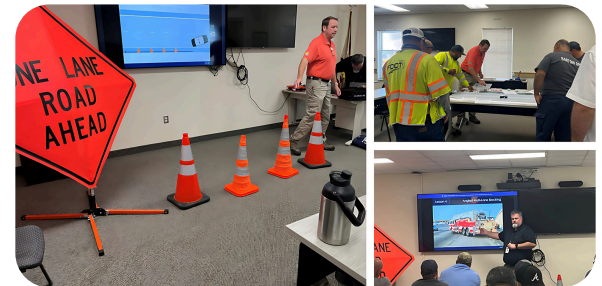
On June 3, 2025, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District One Traffic Incident Management (TIM) program hosted the National First Responder (SHRP2) Training at FDOT Bartow Operations in Bartow, Florida. The four-hour in-person session brought together responders to reinforce the principles of safe, quick clearance and responder safety on Florida's highways.

The training was led by Tom Arsenault, TIM Program Manager, and Beau Baggett, Assistant TIM Program Manager, for FDOT District One. Their instruction provided both classroom learning and an interactive tabletop exercise where participants engaged in a hands-on mock incident response to apply TIM strategies in real-time.

This nationally recognized training emphasizes coordinated incident response, traffic incident scene management, and best practices for protecting responders and the traveling public. Attendees walked away not only with essential safety strategies but also a renewed sense of purpose and teamwork.

"I want to really thank you all for the great training you have provided. The team was very excited after this class and feels they really got some good information from this training," said Sergio Lorenzo, FDOT Bartow Operations Manager. "As a team we are unstoppable, and together the journey gets better." Mike Alves echoed this sentiment, stating, "Teamwork makes the dream work." Photos from the training captured the energy and commitment of everyone involved, showcasing the strong partnership among agencies.

The District One TIM team welcomes the opportunity to provide this essential training to additional agencies. If your agency is interested in hosting a session, or if you'd like to participate in future trainings, please reach out to us. Announcements about upcoming opportunities will be shared as they are scheduled, so stay tuned for future updates.



Statewide TIM Managers Unite to Strengthen Program Efforts

Each year TIM Program Managers from all FDOT Districts and Florida's Turnpike Enterprise meet in person to collaborate, share insights, and strengthen Florida's TIM program. This year's meeting took place in Tallahassee on June 24–25, bringing together leadership from across the state.

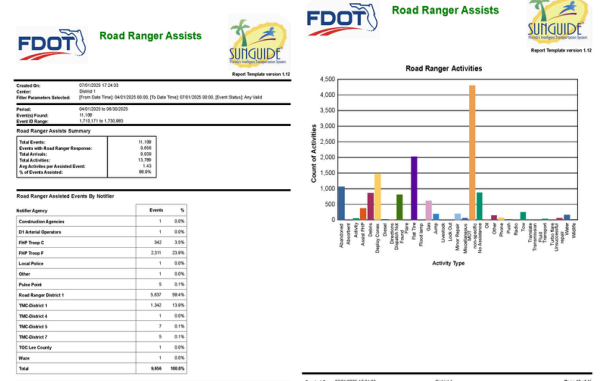
District One TIM Program Manager Tom Arsenault contributed to the discussion by presenting two key initiatives: the launch of a new Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) Incentive Program and the importance of recognizing TIM Champions. His presentations sparked meaningful dialogue on advancing performance and celebrating those who go above and beyond.

These annual meetings reflect the power of teamwork in improving safety and efficiency statewide.



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 seamless coordination ensures that the response time is optimized and the overall effectiveness of the emergency response is enhanced, ultimately saving lives and minimizing the impact of incidents on the roadways. Their tireless efforts and unwavering dedication have undoubtedly made a significant impact on improving the safety and efficiency of the Florida's roadways. To view and download the 2025 2nd Quarter Road Ranger Assist report, please click on the following link: [Report](#)



Honoring TIM Champions: Florida Highway Patrol's Traffic Homicide Unit Recognized



FDOT District One has excelled in recognizing champions through initiatives such as the Shoutout Program, Employee of the Month, and Employee of the Quarter. During the TIM Team Meetings held in June 2025, the District One TIM Program honored the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) Traffic Homicide Unit for their ongoing support and commitment to improving traffic incident clearance and safety.

The District One TIM Team consists of four active teams: the Collier Lee Charlotte, Sarasota Manatee, Polk, and Heartland TIM Teams. The Heartland TIM Team convenes quarterly to review five or six major incidents, most of which result in significant State Road closures due to fatal crashes. The FHP Traffic Homicide Unit plays a vital role in these reviews, offering detailed insights and photographs that help attendees understand the cause and impact of each incident.

These visual presentations are instrumental in illustrating the scope of the scene and the reasoning behind lengthy closures. As the saying goes, "A picture is worth a thousand words" and in TIM, it can mean the difference between assumption and understanding.

Clearing the roadway quickly and safely is not only about restoring traffic flow, it is about protecting lives. Timely clearance is critical, as every minute a freeway lane remains blocked increases the risk of a secondary crash by 2.8 percent, according to the [Federal Highway Administration](#). These secondary crashes often place first responders and motorists in even greater danger. TIM Champions play a vital role in managing scenes efficiently, ensuring seamless communication among agencies, and helping everyone get home safely. Their leadership and coordination directly influence how incidents are handled and how quickly normal travel can resume.

There are two distinct FHP Traffic Homicide Unit Teams in District One, one based in Venice and the other in Fort Myers. Each team was honored with a custom recognition plaque listing all team members. Captain Roberts, Special Operations Commander, shared, "The FHP Homicide Team is happy to support the District's TIM Program and are thankful for the recognition."

Steven Davis, District Traffic Operations Engineer and coordinator of the Recognition Team, stated: "District One Traffic Operations prioritizes consistent recognition, not just for our brave Road Rangers but for all our team members. While we understand the hard work, sacrifices, and passion they bring each day, it's vital to visibly acknowledge everyone's contributions. Recognition shows the public the value of what we do and reminds our teams that their efforts are appreciated. TIM Program recognition is especially important. Our Road Rangers often work in dangerous conditions or directly save lives. District One considers them first responders and recognizes the stress they face daily. We will continue to take pride in acknowledging their contributions as a core part of the TIM Program."



Recognizing TIM Champions is not just about celebration. It is about supporting the first responders who dedicate themselves to keeping Florida's roadways safe. The FDOT District One TIM Program is proud to uplift those who go above and beyond, reinforcing a culture of safety, appreciation, and teamwork that strengthens our entire transportation network.

Their dedication during some of the most challenging and high-risk situations on our roadways demonstrates the true spirit of public service. By recognizing their efforts, we not only show our appreciation but also inspire continued excellence and collaboration across all partner agencies. The success of the TIM Program depends on this collective commitment to safety, communication, and quick clearance.

As we continue to grow the program, FDOT District One remains committed to fostering a culture where every responder feels seen, supported, and empowered. Together, we are building a safer and more resilient transportation system, one Champion at a time.

The FDOT District One TIM Program expresses its gratitude to all individuals who serve as Champions and actively participate in the Program. We promote positive acknowledgment for all our Champions.

Article submitted by Tom Arsenault, TIM Program Manager, 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.

