FDOT's Traffic Engineering and Operations Quarterly News

SUNGUIDE®

DISSEMINATOR

Rapid Incident Scene Clearance Begins in District Seven

The Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) Program is an initiative that contracts towing companies to provide quick, safe clearance of large vehicle crashes, such as tractor trailers, box trucks, and boats that are overturned or damaged to the point where the vehicle cannot be towed by a smaller tow truck, on the interstate. As part of the RISC contract, the towing company must respond with two heavy tow trucks, one of which must be a rotator, plus a support vehicle. The contractor must be at the scene within 60 minutes of notification and clear all travel lanes within 90 minutes of receiving a notice to proceed. The contractor receives a bonus from FDOT when they meet the requirements in addition to the usual compensation by the owner/insurance company for their services.

Florida's Turnpike Enterprise initiated this program and District Seven is the first to follow. District Seven had its first RISC contract ready to roll on January 8, 2009. RISC was activated on January 14, for the first time. A 30 foot boat came off its trailer on east bound I-4 near the McIntosh exit, blocking two travel lanes. The RISC contractor, Stepp's Towing, responded to the incident within 44 minutes of being notified. Once they received the notice to proceed, the lanes were cleared for travel in 60 minutes. The total lane closure for this incident was 104 minutes.

Using two heavy wreckers, Stepp's Towing was able to load the boat on to a flatbed truck. Without RISC being activated, any company on the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) rotation list could have been called. This could have resulted in a much longer clearance time if they had to wait for additional equipment to pick up and remove the boat. While clearing the travel lanes is the priority, in addition to expediting the clearance, the method used may have prevented any further damage to the owner's boat.

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District Seven's Tampa Bay SunGuide® Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) activates RISC at FDOT or FHP's request. RISC may also be immediately activated if the RTMC operator has the incident on camera(s) and determines that RISC is required. The operators have been trained to recognize a RISC incident and acquire pertinent information to relay to the towing company to ensure that they bring the right equipment and personnel to the scene. This information alone is beneficial to reducing the clearance time since there is no wait for additional equipment. The contractor also has the ability to work with the operators to determine the best route to take to get the scene as soon as possible and to assist with any communications from/to FHP.

Since inception, District Seven has activated four RISC calls. One was cleared by the owner's preferred company; the rest were all quickly and safely cleared within the time frames established by FDOT. One incident involving an overturned flatbed carrying a bulldozer blocking three lanes of traffic was cleared within 22 minutes of the notice to proceed. The total lane closure time for that incident was 55 minutes.

Though still in its youth, this program has already proven beneficial, not only to the District, but to the responders involved. Rapidly clearing a crash frees the FHP troopers and Road Rangers to continue with their duties. Other benefits to the traveling public will prove themselves in the time and fuel saved, plus fewer secondary incidents.

This article was provided by Romona Burke, FDOT District Seven. For information, please contact Ms. Burke at (813) 615-8613 or email to Romona.Burke@dot.state.fl.us.

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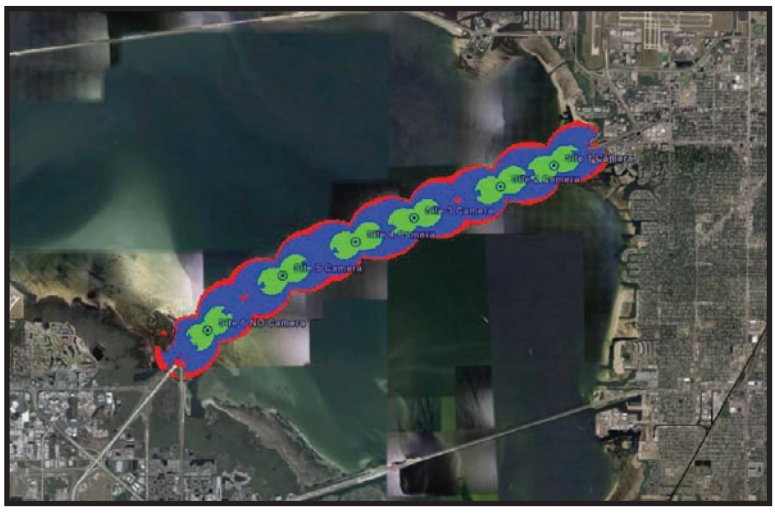
American Tower and FDOT—Maximizing Transportation Communications for Florida



The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and American Tower, owner and operator of wireless communications sites, have worked together over the last ten years. Together, they deliver the most advanced communications systems along its highways, interstates, turnpikes, rests stops, and across its communities to the people of Florida.

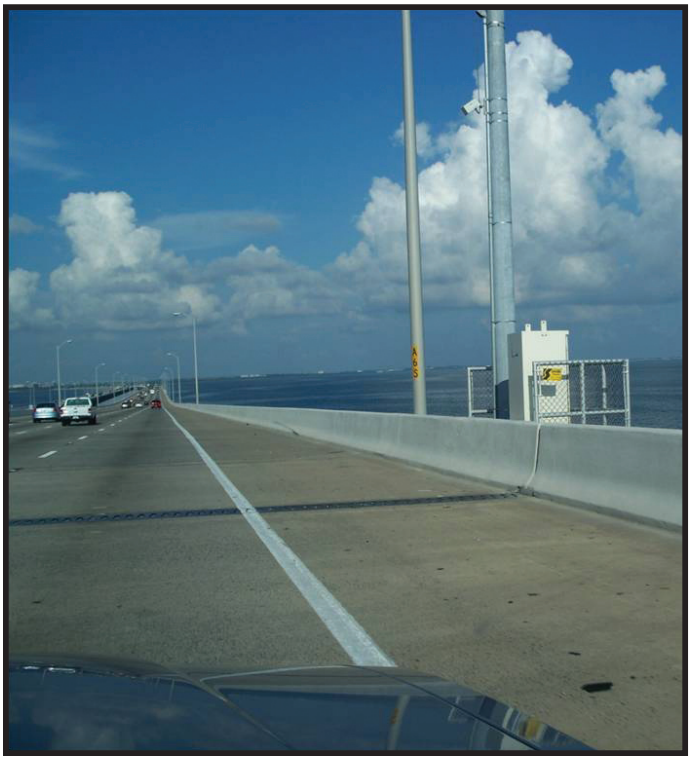
On March 25, 1999, American Tower (through a predecessor Lodestar entity) embarked on a 30-year relationship with FDOT. In this successful relationship, American Tower is responsible for developing wireless facilities within FDOT's rights-of-way, along with identifying, managing, marketing, and negotiating FDOT's communications sites to the wireless industry. Currently, American Tower manages 54 of FDOT's towers and operates 30 American Tower owned sites utilizing FDOT's utility infrastructures. These services generate a healthy revenue stream for FDOT.

To further enhance FDOT's well-established communications system, American Tower will design, install, and maintain the first neutral host outdoor distributed antenna system (DAS) on the Howard Frankland Bridge in Tampa, Florida. "We're proud to launch the very first outdoor DAS for FDOT," said Gerard Ainsztein, American Tower's Senior Vice President of DAS Solutions. "And with

the increasing demand for public safety communications along coverage challenged areas, we're even more pleased to partner with FDOT as it expands its transportation communications system."

An outdoor DAS installation includes nodes that are typically placed on utility infrastructures, such as poles, light-stands, and traffic lights. Radio frequency (RF) signals are received by an antenna on the node. These signals are then transmitted to the node's equipment box. The nodes connect to a hub via fiber optic cable. Fiber optic cable connects from the equipment box aerial via telephone poles to the hub. The hub contains American Tower's head-end equipment and the service provider's base transceiver station (BTS). The equipment at the hub site converts optical back to RF and sends the RF signal through the coaxial cable to the service provider's BTS. Calls are then routed through the service provider's public switched telephone network and transmitted via the landline network or back out through the DAS equipment.

This system includes placing 12 antenna nodes on FDOT's existing bridge camera poles and signage structure. American Tower will install new single mode fiber within FDOT's existing innerduct. This will eliminate future capacity concerns and reduce traffic and safety disruption along the bridge. The system gives the motorists the freedom to use a wide variety of services, such as cellular, two-way paging, and two-way radio. Additionally, it supports critical emergency response services allowing public safety officials to react more quickly to emergency and evacuation situations.



"The strategic partnership we have with FDOT is continuing to grow with new leasing revenue and a nice pipeline of site projects. There are already plans to build out ten new tower sites in 2009," said Mike Flint, American Tower's Southeast Area Vice President. American Tower and FDOT will continue their partnership for the next two decades, meeting the communications and public safety needs for Florida residents and visitors alike.

This article was provided by Randy Pierce, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations. For information, please contact Mr. Pierce at (850) 410-5608 or email to Randy.Pierce@dot.state.fl.us.

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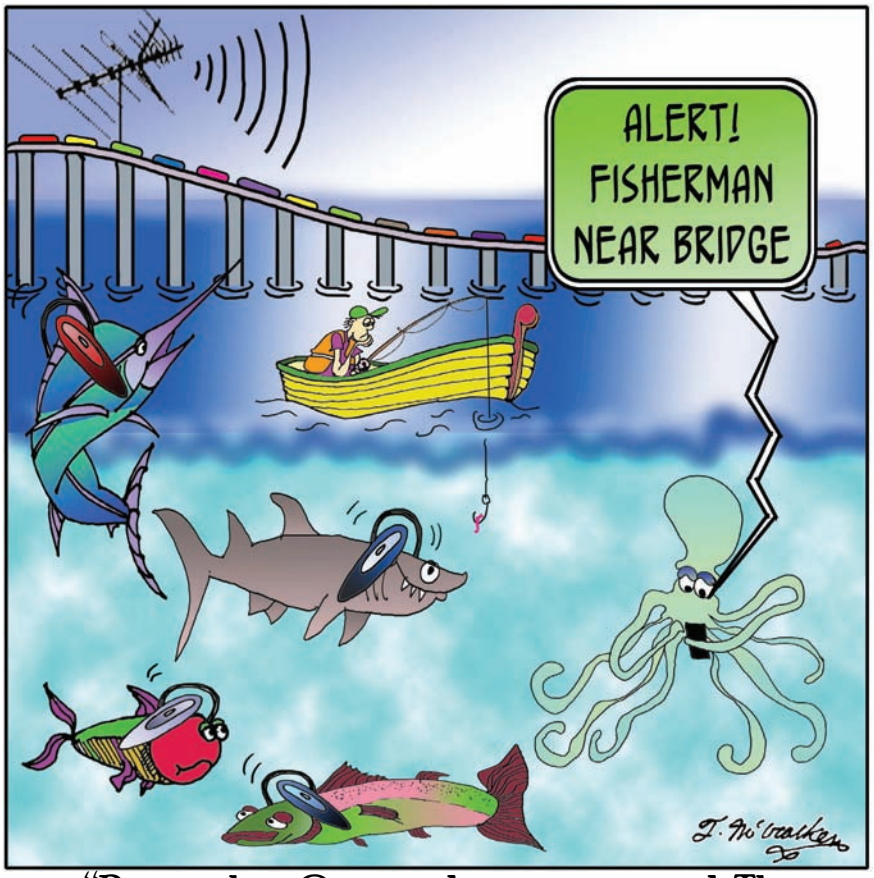
Moment of Humor!



"Roger that Octo—disaster averted. This technology is off the hook!"

Word Challenge Answer

"Friends, Farmers, and Floridians—
If you're talking
ALLTERNATIVE
fuels, we're all ears!"

ROSC
EVACUATION
AMERICAN TOWER
CONGESTION

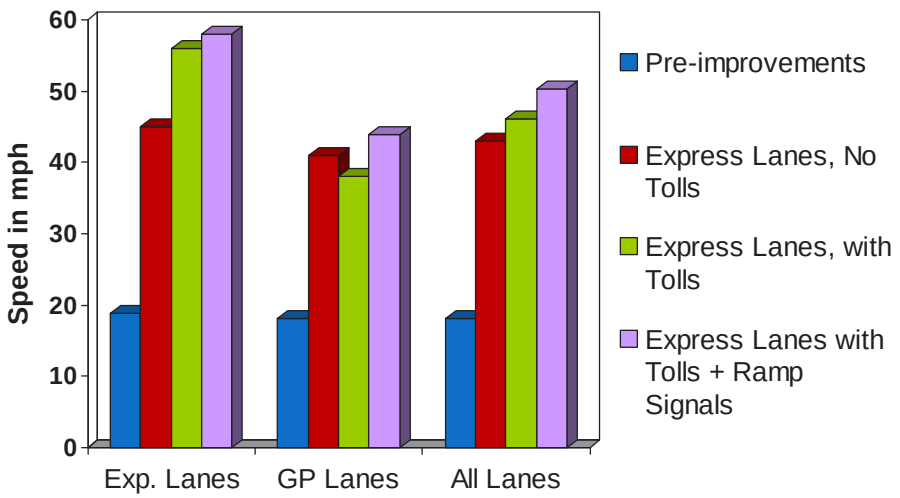
District Six Improves Mobility Along I-95

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Six recently completed Phase 1A of a two-part congestion-relief plan along Interstate 95 (I-95) in Miami-Dade County. This plan combines a series of transportation management strategies to mitigate congestion and improve mobility along I-95, which is helping the corridor operate safer, and more efficiently.

I-95 is one of the most important highways of the metro Miami area. It serves as the main north/south access point for cross-county commuters traveling between Broward and Miami-Dade Counties, and carries up to 290,000 motorists a day. However, as local population continues to grow, daily traffic volumes are expected to exceed 360,000 by the year 2030. With traffic demand already approaching, and sometimes exceeding existing system capacity, District Six implemented Phase 1A of the congestion-relief plan to reduce the interstate's current and anticipated levels of traffic congestion.

With traditional roadway improvements continuing to prove to be cost-prohibitive and unable to respond to growing demand, District Six leads the effort in implementing a series of operational strategies to maximize the capacity of the existing I-95 roadway infrastructure. With minimal construction impacts or delays, Phase 1A of the 95 Express and Ramp Signaling Systems launched within two months of each other in December 2008 and February 2009, respectively. These systems introduced the concepts of variable congestion pricing and highway access management to the state of Florida, and together have significantly helped improve mobility on I-95 in Miami-Dade County.

According to preliminary data, travel speeds and trip reliability have increased within the project limits of northbound I-95 between State Road 112 and the Golden Glades Interchange since Phase 1A was completed. Prior to any improvements, breakdowns in capacity and inefficient use of the roadway often led to congestion and significant delays, especially during periods of heavy use. To address inefficiencies, District Six restriped and reconfigured the facility to allow room for an additional lane along the existing roadway. The District then converted the former high occupancy vehicle lane into the 95 Express lanes which increased capacity and vehicle throughput. Electronic toll collection based on variable congestion pricing serves to enhance system operations and increase overall trip reliability. In combination with the 95 Express, the ramp signaling system, which regulates traffic at highway access points, has served to improve mobility along I-95.



Upon completion of Phase 1A, average operational speeds on the general purpose lanes averaged 42 miles per hour (mph) during the evening peak period—that is 24 mph greater than the preconstruction speeds of 18 mph. For the same reporting period, the 95 Express lanes operated at an average speed of 57 mph, allowing the entire facility (all lanes) to operate at an overall average speed of 50 mph. The increased speeds resulted soon after the implementation of Phase 1A. Through the end of January 2009, the average toll rate collected was $1.69 during the evening peak period, with rates usually varying between $1.50 and $2.00 depending on demand during this time.

Enhanced incident management resources and quick clearance protocols developed with first responder agencies, such as Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), were also implemented. The support received from FHP, along with the increased resources, has served to increase the benefits resulting from the 95 Express and Ramp Signaling Systems.

The 95 Express is a two-phased north/south congestion management plan aimed to improve regional mobility for commuters traveling along I-95 between Miami-Dade and Broward Counties. Phase 1B of the 95 Express, between the Golden Glades Interchange southbound to State Road 112/I-195 is expected to open for operation in December 2009. Phase 2 will extend north to I-595 in Broward County from near downtown Miami, and will cover a distance of approximately 22 miles and traverse two FDOT Districts—Districts Four and Six—once completed. The final completion date for Phase 2 is pending project funding.

This article was provided by Javier Rodriguez, FDOT District Six. For information, please contact Mr. Rodriguez at (305) 470-5341 or email to Javier.Rodriguez2@dot.state.fl.us.

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District Three Begins ITS Projects in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties

On March 4th 2009, construction officially began for the District Three regional intelligent transportation system (ITS), consisting of a freeway management system (FMS), associated regional transportation management center (RTMC), and Road Ranger Program in Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties. These projects consist of the design, deployment, operations, and maintenance of numerous applications used to monitor traffic activity and roadway and weather conditions along the Interstate-10 (I-10) corridor—beginning at the Florida/Alabama state line in Escambia County and continuing approximately 16 miles into Santa Rosa County—including the Interstate-110 (I-110) spur into downtown Pensacola. These applications will be managed with Florida's SunGuide® Software from the RTMC which will serve as the command and control center for this regional ITS.

The Escambia and Santa Rosa County area does not currently have a facility or systems in place where the synergies of multiple stakeholders come together to better manage and focus on transportation incidents of regional significance along the interstates. Nor is I-10 or I-110 currently equipped with an FMS that could contribute to the region's reduction in congestion due to incidents—both planned (football games, local events) and unplanned (hurricane evacuations, crashes, and debris)—through incident management and coordination which help restore traffic flow.

One extreme example of this was 2004's Hurricane Ivan which had a devastating impact on the transportation system, most notably by the destruction of the I-10 Escambia Bay Bridge. The bridge remained completely closed for a month and was only open to local traffic two months later. Commercial vehicles were banned from using the bridge for many months beyond that. Also, on March 30, 2006, an incident of regional significance occurred along I-10 in Santa Rosa County due to poor visibility stemming from fog and smoke. The Florida Highway patrol (FHP) was forced to close down both sides of I-10, rerouting traffic to U.S. 90.

If an FMS, including dynamic message signs, vehicle detectors, closed-circuit television cameras, and a road weather information system, had been in place, FDOT would have had additional information and tools at their disposal to more effectively manage the necessary response to warn the traveling public to avoid the long traffic delays, as well as alert motorists of the recommended detour routes.

FDOT District Three is pleased to bring this regional ITS to the Pensacola area. The benefits of which include real-time traveler information and reduced incident durations, that upon the beginning of operations should be realized immediately by the motoring public.

This article was provided by Elizabeth Bitting, TransCore ITS and Chad Williams, FDOT District Three. For information, please contact Mr. Chad Williams at (850) 415-9504 or email to Chad.Williams@dot.state.fl.us.

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Florida's Turnpike—Raising the Bar on Incident Clearance

Building on the prior accomplishments of the highly-successful Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) program towards quick clearance goals, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) is launching the new Towing and Roadside Repair Services (TARRS) program this April. This program applies the same performance-based approach towards contracting with the tow community for expedient and safe towing services for those incidents not involving larger-sized trucks, nor requiring the specialized heavy duty rotator-type wreckers needed for RISC scenes. While the oversized vehicle incidents are, on average, a source of many long-term closure durations, the majority of traffic crashes and disabled vehicle lane-blocking events which occur on the Turnpike are not of that type. Of the 2,177 lane-blocking events (crashes, vehicle fires, and disabled vehicles) that occurred in 2008, the RISC contract was only needed for recovery 74 times (or 3.4 percent). The less difficult clearances, dealing with passenger vehicles, sport utility vehicles, and light trucks, are a larger overall source of congestion and potential for secondary crashes for an average customer traveling the system.

The TARRS program is obtaining the services of licensed/certified tow and road service operators whose responsibilities will include light, medium, and limited heavy duty towing and vehicle repair services on Florida's Turnpike, with the inclusion of tows at the direction of the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) and customer-requested towing services, including handling AAA© motor club towing requests. Services will also include assisting disabled motor vehicles, performing minor vehicle repairs, and removing abandoned vehicles, spilled motor vehicle fluids, and debris or cargo from the Turnpike.

Florida's Turnpike is fortunate to have the dedicated services of FHP Troop K, who will be the main dispatching authority for TARRS. FHP will frequently dispatch without a trooper arriving at the incident scene—when an FHP representative is able to view an event on a closed-circuit television camera from the FHP Dispatch Center in Lake Worth, or when the transportation management center (TMC) operator is able to advise from a field representative. This quicker dispatch philosophy is being

coined by FTE as the "InstaTow" program, which will result in wrecker services being en route as soon as possible. Therefore, the wrecker can arrive at the scene before excessive traffic queues form, significantly reducing response time, and as a result the roadway can return to normal traffic flow sooner. The program borrows this concept from Washington State, and the City of Houston, among other places.

The program replaces the current 'Service Plaza Wrecker' program, which dates back to 1994, with new regionally based contracts will capitalize on the tow industry's investments and response capabilities, encourage competition, and also include performance measurement to better meet the Turnpike's Open Roads goals. These services are outside the scope of the limited assistance provided by the State Farm Safety Patrol (Road Ranger), a free program only provided 8 to 14 hours per day; and the RISC incentive program for quick clearance of heavy commercial trucks, both of which are operated by FTE under separate agreements. FTE expects each participant to work towards full compliance with Florida's Open Roads Policy. These contracts will also be the basis for hurricane evacuation service patrols, if an evacuation is executed in southeast or central Florida.

Across the ten contract zones, which span the 309-mile Florida's Turnpike (Florida City to Wildwood) and 22-mile Sawgrass Expressway in Broward County, the response times required for TARRS vendors to arrive after dispatch by FHP or TMC are 30-minutes and 45-minutes maximum, respectively, in the urbanized and rural areas of the Turnpike system. However, quicker response guarantees were a source of innovation that merited higher technical scoring in the Request for Proposal (RFP) review process; and FTE was able to prompt guarantees of 20 to 25 minutes in certain areas. Additionally, the recently conducted RFP process required each bidder to present their plan for operations, including commitments to using dedicated tow units and service plaza/toll plaza parking areas to stage equipment to meet these required response times. Proximity of the vendor's storage yard/offices to the Turnpike is an important element to the response, along with being sized properly to meet the demand for vehicle storage.

FTE has set maximum rates and fees for customer charges, which were determined based upon a review of those rates allowed in counties covered by this program. Companies were encouraged to provide lower customer rates than the maximums set. FTE will collect a permit fee from the contracted parties, proposed independently for each zone by bidders, to allow FTE to offset the cost of certain services provided by this program; including dispatches to a Gone-On-Arrival (GOA) or Made-Own-Arrangement (MOA) event. A minimum permit fee was determined for each zone based upon levels of activity, ranging from $6,000 to $15,000, or a total minimum of $96,000 for offsetting the program direct costs.

The following performance measures were identified as FTE's measuring stick for how well each contractor is doing:

1) Average Response Times and Percent of On-time Response - Awarded vendors must arrive after dispatch by FHP or the TMC within their agreed response time. Select proposers guaranteed 20 to 25 minute response times for areas in southeast Florida.
2) Customer Satisfaction - Each awarded vendor's performance will be monitored as to level of complaints and/or billing issues, as well as positive comments obtained through comment response forms. Vendors are required to respond in writing within 48 hours of receipt of any written or email complaint from a customer, FHP, or FTE representative, and make a good faith effort to resolve the cause of complaint. Random surveys of customers will be performed by FTE and it is expected that a 95 percent satisfaction rate will be achieved by each vendor.

FTE's TMC and its management staff will be the responsible entity for managing these contracts and communicating with the tow providers, whether they are en route, on-scene at an incident, or for follow-up debriefing to improve the performance for future incidents. Traffic Operations staff will work closely with operators in the training process to demonstrate the safest and quickest methods for recovery. During the RFP process, 13 bidders submitted for a total of ten zones, with some applying in multiple zones. FTE has recently posted the intended awards and the program is anticipated to start operations in April.

This article was provided by John Easterling, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise. For information, please contact Mr. John Easterling at (954) 975-4855 or email to John.Easterling@dot.state.fl.us.

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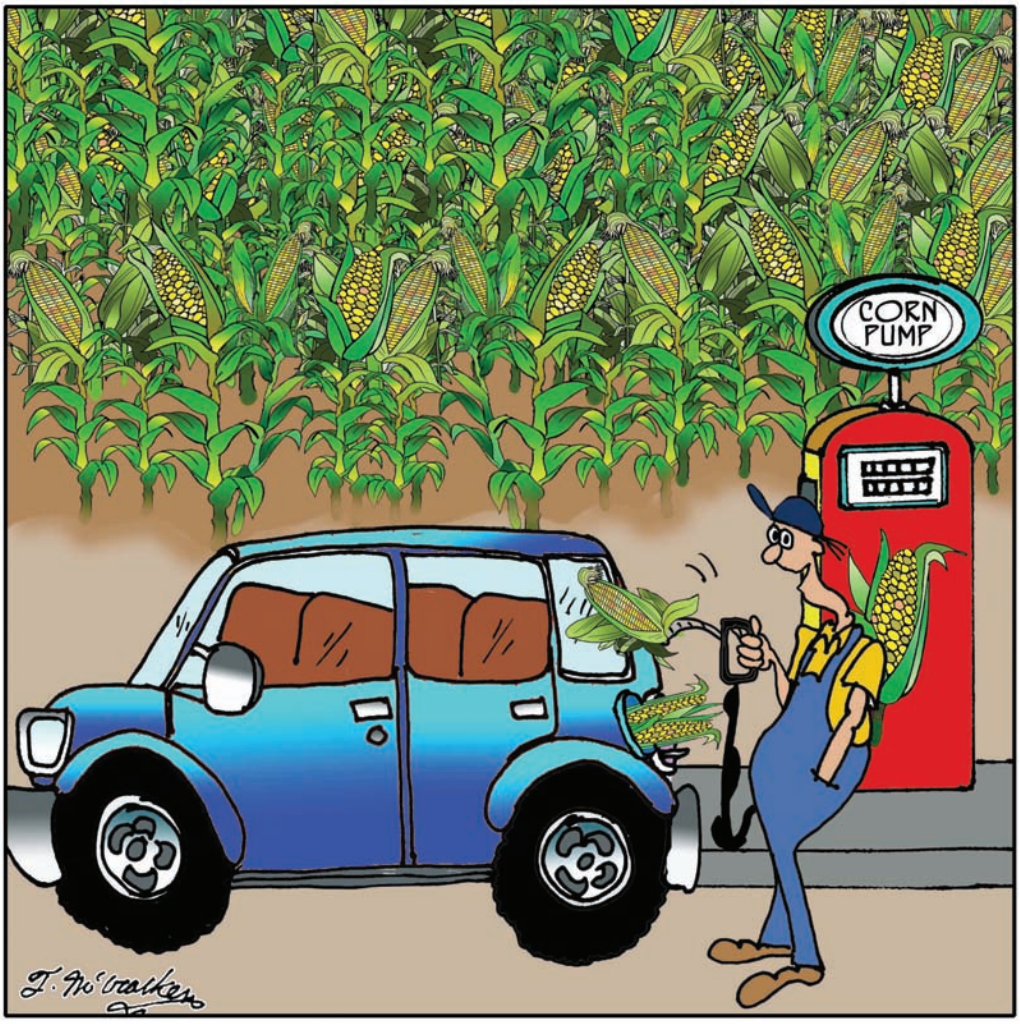
SunGuide® Disseminator Word Challenge



We invite you to have some fun and complete the *SunGuide® Disseminator* Word Challenge!

Unscramble the letters to complete the word for the clue found under the boxes.
Use the letters in the red circles to complete the final puzzle.
The answers can be found on the page 2.

Enjoy
and
Good Luck!

I C S R

Initiative that contracts towing companies for large vehicle clearance.

N I A M C R E A W R O E T

Reponsible for developing wireless facilities along FDOT's rights-of-way.

L E A V I N A O U T

TERL is providing this for the LPR vehicle detection system.

G O N E S N O T I C

FDOT District Six is implementing this two-phase relief plan on I-95.

"Friends, Farmers, and Floridians—

If you're talking ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ fuels, we're all ears!"

Inside the TERL

The FDOT has a goal to assure that only a safe and uniform ITS and traffic control system is implemented in the state of Florida. The Traffic Engineering Research Lab (TERL) plays a part in obtaining this goal by satisfying Florida Statute 316.0745 - Uniform Signals & Devices. Below is a look Inside the TERL at activities that help accomplish our goal.

License Plate Reader Vehicle Detection System Evaluation

The TERL is always involved in the review and evaluation of new products and technologies that are proposed for use within Florida. One of the latest new product evaluations is the license plate reader (LPR) vehicle detection system.

The State Traffic Engineering and Operations Office issued a contract for the design, installation, and operation of a vehicle detection system using license plate readers placed at eight locations along the Interstate-10 (I-10) corridor (between mile markers 192 and 210) in Leon County. This system was intended to collect and provide raw data that can be used to calculate travel times along various segments of I-10. The project serves two main purposes—first, to allow travel time messages to be generated and posted on dynamic message signs along I-10 in the Tallahassee area; and second, to develop additional capabilities within the state's SunGuide® Software that allows integration and use of LPR technology.

The TERL was tasked with performing independent testing to document the current performance of this system and verify that the field systems are capable of providing the data required for SunGuide Software to generate reasonably accurate travel times along the corridor. To accomplish this task, TERL staff collected data, performed drive tests, and analyzed a wealth of information in order to gauge the accuracy and effectiveness of the LPR-based travel time system.

The design, installation, and maintenance of the field sites associated with this system were the responsibility of a private contractor, Traffic Control Devices (TCD) of Altamonte Springs, Florida. TCD worked closely with FDOT and the City of Tallahassee to install and initially configure the system.

How does the LPR System Work?

LPRs perform automatic optical character recognition (OCR) of vehicle license plates as they pass LPR stations (cameras). The LPR then transmits a portion of the license plate information to the traffic management software system operating in the Tallahassee transportation management center (TMC) for analysis. Data is sent in a format that protects the anonymity of individual vehicles yet still allows the software to perform a comparison of license plates which allows data matching between upstream and downstream LPR stations. Timestamps included with the captured data and the known distances between the sites are used to determine the travel time between stations.

Test Results

The TERL's findings indicate that the LPR devices and the matching functions performed by the software worked as expected. However, a number of lessons have been learned from this experience. Some of the lessons involve the care that must be given in the installation and configuration of the LPR field sites. This project has demonstrated that site selection, camera placement and orientation, and a number of other factors need to be closely considered in order to yield the maximum possible performance from the overall system. Many of these lessons are likely to be the subject of a future paper and project summary.

This article was provided by Ron Meyer, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Office - Traffic Engineering Research Lab (TERL). For information, contact Mr. Meyer at (850) 921-7350 or email Ronald.Meyer@dot.state.fl.us.

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2009 ITS America Annual Meeting and Exposition—Some Great Reasons to Attend

Come to Washington, D.C., June 1 – 3 to the 2009 ITS American Annual Meeting and Exposition to expand your network opportunities, attend focused educational programs, and see more than 150 exhibitors. Members are encouraged to stop by Booth 310 and support the ITS Florida Chapter which will again be competing for the prestigious Outstanding State Chapter Award. We look forward to seeing you there!

Top 10 Reasons Why You Can't Afford to Miss ITS America's 2009 Annual Meeting and Exposition

1. Location in the Nation's Capitol – this year, our nation's leaders will be debating the next surface transportation bill—legislation that will not only significantly impact ITS, but the future of our nation's surface transportation system. The Annual Meeting's ideal timing and location will allow attendees to engage in discussion with key policy and decision makers as well as connect with leaders from around the country on ITS development and deployment.
2. Technology Demonstration – Featuring innovative mobility solutions first seen at the 15th World Congress on ITS in New York.
3. Forum Showcases – Part of what makes ITS America's Annual Meeting and Exposition so compelling is its Forum Showcases. Not only a great way to learn more about your specific business area, these specialized sessions will help ensure you leave armed with knowledge and contacts to forge ahead.
4. Plenary, Executive, Special, Scientific, Technical, and Interactive Sessions – Participate in the leading industry conference on intelligent transportation systems.
5. Transportation Management Center of the Future – Visit this dedicated area within the exhibit hall that will showcase the integration of active probe data into the most advanced applications of transportation management center systems.
6. Nationally Recognized Speakers – From the keynote address to industry leaders, ITS America brings together a distinguished group of speakers.
7. Exhibit Hall – Over 150 exhibitors will be on hand covering over 100,000 square feet of space, showcasing the latest ITS products, services, and solutions.
8. Professional Development Hours – Attendees are eligible for professional development hours (PDH). Each hour of participation in an educational session, workshop, or Forum Showcase earns one PDH.
9. Industry Awards – Honoring the most innovative organizations, solutions, and individuals in the industry through the Best of ITS Awards, Outstanding State Chapter Award, and Student Essay Competition.
10. Networking Events – From the Opening Night Reception in the Exhibit Hall to the Networking Extravaganza, the Annual Meeting's networking events are the perfect settings for connecting with old friends and making new ones.

You can register online at http://registration.experient-inc.com/ShowITS092/Default.aspx. Full registration includes admittance to all educational sessions, the exhibit hall, the VII Technology Showcase, and ITS America's networking events.

For more information on ITS Florida, please check the ITS Florida Web site at www.itsflorida.org or contact Sandy Beck, Chapter Administrator, at itsflorida@itsflorida.org.

If you wish to contribute an article to the SunGuide Disseminator on behalf of ITS Florida, please email Mary Hamill at MaryKHamill@global-5.com.

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Editorial Corner—FHP Speaks Up for ITS

Intelligent transportation systems (ITS) are valuable tools for first responders, such as the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), as well as roadway users. Incident detection, verification, and response are greatly improved with ITS. Given the fact that it takes about four minutes to clear every one minute of roadway obstruction, every minute counts. These systems are now serving many purposes in the broader scheme of traffic and transportation safety.

By routinely monitoring traffic cameras FHP dispatchers are alerted to the on-scene situation which can in turn be relayed to responding troopers. With this advance information, responders can make decisions on the best means of accessing the scene through traffic, and where to park strategically once they arrive. Transportation management center operators and FHP dispatchers can often identify the type of vehicles involved and the nature of the damage in order to notify wreckers more expediently. Having this critical information reduces response time, clearance time, traffic backup, and, ultimately, the chance of secondary crashes. Police officers, firefighters, and other responders on the scene of a crash are safer when approaching motorists are warned of the incident by dynamic message signs.

Information on incidents allows drivers to make smart choices about their travel. When an incident reduces traffic flow, alerted motorists can chose to use an alternate route, reducing their individual travel time and the impact on the affected roadway. Message boards are great for moving traffic more efficiently and they also serve to mitigate secondary crashes, thereby reducing the exposure of emergency responders. Highway advisory radios and CB Wizards, used in conjunction with dynamic message signs, advise motorists of incidents and direct them to detours. This directs traffic away from the incident allowing responders to work freely without the risk of being struck. Even the 511 traveler information system can be a big help to responders. By dialing 511, motorists are advised of traffic situations and can plan their trip accordingly which reduces the amount of traffic flowing into an incident scene.

We have always seen ITS as a tool to move traffic more efficiently. Now these technologies are helping to minimize response times to incidents, reduce weather-related traffic incidents, and improve security for motorists through the use of traffic cameras and call boxes. Additionally, using dynamic message signs to alert motorists about abducted children or missing elderly persons is yet another valuable tool for public safety. Safety and security on our roadways is enhanced by ITS—I know first-hand as a retired trooper with the FHP. Our first responders appreciate and support FDOT's ITS Program which keeps them safe as they perform their duties.

As stated by Major Grady Carrick, FHP Troop Commander, "As the Troop Commander for FHP's Troop G based in Jacksonville, I cannot over-emphasize how much our troopers rely on ITS devices in the Jacksonville area. One thing that I always state to our troopers is to go home safe. FDOT's ITS devices help with their safety."

This editorial was provided by Charlie Creel, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Office. For information, please contact Mr. Creel at (850) 410-5613 or email to Charles.Creel@dot.state.fl.us.

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Announcements

Join Us in Congratulating...

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Omar Meitin to the position of District Six Traffic Operations Engineer.

Omar began his career in the Unites States Army serving during the Persian Gulf War as part of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He continued his service as a member of the United States Army Reserves, and in 1992 was called back into active service to assist South Florida with Hurricane Andrew recovery efforts.

Omar earned his Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Florida, and was hired into FDOT's Professional Engineering Trainee Program shortly after graduating. Omar has been with FDOT for nearly ten years.

Please join us in welcoming Omar to his new role.

* * * *

Welcome Arun!

Also join us in welcoming Arun Krishnamurthy, P.E. to the position of ITS Software/Standards/Architecture Coordinator in the Traffic Engineering and Operations Office in Tallahassee.

Arun has over six years of experience in ITS and traffic operations. Arun has a Master's degree in Transportation Engineering (with emphasis in ITS) from Vanderbilt University, Nashville. He started his career at PBS&J in the FDOT's Central Office as an ITS Analyst and provided support to the SunGuide® Software, ITS Architecture, and ITS Standards and Specifications. For the past three years, Arun has worked as a project manager for Kimley-Horn and Associates.

* * * *

Good Luck Steve

Please join us in wishing Steve Corbin good luck. Steve is leaving the FDOT District Four to relocate with his family to Ohio. Steve has played a significant role in District Four's ITS program since its inception. His contributions have been many including establishing the Broward County TMC operations plan, establishing a District ITS public outreach program and taking a leadership role in the development of the SunGuide® Software.

Steve will be missed, but has left a legacy of a solid ITS Program on which we will build to become increasingly operations-oriented.

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Mark Your Calendar...

ITS America's 2009 Annual Meeting and Exposition—Moving America Forward

When: June 1-3, 2009
Where: Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center (National Harbor, Maryland)

ITS America's 2009 Annual Meeting & Exposition is a three-day learning and networking event which will attract the most diverse transportation audience from across the country in one place. This event will feature panel sessions, poster sessions, interactive seminars, renowned industry speakers, informative exhibits and hands-on technology demonstrations, technical tours, and receptions.

Further information is available at www.itsa.org/annualmeeting.html

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FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Mission and Vision Statements

Mission:
Provide leadership and serve as a catalyst in becoming the national leader in mobility.

Vision:
Provide support and expertise in the application of Traffic Engineering principles and practices to improve safety and mobility.

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