FDOT's Monthly ITS News

SUNGUIDE®

DISSEMINATOR

Just When You Think...

Just when you think things couldn't get any weirder in the transportation management center (TMC)..."they do." On morning of August 31, a small plane decided to try to use I-10 as a landing strip after the pilot began to have engine trouble. Nope....you do not know the half of it yet! Guess you could say we were fortunate in that one of our District's right-of-way consultants, Mr. Gerald Springstead, was the last vehicle the plane passed over before it crash-landed on the back slope of the westbound travel lanes (or unfortunate in the case of Gerald – so he says!). I will share the experience of this day hoping that the lesson will be learned by all—that is "when you hear a loud noise and don't see any vehicles in your mirror, you'd better duck because the noise is probably coming from on top of you!" (Per Mr. Springstead)

So here it goes. That morning, the District was conducting its Work Program review of the 10-year plan at the Lake City Maintenance facility. The meeting started at 10:00 a.m., so logically everyone at the Jacksonville Urban office planned to leave by around 8:30 a.m. For me, the morning began strangely and things kept popping up that delayed me from leaving at the scheduled time. As I ran around the building, I noticed that several other meeting attendees were also running late. Then, the call came in.

The Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) notified the TMC about a plane crash along I-10 at around 8:40 a.m. FDOT immediately went into action by contacting all of our traffic incident management (TIM) partners, the media, and the airplane service we utilize for morning commute reports. Within five minutes the information was on all the news channels; Jax Fire and Rescue had units on route; FHP had already arrived at the scene; and Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO) was coordinating traffic control. Of course, I-10 had to be closed for a while so making this meeting in Lake City within a reasonable amount of time was not going to happen. I decided to stay involved for a few more minutes before I realized that the TMC staff had it under

Inside This Issue
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control. My departure time was 9:00 a.m., so I followed detour recommendations and took the US 90 route around the scene. Ironically, I was only late by about five minutes and noticed several of my peers from the Urban Office had also made it on schedule.

When I returned that evening, I learned that Gerald was the person who notified the FHP, so the next day, I ran up stairs to thank him for his actions. That is when I heard the "real" story and felt I had to share this with everyone. Gerald was one of the few to leave on time and he was riding along I-10 westbound at a steady pace. He says that he heard this roaring noise (like a truck with an engine problem) getting louder and louder as he proceeded down the road. He checked his side and rear view mirrors to try to figure out what the heck was going on. Then he noticed that there were only a few cars in front and behind him. Not knowing what was going on, he decided to look up just in time to see the plane's wheels flying right over his hood.

Gerald said that he decided to slow his vehicle down to about 40 mph to allow the plane to pass him. He realized that the pilot was trying to go under some power lines crossing the interstate and had problems as the plane lost elevation. The plane hit the pavement, proceeded onto the grass shoulder, went up the back slope, clipped a tree with its wing, and stopped within inches of a construction staging area full of materials (this area was also under construction). Gerald pulled over beside the plane and got out of his car to share his thoughts with the pilot on his lack of appreciation for Gerald's life. After calming down, he had the resolve to contact FHP to get emergency responders on site.

The amazing portion of this story was the reactionary measures taken by Gerald throughout this ordeal. Even with the suddenness of this event, he had the wherewithal to slow down and put his schedule on the back burner to assist with the situation. Some things that Gerald noticed were: there were no other vehicles near the landing area except for his; the pilot did try to go under the utility lines, but ditched the plane at the last second; one of the engines was still running on the plane; and it wasn't a matter of talent, but luck that prevented this from being a much worse scenario. I don't think the media caught all of this information when investigating the event.

Of course, something like a plane crashing on an interstate cannot be resolved in a matter of hours. There is really no game plan in the playbook for something like this incident. Instead, the TIM members had to play-it-by-ear, using their best resources and experience to get the roadway open as soon as possible. One lane was opened within less than an hour, but intermittent closures were necessary to get rescue personnel to the scene. By about 5 p.m., both travel lanes were reopened to traffic while the plane remained on the shoulder. Of course, this led to the "rubbernecking" syndrome that impacted traffic throughout the evening.

The next day the Federal Aviation Administration completed their investigation; the plane was chopped up to be transported; and traffic resumed to normal by noon. Gerald now spends part of his time looking overhead while he drives. The TMC staff learned to expect the unexpected and I now realize I need to add an extra half-hour of travel to my Lake City meeting to avoid the unexpected.

This article was provided by Peter Vega, FDOT District Two. For information, please contact Mr. Vega at (904) 360-5463 or email to Peter.Vega@dot.state.fl.us.

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511—What's Going on Nationally

The 511 Deployment Coalition Working Group met in Dallas, Texas, on September 8 - 9—just in time for Tropical Storm Hermine. Attending the 511 Deployment Coalition Working Group meetings always provides access to a lot of information on what other states are doing to provide traveler information to the public. As of October 2009, there were 41 deployments of 511, including deployments in some Canadian provinces. After listening to representatives speak about their systems, it was obvious that reasons for deploying 511 can be vastly different among the states. Florida, for example, being a warm weather urbanized state, is geared to provide information about congestion and issues that may impact one's commute, so that motorists can avoid problem areas. Other Midwestern states, where weather is the dominating issue during the winter months, are geared to provide information about roadway snow accumulation, so motorists can avoid the dangers of being stranded. Of course, any information on the passability of a roadway is of paramount importance to commercial vehicle operators where delays cost money. Other states that are both urbanized and cold during the winter have to contend with congestion and snow. In the end, it's good to know that from Florida's standpoint, Florida's 511 deployment is one of the more comprehensive systems in terms of information available to callers.

Many states that deployed 511 early now have mature systems and are concentrating on providing system enhancements to better serve their customers. One problem that all states face is the ability to get statewide data. Due to costs, all states have concentrated on providing instrumentation on roadways in their urban areas; thus, the ability to know what is going on in these areas is pretty good. In general, rural areas are a lower priority; however, statewide systems include rural areas. Over the years, private industry has been working hard at being a source for traffic-related data. During this time, private industry data has become more comprehensive in scope and of greater quality. In order to supplement their own data collection efforts, states are now signing up these private industry providers to supply data. This allows states to access data supplied by a number of different private sector providers.

The 511 Deployment Coalition Working Group Meeting was well attended; as-a-matter-of-fact, the registration to the Working Group Meeting had to be cut off due to space limitations. The attendance was from the public as well as the private side and was probably close to an even split. This is a good indication that there is still much interest in deploying 511 and in determining what the future of 511 will be. In any discussion of 511 deployments, funding is always one of the topics. Florida, like all states, is looking for ways to hold down costs to minimize the impacts on state budgets. One way to hold down out-of-pocket expenses is for states to commit to deploy and operate 511 by cultivating a supplemental revenue source. A number of presentations dealing with revenue generation were of interest to Florida.

The revenue generation presentations centered around the idea of sponsorships. Global-5 looked at sponsorships and broke it down into a number of sponsorship areas. These areas include the sponsorship of dynamic message signs (DMS), web sites, phone systems, and system personalization. Personalization, in the simplest term, means that a person can register a number of routes and the system will contact the person to report any problems on the designated routes. Out of the total amount of possible revenue generated by sponsorships, DMS sponsorships appear to provide by far the greatest return on investment. Based on Global-5's presentation, DMS sponsorship would account for about 95 percent of the total revenue that could be generated from sponsorships. The other opportunities for sponsorship make up the remaining 5 percent. Although there was no agreement on the worth of DMS sponsorships, everyone tended to agree that the signs provided the greatest opportunity for generating significant revenue.

Georgia provided a presentation of their no cost model for the operation of their 511 system. Georgia has implemented a sponsorship model that provides for revenue generation to cover the cost of operating their system. Their traffic management center operator manages the sponsorship program that provides for the operation of Georgia's 511 system for free. Revenue is generated from the sponsorship of roadside signs.

Sendza reported on their system in Massachusetts, where they are providing a free traveler information system for Massachusetts Department of Transportation through a sponsorship model similar to the one used in Georgia. Sendza receives revenue from sponsorships on the phone system, banner messages on the web site, text and email ads, and from roadside sign sponsorships.

There was an alternate view presented at the meeting that the estimates for revenue that could be generated to support 511 systems are overstated. In a tough economy advertisement dollars are shrinking, thus reducing the ability to generate revenue to support 511. Although there was disagreement on whether enough revenue could be generated to support a "free system," there was general consensus that revenue could be generated to at least offset some of the costs to operate 511 systems.

The need to have information regarding road conditions—be it traffic or weather problems—will always persist. As traffic worsens on our roadways, the need to know about road conditions will become increasing important. Revenue generation and the provision of private sector data could potentially become service multipliers allowing states to provide enhancements to their systems to provide more and better information to the public.

This article was provided by Gene Glotzbach, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Office. For information, please contact Mr. Glotzbach at (850) 410-5616 or email to Gene.Glotzbach@dot.state.fl.us.

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SunGuide® Meets INRIX

The Florida Advanced Traveler Information System, also known as FL-511, provides time-critical traffic data to motorists traveling on Florida's limited-access facilities. The SunGuide® software system, an advanced traffic management center software, provides traffic data to FL-511 for distribution to motorists. In turn, SunGuide collects this information from intelligent transportation systems (ITS) devices located on limited-access facilities.

Typically, public agencies deploy ITS devices, including detectors, cameras, and the fiber network, to collect traffic data and verify traffic incidents. These deployments can cost millions of dollars, require significant project planning, and take considerable time to implement. Currently, I-10 and northern portions of I-75 do not have ITS devices and thus, have limited reporting abilities by FL-511 to the motorists. Due to this limited reporting, motorists are unaware of potentials traffic delays along these areas of roadways, which they could have otherwise avoided.

To avoid the high costs and long schedules to deploy ITS devices, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is implementing an innovative solution for these rural limited access roadways. FDOT has contracted with INRIX to receive real-time travel time data along I-10 and northern portions of I-75. INRIX, a private traffic data provider, collects real-time travel time data from global positioning system (GPS) enabled mobile devices in commercial fleets and other sources. The INRIX contract allows FDOT to obtain travel time information for roughly 530 miles of rural roadways without ITS devices. FDOT receives this data for a flat annual rate with no up-front cost and the data is available for immediate use.

FDOT will integrate the INRIX traffic data into the SunGuide software, which will automatically publish this data to the FL-511. Once this enhancement is in place, data for all of I-10 and portions of I-75 will be immediately available—not requiring several long, expensive design, build, test, and integrate projects on these roadway segments.

SunGuide will display this data on an operator map without requiring the extensive manual configuration normally performed for FDOT-deployed detectors. The operator map will show color-coded congestion maps using the INRIX data. If congestion occurs on any roadway segment, the color overlay on that segment will change from green to yellow. If the traffic almost slows down to a stopping condition, the color will change to red. The system is designed to also provide a text alert to the operator when the traffic almost slows down to a stopping condition. This text alert appears in the alert box within the SunGuide software.

This SunGuide enhancement is currently under development with an expected release in December 2010. FL-511 is also preparing necessary configuration changes to make use of this new data.

This article was provided by Clay Packard and Arun Krishnamurthy, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Office. For information, please contact Mr. Krishnamurthy at (850) 410-5615 or email at Arun.Krishnamurthy@dot.state.fl.us.

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Florida's Expanded CVISN Program—An Update

Florida has made a substantial financial and programmatic commitment to the National Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks (CVISN) Program. Florida was certified as CVISN core-compliant in February 2009, and with this certification became eligible for additional grant funding for Expanded CVISN projects from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). Since 2000, Florida has invested well over $10 million in core CVISN program deployments. In order to capitalize on these investments and to further leverage the state's investments in CVISN deployments, in January 2010, Florida moved into the next phase of CVISN known as Expanded CVISN.

Expanded CVISN builds on the successful technology and infrastructure deployments that took place during core CVISN. Florida successfully applied for and received $3.5 million—the maximum allowable grant funding—for their CVISN program projects. No grant funds could be released until an Expanded CVISN Program Plan and Top Level Design document was written and submitted to FMCSA for approval. This document was a joint effort by all partner agencies on the CVISN team. Many of the Expanded CVISN projects overlap agencies and input was needed from all agencies involved. This input included project descriptions, project budgets, a time schedule for implementation, and a detailed system design. This information was compiled into one document, and the Expanded CVISN Program Plan and Top Level Design document was submitted to FMCSA in January 2010. Approval was received in February 2010, and this approval has allowed Florida to move to the implementation stage of Expanded CVISN projects.

Florida's CVISN Team

The Florida CVISN team is made up of members from state agencies involved in any aspect of commercial vehicle regulation, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (responsible for Federal regulations), and industry.

State

Florida Department of Transportation
Florida Department of Transportation – Permits Office
Florida Department of Transportation – Office of Motor Carrier Compliance
Florida Department of Revenue
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles

Federal

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)

Private Industry

Florida Trucking Association
Representatives from the trucking community

What's in it for Industry?

Quicker Oversize/Overweight (OS/OW) Permit Issuance. One of the first projects being deployed will enhance the capabilities of Florida's electronic permitting system, known as the Automated Permitting Application Submission System or APASS. This project is currently well under way. When enhancements are fully implemented, the turn-around time for issuing online permits (that do not require engineering support) will decrease from an average of three hours to about an hour. Additional system enhancements to be deployed include adding a geographic information system (GIS) based routing capability which will allow the APASS software to route trucks, evaluate the route for the given vehicle, and re-route if necessary. Also, financial tracking, Electronic Document Management, additional customer interface tools, and online printing of the permits are scheduled for deployment. Look for updates in future Florida Trucking Association newsletters for notice of when the enhanced system is available for OS/OW permitting.

Quicker Theft Recovery. Another project is development of the Container Number Database. This project will provide benefits to both industry and the State of

Florida. For industry, this system will facilitate location and apprehension of stolen containers. The system will read container numbers as they move through the state. Once read, the container numbers will be run against various criminal databases to make sure they're not involved in criminal activity. If there is a 'hit,' enforcement officers will be notified to apprehend the vehicle and conduct a more thorough investigation to determine the status of the load and act accordingly. The state will use the information in the container number database to assure that Florida's transportation infrastructure keeps pace with freight movements within and through the state. Additionally, this project will add internet connected computers to rural sites currently without cameras. This will allow the officer on duty to manually enter the container number into the database.

Future Expanded CVISN project deployments in Florida will include deployment of one or more virtual roadside facility(s) equipped with high-speed weigh-in-motion, license plate readers, and length and width detection. Additional pre-screening technology deployments will allow safe and legal motor carriers to avoid or limit pull-ins for inspection activities. Another project in the Expanded CVISN plan is to evaluate Florida's non-port-of-entry status. Under the current system, commercial vehicles must obtain all necessary operating credentials prior to crossing the state line into Florida; failure to do so can result in a stiff fine. The study will evaluate the feasibility of changing Florida's status to a port-of-entry state. Tasks for this project include conducting a review of what legislative changes would be required to change this status, identifying best practices with regard to port-of-entry, determining the costs and benefits of changing to port-of-entry status, and providing recommendations.

The Expanded CVISN Program in Florida is progressing on schedule, with a target completion date of all projects in the plan by spring 2015.

This article was provided by Richard Easley, E-Squared Engineering. For information, please contact Mr. Easley at (703) 858-5588 or email at REasley@e-squared.org.

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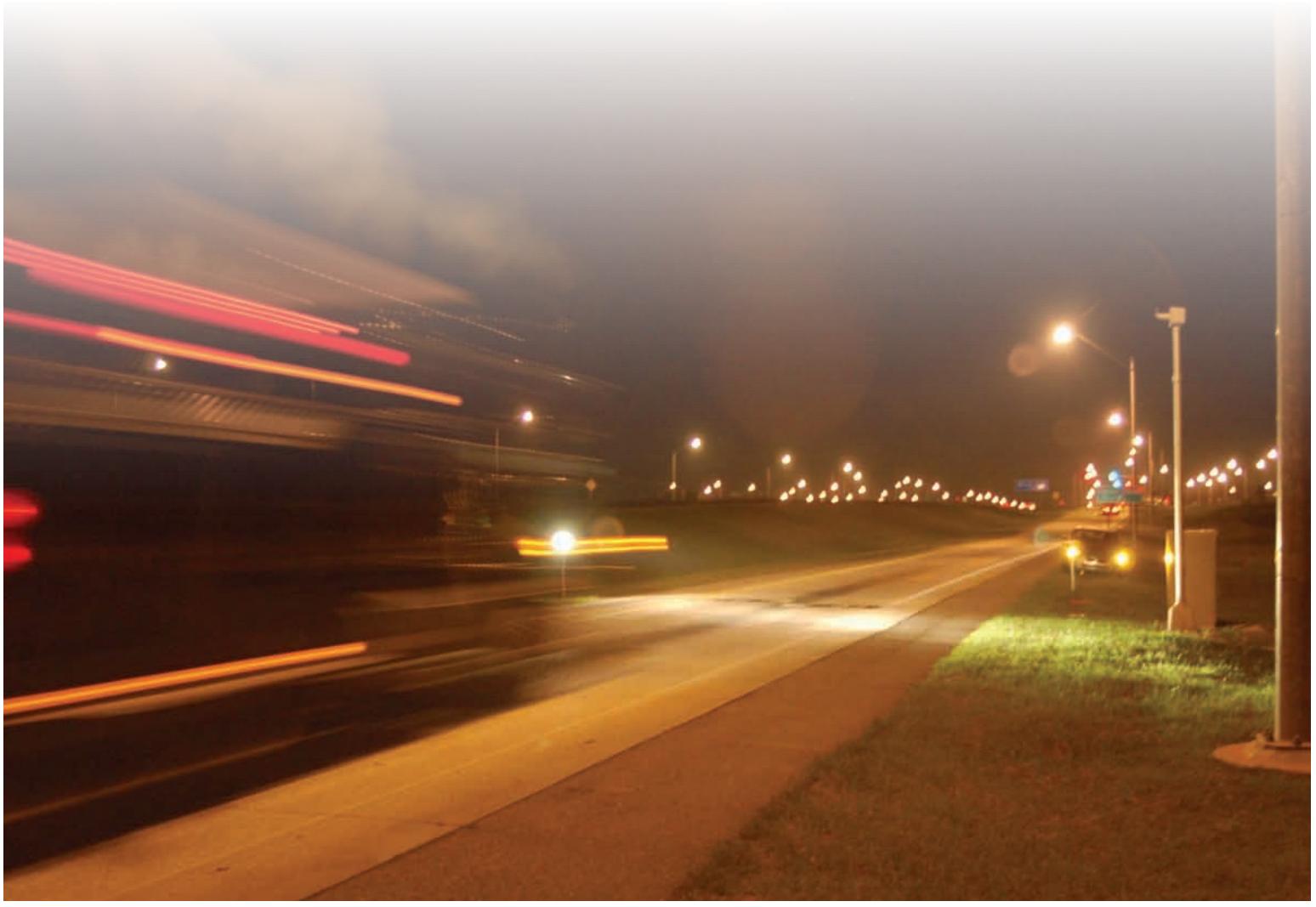

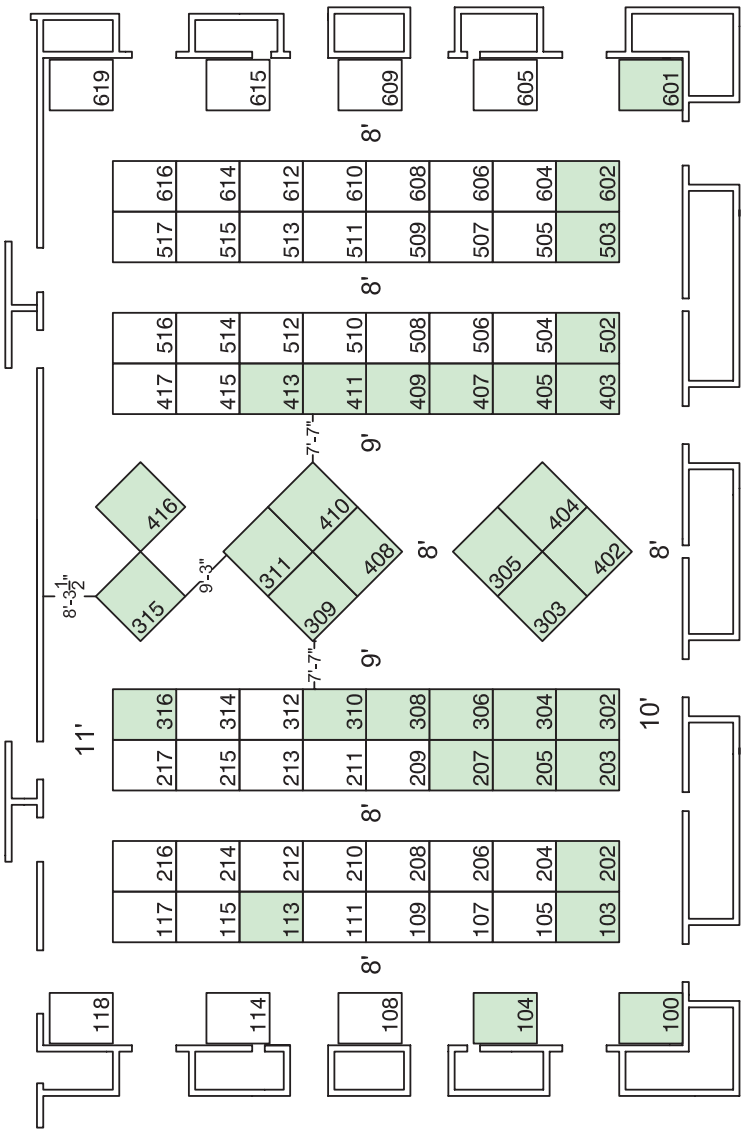

Transpo 2010: "ITS—NOW MORE THAN EVER"

Transpo 2010 is excited to announce that the Expo Hall for December's Transpo 2010 conference, to be held December 12-15, at the Marriott Sawgrass, Pointe Viedra Beach, is well underway to being one of our most spectacular exhibits. Take some time to look at the companies that have already reserved space.

But remember, we still have room for you! If you are interested in reserving a space in the exhibit hall, pick one of the white spaces to the left and go to the Transpo website (http://www.itstranspo.org/exhibitors.html) to reserve it

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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Company (Booth)	Company (Booth)
American Signal Company (100)	Kimley-Horn and Associates (409)
Blackhawk Enterprises (411+13)	Lighting Control Consultants, Inc. (302)
ComNet Communications Networks (503)	MG Squared Innovative Technologies (315)
Comtrol Corporation (113)	PTV America, Inc. (502)
Control Technologies of Central Florida, Inc. (402+04)	RuggedCom, Inc. (407)
Core Tec Communications (304)	Skyline Products (104)
Daktronics, Inc. (410)	Tapco (316)
Econolite Control Products, Inc. (405)	Telvent (416)
EtherWAN Systems, Inc. (602)	Temple Inc. (408)
Fortran Traffic Systems, Ltd. (308)	TESCO (601)
GarrettCom Inc. (306)	Transcore (309)
Global Traffic Technologies (103)	Transportation Control Systems, Inc. (311)
Harris Corporation (305)	Utilicom Supply Associates, LLC (205)
Image Sensing Systems (403)	Utilicom Supply Associates, LLC (207)
Iteris Inc. (303)	VANUS, Inc. (203)
Jupiter Systems (310)	Wavetronix LLC (202)

Editorial Corner—Keeping Consistency Despite Change

The norm in the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is to have one transportation management center (TMC) per District. District Four was already the exception by having two TMCs, and as of one year ago, is even more unique. A nationally recognized project, called I-595 Express, resulted in District Four relinquishing control of I-595 to I 595 Express, LLC and having a TMC within a TMC.

Consistent Operations

An important part of preparing to transfer responsibility was ensuring that District Four and I 595 Express, LLC (the concessionaire) would be running consistent operations. Over the years, District Four has established an extensive Districtwide ITS program that includes infrastructure deployment, operations, maintenance, traffic incident management, and traveler information. The accountability of the District's ITS program is assessed through performance measurement reports. These measurements are also used by the FDOT to help establish policies, plan resources, and develop report cards. The importance of meeting District Four's performance was made clear in the Request for Proposal from the very beginning.

Until the end of the 35-year agreement, FDOT will monitor a wide range of performance measurements on the concessionaire's ITS operations to continue a high-level of service for the I-595 ITS. It must be as good or better than FDOT-operated ITS programs in the region—ranging from physical ITS infrastructure deployment to daily ITS operations to the system availability and reliability. Failure of the concessionaire to meet District Four expectations will subject it to faults, which would impact its financial performance. The I-595 ITS performance measures must conform to the detailed definitions, outcome measures, output measures, data requirements, and reporting formats that are specified in current FDOT District Four ITS performance measurement standards. Key performance measures include:

- Incident/event response and clearance durations
- ITS maintenance services and Road Ranger response time
- ITS availability

Seamless Transition

Before the concessionaire took over the I-595 operations, its staff trained closely with District Four. It adapted the District Four standard operating guidelines as their own for the duration of the project. In terms of infrastructure, because I-595 is part of District Four network of roadways, continuous ITS coverage will be essential to the traffic management during all phases of construction. When it becomes no longer feasible to operate the existing I-595 ITS due to the impact from the project construction, the concessionaire is required to deploy a portable work zone and wireless communications-based interim traffic management system. When the construction is complete, the permanent I-595 ITS will be an integrated system with the reversible express lanes control system, fiber optic communications system, video monitoring

The Project

In March 2009, FDOT District Four signed a public-private partnership (P3) agreement with I 595 Express, LLC, a subsidiary of ACS Infrastructure Development. I 595 Express, LLC will serve as the concessionaire to design, build, finance, operate, and maintain the $1.8 billion I-595 Corridor Improvements Project through a 35-year agreement term with the FDOT. The highlight of the major I-595 improvements is the construction of three at-grade reversible express lanes in the median that will be operated as high-occupancy toll lanes. A comprehensive intelligent transportation system (ITS) is being fully integrated and centralized to manage, control, and operate the reversible express lanes, general purpose lanes, and adjacent State Road 84 frontage roads. Beginning on July 31, 2009, when the Notice to Proceed was issued, the concessionaire assumed responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the existing I-595 ITS.

system, dynamic message signs, microwave vehicle sensors, highway advisory radio, and open road toll collection system. The construction must also be consistent with District Four practices, such that it carries the same design, naming schema, technology selection, and implementation.

The Partnership

Realizing that ITS will play a critical role in operating and maintaining a safe and reliable I-595 corridor to maximize the public safety, reliability, and roadway availability, District Four and I 595 Express, LLC are building a working relationship for the long term. Establishing and maintaining consistent operations may seem tedious and constraining at first, but both teams feel it has helped in avoiding potential problems, which would have come from following two different practices within one building. Roadway ownership must be seamless to the motorist. To do this, the two parties must have a positive working relationship in the control room. The result is consistency, which helps build better overall roadway management in South Florida.

This editorial was provided by Dong Chen, FDOT District Four. For more information, please contact Mr. Chen at (954) 847-2697 or email to Dong.Chen@dot.state.fl.us.

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Inside the TERL

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has a goal to assure that only a safe and uniform 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.

The ***Minimum Specifications for Traffic Control Signals and Devices*** (*MSTCSD*) contains the minimum material and operational product specifications used for the evaluation and certification/approval of all traffic control signals and devices listed on the FDOT Approved Product List (APL). Because the *MSTCSD* received a major update in July 2010, it is being featured in this issue of Inside the TERL.

All product specifications that fall within the responsibility of the TERL are contained in the *MSTCSD* with the exception of intelligent transportation systems (ITS) devices. ITS device material and operational specifications are currently contained in the *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction* workbook; however, there are plans to include them in the *MSTCSD* in the future. These minimum specifications are compiled and published by the Traffic Engineering and Operations Office's TERL and are issued in accordance with *Florida Statutes* Chapter 316.0745 (2).

316.0745 (2) The Department of Transportation shall compile and publish a manual of uniform traffic control devices which defines the uniform system adopted pursuant to subsection (1), and shall compile and publish minimum specifications for traffic control signals and devices certified by it as conforming with the uniform system.

All traffic control signals and devices sold within the State of Florida must conform to the *MSTCSD* requirements. The *MSTCSD* and all product specifications that fall under the responsibility of the TERL can be viewed at http://www.dot.state.fl.us/trafficoperations/Traf_Sys/terl/apl4.shtm which provides the following information:

- A listing of all products handled by the TERL
- Specifications for products handled by the TERL
- A listing of what is required to be listed on the FDOT APL
- The type of approval required for each item
- A compliance matrix for each item

Take a look at the TERL's product specification page and let us know if you have questions or suggestions for improvement.

This article was provided by Jeff Morgan, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Office - TERL. For more information, please contact Mr. Morgan at (850) 921-7354 or email Jeffrey.Morgan@dot.state.fl.us.

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Announcements

Next Big Bend Florida Chapter ITE Meeting:

Tour of the FDOT Traffic Engineering Research Lab (TERL)
2612 Springhill Road, Tallahassee

Monday, November 8, at 11:30 a.m.

A BBQ lunch will be catered ($10) and will require an RSVP (David.Bright@blueprint2000.org) by noon, Friday, November 5. Book Scholarship raffle tickets will be on sale!!

The TERL is located on the west side of Springhill Road just south (0.2 mile) of Orange Avenue. The following link provides a location map:
http://www.dot.state.fl.us/trafficoperations/Directions/Directions.shtm#Traffic_Engineering_Research_Lab_(TERL)

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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