

Treasure Coast Traffic Incident Management Team Meeting Minutes

September 2009



Meeting Date: September 17, 2009
Meeting Time: 1:30 PM
Location: FDOT Operations Center
3601 Oleander Ave.
Fort Pierce, FL 34981

Attendees: Listing Attached

Call Meeting to Order

Chuck McGinness of AECOM called the meeting to order. Introductions immediately followed.

Distributed Documents:

- Agenda
- Previous Treasure Coast Meeting Minutes – July 16, 2009

REVIEW ACTION ITEMS/PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

I-95 Crossover at Becker Road Interchange

Chuck reported that the issue has been resolved now that the interchange is open. Lt. Michael Ewing from Martin County Sheriffs Office asked Chuck to look into a blanket variance for the crossovers to not be blocked when putting in guardrails. Chuck stated that he looked into this issue and was told that it is a federal mandate and that has to be taken care of on a federal level.

Incident notifications to FDOT for Treasure Coast

There were no representatives from FDOT to follow up on this action item. Chuck will contact Vana Kinchen to inquire about the notifications being sent to FDOT.

UPDATES

I-95 Construction – (Report submitted by Mickey Kelly, FDOT Treasure Coast Operations)

The ITS contractors over the past month have been continuing to pull wire (about 40% complete), install fiber optic cable (about 30% complete) and devices on poles. Devices being installed are the Microwave Vehicle Detection and the Voice over Internet Phone equipment on the concrete poles. On 9/17/09 the contractor installed the first Dynamic Message Sign foundation just North of Hobe Sound and that work will continue for the next few months. The contractor is still optimistic to finish the construction phase in early 2010.

Amount paid to Date: \$17,000,000 out of \$23,713,154 or 71.7%
Contract Time Elapsed: 522 days out of 979 or 53.3%

UPDATES

I-95 Express Buses – Chuck McGinness, AECOM

Palm Tran, Palm Beach County's Transit agency, has started a bus route on I-95 from Martin County to West Palm Beach. There are two buses that operate in the morning and two that operate in the evening. Chuck stated the importance to the incident responders is that the buses are diesel hybrid and have cables that carry 900 volts. It is important to watch what you cut when servicing these types of buses. Chuck stated that Palm Beach County has had training on these types of buses, and Chuck will follow up to see if it can be offered to Martin County. Contact information at Palm Beach County Fire Rescue was sent to Jon Belding at Martin County Fire Rescue.

Distracted Driving Summit – Chuck McGinness, AECOM

Chuck reported that the U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary was sponsoring a program on distracted driving. There will be experts coming from various states to sit as panel members on different seminars. This will be held on September 30 and October 1. The flyer in the packet lists a website that will have the event televised live.

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Road Ranger Program Update – Guy Francese, FDOT

Guy reported that the advertisement for the Treasure Coast Road Ranger program will be posted today 9/17/09 by end of day or early on 9/18/09. Guy will have an email sent out to all TIM teams to inform them of the new contract. The link to the advertisement is <http://vbs.dms.state.fl.us/vbs>. The Treasure Coast Road Ranger Program will have nine Road Rangers and operate Monday – Friday 6am – 10pm. The beats start at the Palm Beach County line and expand to the Brevard County line. There will be no tow trucks just pickup trucks and this allows for more equipment to be carried on the pickup trucks.

Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) Update – Guy Francese, FDOT & Mike McGee, AECOM

Guy reported that the RISC contract officially started August 3rd. Our first RISC activation occurred in Broward County on Friday, September 4th. After RISC activations there is a post incident analysis (PIA) meeting held with all agencies involved to go over the incident and review weaknesses and strengths of the incident.

Mike reviewed the incident that occurred on I-95 northbound and southbound at Hillsboro Blvd. in Broward County. There was a tractor trailer, milk truck, and a pickup truck involved. The tractor trailer ended up crashing through the median wall onto the other side of the interstate. Mike stated that 12 of the 15 agencies involved attended the PIA. Mike stated that notification, communication, and response procedures were coordinated well.

Lessons learned:

- RISC provider trucks to give TMC dispatcher truck number of truck that has arrived on scene.
- Determine a procedure to give alternate route information for RISC provider trucks so they do not become stuck in the traffic leading to the incident.

PRESENTATIONS

Indian River State College / Fire Fighter TIM Training – Michael Dashosh

The public safety complex opened on Friday, September 11, 2009. Approximately 98% of the facility is complete. The main objective of the public safety complex is to train fire fighters, law enforcement, and correctional officers. There is a fire academy that offers specialized courses to train fire fighters in specific situations. The facility also houses a law enforcement academy. Other areas of the public safety complex include a fire tower for training, a live burn prop, gas grill for gas tanker explosions, and a mock village of a city. The main purpose is to learn and practice communication which is vital in the emergency responder field. The public safety complex services four counties, Okeechobee, Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River. Mike also explained there is an emergency operations center (EOC). The EOC assists in operations and training.

Bob Murphy asked if there were Traffic Incident Management classes offered. Mike answered that there are courses offered currently that relate to traffic enforcement, traffic investigations, and various other law enforcement courses.

GM “On star” – Mike McGee, AECOM

Mike gave some background on the conference that he attended in New York back in March. From that conference he received materials on On Star that is useful to police agencies in locating vehicles and possible suspects. Anyone interested in the material can contact Mike McGee at (954) 847-2634 or Michael.mcgee@smartsunguide.com.

Florida’s Turnpike Gas Tanker RISC Call Incident Review – Ed McKissack & Mike Washburn, Florida’s Turnpike

On Monday morning, September 14, 2009 a gas tanker collided with a white van. The incident occurred on Florida’s Turnpike and Okeechobee Rd. The incident shut down both northbound and southbound lanes for several hours. The gasoline tanker was carrying approximately 9,000 gallons of gasoline and about 3,000 gallons spilled onto the roadway and on the side of the road in the grass swales. All power to the light poles was immediately disconnected by FPL. Within 15 minutes of the incident occurring, the RISC contractor was activated. Once the tanker was up righted the lanes were opened within one hour. Overall clean up of the area was a two to three day process.

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Post Incident Analysis – Helena White, Palm Beach SMART SunGuide Center & David Jefferson, Creative Engineering Group



On the night of September 13, and the morning of September 14, there was a construction pattern on I-95 and Okeechobee Rd. Crews were milling and resurfacing the pavement. Construction was scheduled from 9pm to 6am. The construction crew encountered rain through the night that lasted until 5am. Once the rain stopped, the construction crew needed to empty the 3,000 linear foot hole in the road and patch it for motorists to drive across. This lasted until 9am. The traffic backed up for about 5 miles. The construction team kept in contact with the public information office when conditions changed.

Ten Cones of Highway Safety Video – Chuck McGinness, AECOM

This video demonstrates safety precautions when on the scene of traffic incidents. The video shows ways for first responders to be safe and not become part of the incident when working on the interstates.

Training Safety Tip – Chuck McGinness & Mike McGee, AECOM

During a two-month span this summer, 5 people were killed in construction zone crashes in Palm Beach and Martin counties.

In June 2009, two incidents occurred a week apart in Palm Beach County resulting in two highway construction workers being killed and two other workers injured. Both were re-surfacing projects that were taking place at night when traffic volume is low.

- June 19 at 05:08am E/B Forest Hill Blvd. Truck injured worker then struck rear of MOT truck.
- June 26 at 12:30am N/B A1A between Toney Penna Drive and Frederick Small Road. Car killed two workers and injured one.

In August 2009, three teenagers were killed in another nighttime incident in Martin County when their SUV crashed into a front-end loader working in a construction zone at Cove Road and Federal Highway. In this case, the construction workers escaped injury.

These incidents demonstrate the dangers of working after dark on road construction projects. The same dangers are present for traffic incident responders who establish a temporary traffic control area, to stabilize and clear a traffic incident from the travel lanes.

Highway work is a high-risk occupation under the best of circumstances. Considering the added risks associated with night operations, it is imperative that safety issues are identified and addressed to minimize risk to incident responders.

Common safety risks inherent in night operations include:

- Reduced visibility of incident responders
- Vehicle intrusions into the work space
- Incident responders on foot or adjacent to the travel lanes
- Incident responders in danger of being struck by other emergency vehicles within the incident scene.

Visibility

There are two fundamental questions regarding night time response safety issues. Can you see? And, can you be seen? In other words, can you see traffic approaching; and can a driver determine that you are there and can you be seen from their perspective? We assume all drivers can see us, but that is not true under all circumstances.

Safety Vest Requirements

The Worker Visibility Rule (Title 23 CFR part 634) requires all people working within the right of way of Federal-aid highways to wear high-visibility garments that must meet ANSI/ISEA Class 2 apparel requirements. Flaggers must wear Class 3. There is an exemption of firefighters from the requirement to use high-visibility safety apparel, as defined in this rule, when they are exposed to hazardous conditions where the use of such apparel may increase the risk of injury to firefighter personnel (Final rule effective June 15, 2009).

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Scene Lighting

Emergency equipment lighting (red or blue) and emergency flashers (yellow) that are used to give direct warning to the motorist approaching an incident scene is vital. However, redundant lighting such as strobes and additional flashing LEDs add to the amount of lighting the motorist has to interpret to understand what type of incident they are approaching. That additional lighting should be turned off if possible.

Emergency vehicles that are parked as part of the taper, like cones, give a motorist an understanding of the direction in which you are trying to divert traffic. When augmented by cones, flares, and other traffic control devices, it makes the approach to the diversion more understandable to the motorist. Those emergency vehicle downstream of the MOT vehicles, within the scene could reduce roof lighting and leave flashers to identify the vehicle.

Scene lighting such as floodlights on police units, fire apparatus, and paramedic units can be used to illuminate the work area. However, take down roof lighting and wig-wag headlamps that face motorists, should be turned off to eliminate the "dazzle" effect.

Maintenance of Traffic (MOT)

MOT is not something you set up and forget. MOT should always be monitored and updated based on:

- Cones get knocked over and flares burn out. Always monitor the traffic control devices in use. For example: If a cone gets knocked down, approaching drivers may see that as an opening and drive into the incident scene.
- Expansion or constriction of the incident work area. As more law enforcement, fire units, and wreckers arrive; and as the ambulance, fire apparatus, and wrecker leave, adjustments needs to be made to tapers and work area length.
- The opening or closing of lanes or shoulders. A full roadway closure should be modified when one, two, three, or all lanes are opened back to traffic.
- Breaking down the scene in preparation to clear the scene. Reducing the MOT on scene as the scene gets smaller until finally, all remaining devices are recovered.

Placing cones and picking up cones are dangerous times because the MOT taper is not fully established, so drivers may be confused what is happening or where you want them to drive.

Key points:

Always watch traffic whether you are directing traffic or working within the incident scene.

Do not turn your back to traffic at any time. If you are required to conduct a homicide investigation, perform an extrication, or place a hook under a vehicle; and it requires you turn your back to approaching traffic, have someone as a spotter who can watch for you and sound a warning if something goes wrong.

All incident responders should work within the designated (protected by vehicles and coned off) incident scene. No one should walk outside the area that motorists can identify as the work area. Once you step outside the area, motorists do not expect anyone to be there. If you have to step outside the incident scene, stop traffic momentarily or have a spotter go with you. You also have the "rubberneck" factor. If they are looking off at an angle at the scene, to see what is going on, and you are outside that designated area, they may not be looking at you.

Environmental Factors

Dust, smoke, and fog, contribute to reduced night time visibility for motorists. In addition, roadway geometry such as curves or hills can contribute to a delay in a motorist seeing first signs of a highway incident.

Headlight glare and changes from bright light to darkness, make it difficult for a motorist to determine depth perception and to see objects while their eyes adjust. Rain on windshield glass causes a refraction of light from each drop of rain causing a dazzle effect of light which can mask the reflectance of the vest you are wearing. Use extra caution.

Backing Emergency Responder Vehicles

Emergency vehicles moving within the incident scene are also a danger. Some vehicles based on their size and configuration, are difficult to see behind in daylight conditions. During nighttime conditions of darkness, shadows, and flashing emergency lights; it can be dangerous to emergency responders if responder vehicles (paramedic trucks, SIRV trucks, fire apparatus, heavy wreckers, etc) "blind back" within the scene. Like most fire agencies, a spotter should be used to guide a backing vehicle by direct visual contact with the driver and give warning to anyone within the area.

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Open Discussion – All

Action Items:

- Coordinate incident notifications to Vana Kinchen for Indian River and St. Lucie Counties.

Attendees:

Jon	Belding	Martin County Fire Rescue
Etienne	Bourgeois	CAPTEC
Captain John	Cataldo	Florida Highway Patrol
Chris	Cribbs	Florida Highway Patrol
Carlos	Duran	St. Lucie County Fire Rescue
Neelam	Fatima	Transportation Planning Organization
Guy	Francese	FDOT TIM Project Manager
Steve	Gove	FDOT – Motor Carrier Compliance Office
Thomas	Greene	FDOT Treasure Coast Operations
David	Jefferson	Creative Engineering
Yovani	Linares	Checkpoint Recovery and Towing
Richie	Marino	St. Lucie County Traffic Engineering Division
Mike	McGee	AECOM TIM Coordinator
Chuck	McGinness	AECOM TIM Coordinator
Ed	McKissack	Florida's Turnpike
Kurt	Mittwede	St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office
Stan	Moore	Kauff's Towing
Bob	Murphy	AECOM Project Manager
Jesse	Quirian	Port St. Lucie Engineering
Major Luis	Ramil	Florida Highway Patrol
William	Ricks	Tow Masters of Port St. Lucie
James	Stewart	Indian River County Sheriff's Office
Helena	White	Palm Beach ITMS