

# SUNGUIDE® DISSEMINATOR

Florida Department of Transportation's Traffic Engineering and Operations Newsletter

## District Two's RTMC — A Labor of Love

By Peter Vega, FDOT District Two

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Two Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) section has focused on building a multi-agency regional transportation management center (RTMC) for the past eight years. Due to a number of unexpected setbacks (like the recent economic decline and partner agency reorganizations), this project has turned out to be a labor of love that has gone through three iterations of design and site plans. The ITS champion in the Jacksonville area is the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (NFTPO) and their Board realized that the region would never reach its transportation management goals without the construction of a new RTMC. This led the Board to dedicate NFTPO funds to an RTMC project in the amount of \$9.1 million so that operation center staff from the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), FDOT, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, Jacksonville Fire/Rescue, and City of Jacksonville traffic signal staff could coordinate management of traffic and incidents under one roof. Likewise, the design required that space be incorporated for partnering agencies in Clay, St. Johns, and Nassau Counties, who are expected to provide operation's staff during major events and/or evacuations.

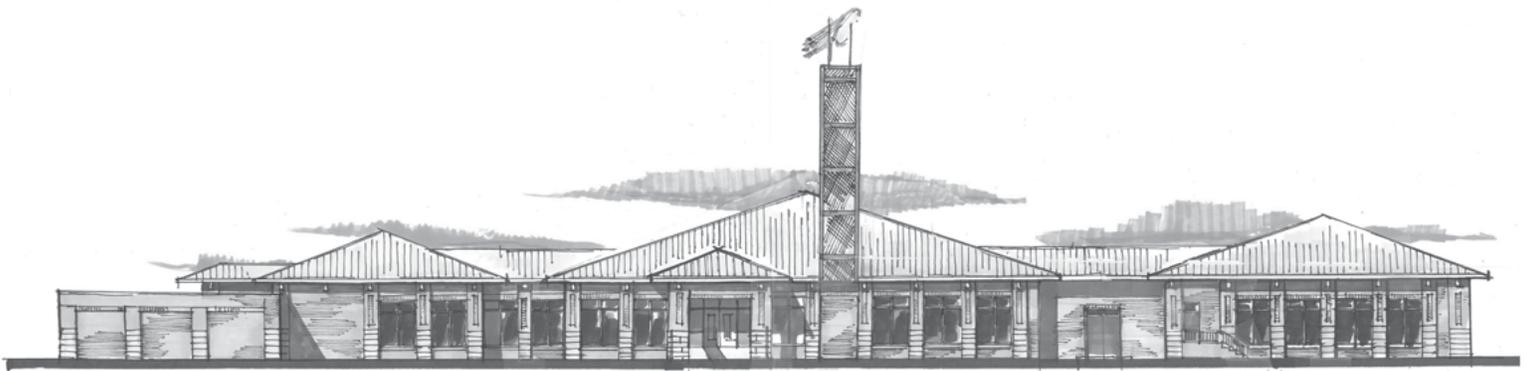


*Jacksonville skyline.*

## Inside This Issue September 2013

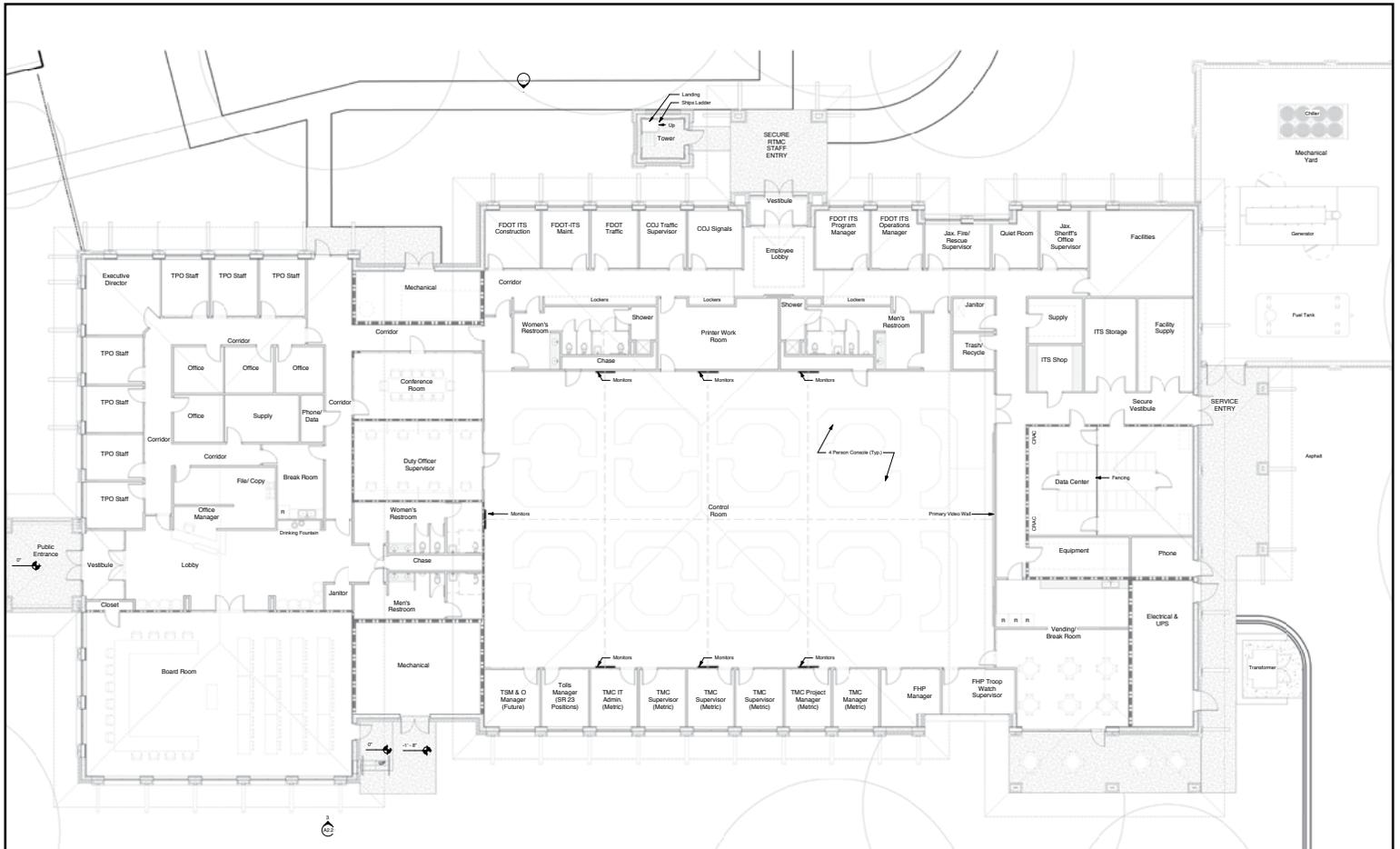
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The *SunGuide Disseminator* is a publication of:  
Florida Department of Transportation  
Traffic Engineering and Operations Office  
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Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450  
(850) 410-5600  
<http://www.dot.state.fl.us>

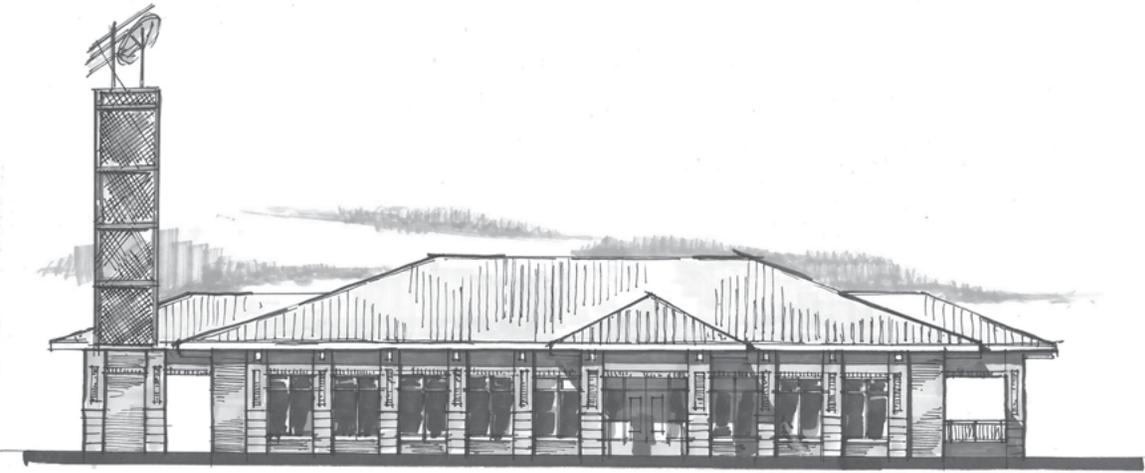


*RTMC north elevation - secure staff entry.*

Having this tremendous diversity of agencies all in the same room will improve communications and information sharing in many ways. One benefit of collocating agencies is the improvement of traffic management because information will be shared in real-time between incident management partners instead of over the phone and computer systems. This will expedite notification and response times because the agencies will be working face-to-face, thereby improving interagency relationships. It will also improve accuracy because the information will be shared through fewer operation personnel, thus reducing the chances of misinterpretation or miscommunication. Accurate information will also be improved due to utilization of multiple RTMC video walls so that staff can get the right information out the first time. In the current situation, where District Two uses satellite dispatch centers, the transportation management center operator has to describe the location of the incident to partnering agencies who must then find the proper camera to view. Sharing video on one floor will enable all agencies in the room to see the location and event on camera at the same time, thus eliminating the possibility of any misunderstanding, while developing a well-coordinated response plan much faster than our current situation. Also, having all the agencies in the same room will improve communications for large scale events, such as evacuations and major events with multi-agency response, during a time when coordination is so vital.



*RTMC floor plan.*



*RTMC west elevation - public entry*

NFTPO is funding the construction of the facility and will be housed in one section of the building. The facility will be located on the State of Florida's Jacksonville campus, just north of downtown where the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Department of Health, Department of Children and Families, and other state agencies currently reside. The building will be approximately 25,000 square feet with the RTMC section taking up about 70 percent of the space. The building's elevations and external features will be consistent with the rest of the buildings on campus. There are three entrances into the facility with public access from the NFTPO section, while two separate entrances will be used for the RTMC, which will be accessed through a secured parking lot.

The RTMC floor will have 32 FHP standard consoles that can be raised or lowered based on the desires of the operator on duty and will be situated in a quad setting that holds groups of four partnering agency staff within one work area. Currently, managerial staff is going through situational arrangements about the best placement of agency personnel in the room to optimize efficiency and communications. Each agency console will have multiple monitors displaying pertinent information for that operator's organization as well as those partnering agencies within the quad. There will also be larger video screens strategically placed on a wall near the consoles that will display information pertinent to the nearest placed agency. These nearby monitors can be used to display a tour of closed-circuit television (CCTV) images throughout their jurisdiction or could be fixed on a certain CCTV image for an incident they are currently handling.

The main video wall will be located on the east wall of the RTMC floor. This video wall will be used on a daily basis to display news, weather information, the SunGuide® software

map, FHP computer-aided dispatch, WebEOC® information, and CCTV images of known bottleneck areas in the region. The size of this main video wall will be approximately 28 feet by 10 feet and will cover nearly 30 percent of the east wall space. Having this type wall will prove invaluable during major events, such as evacuations, hazardous material emergencies, and other large scale incidents. The multiple video walls will be controlled using the ACTIVUE software solution that can

also provide relevant information through mobile equipment in real-time to incident responders in the field.

The current RTMC design incorporates the latest energy saving technologies available. The plan is to have the entire facility equipped with light-emitting diode (LED) fixtures and a goal of saving at least 30 percent a year in electric utility usage. A recent visit to the Jacksonville Museum of Science and History has the team confident that this can be achieved since over one year ago they converted 99.5 percent of their space to LED and are saving nearly \$50,000 annually in utility bills after the conversion. The heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system will incorporate chilled beam cooling due to the benefits gained in the reduction of humidity and site-specific response. By choosing this system, we hope to save another \$50,000 per year in utility bills due to the energy efficiency of this type system.

The North Florida RTMC project is currently in the design phase and construction is expected to begin in late 2013 or early 2014. The project is being designed by Clemons-Rutherford and the construction management at risk firm is Charles Perry & Partners. The Department of Management Services is assisting with project management and FDOT is providing technical assistance. The anticipated schedule for completion of construction is 10 to 12 months so the move-in date is anticipated to be sometime in late 2014. It is expected that full operation of the facility will begin in January 2015.

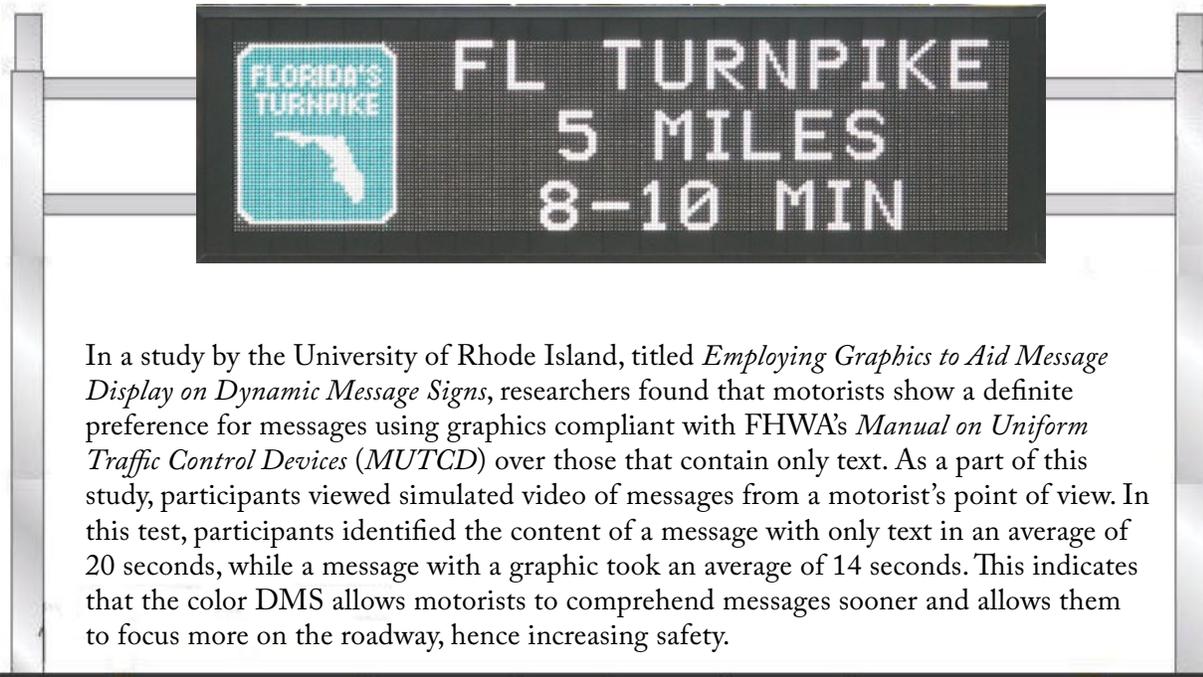
For information, please contact Mr. Vega at (904) 360-5463 or e-mail to Peter.Vega@dot.state.fl.us.

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# Benefits of Color Dynamic Message Signs and Their Integration into SunGuide® Software

By Brian Ritchson, MCG

Color dynamic message signs (DMS) have significant benefits over traditional single-color (amber) DMSs. Two of these benefits are: increased ease of message recognition and the ability to convey additional information using pictures that traditionally cannot be conveyed due to space restrictions.



In a study by the University of Rhode Island, titled *Employing Graphics to Aid Message Display on Dynamic Message Signs*, researchers found that motorists show a definite preference for messages using graphics compliant with FHWA's *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)* over those that contain only text. As a part of this study, participants viewed simulated video of messages from a motorist's point of view. In this test, participants identified the content of a message with only text in an average of 20 seconds, while a message with a graphic took an average of 14 seconds. This indicates that the color DMS allows motorists to comprehend messages sooner and allows them to focus more on the roadway, hence increasing safety.

Color DMSs allow operators at transportation management centers (TMC) to format DMS messages differently by adding graphics. For example, when displaying travel times, TMC staff can use roadway shields to represent the current roadway and the travel time to a destination.

In order to display graphics on DMSs, color resolution is critical. Color resolution was not crucial with single-color DMSs as they only displayed text. However, with graphics on DMSs, the resolution plays a significant role in the type of DMS used. One of the common images displayed on the DMS is the roadway shield. It is important to ensure that the DMS resolution is sufficient to capture details on the shield. If the DMS resolution is not high enough, the image will not be easy to discern and could result in the driver spending more time to understand the information being conveyed through the graphics.

SunGuide® software, Florida's statewide advanced traffic management software, has been modified to support color DMSs. One of the key modifications is software compliance with the most recent version of National Transportation Communications for ITS Protocol (NTCIP). The software also supports creating templates for commonly occurring event types so that TMC staff do not have to design messages for each event. This helps to disseminate information quicker and save time.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has been deploying intelligent transportation systems for several years and some of the DMSs are reaching end-of-life. FDOT will have to replace the existing DMSs and the color DMS will be an alternative for consideration. A few regions in Florida, including Orlando, Fort Lauderdale, and Miami are deploying color DMSs.

For information, please contact Mr. Ritchson at (850) 410-5579 or email to [Brian.Ritchson@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Brian.Ritchson@dot.state.fl.us).

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# District Four Hosts Successful SHRP 2 Training Course

By Gaetano Francese, FDOT District Four

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Four Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Team had the privilege of hosting the training presentation of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP 2). District Four conducted four, four-hour courses with more than 125 attendees from fire rescue, law enforcement, and FDOT Operations and Maintenance. District Four learned about the program's principles and were instructed on how to conduct these classes after participating in FHWA's two-day "Train the Trainer" Program last summer.

The training initiative is being conducted under a Memorandum of Understanding with FHWA and the

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. SHRP 2 is focused on addressing the needs of the nation's highways regarding road safety, traffic congestion, and infrastructure rehabilitation. The course provides a foundation of best practices from across the nation that can be used across all responder disciplines to promote mutual understanding and awareness, and lead to increased responder and public safety and effective communications.

This four-hour course was developed to equip incident responders with a set of shared, core competencies to improve response in accordance with the goals of the National Unified Goal for TIM, whose three stated objectives include: 1) responder safety; 2) safe, quick clearance; and 3) prompt, reliable incident communications.

This course was developed as a single, interdisciplinary course that introduces, teaches, and provides participants with hands on, scenario-based opportunities to acquire and demonstrate common, core competencies among multi-disciplinary responder types.

Developments in research and technology—such as advanced materials, new data collection technologies, communications, technology, and human factors science—offer an opportunity to improve the safety and reliability of the nation's highway system. In establishing SHRP 2, Congress recognized that breakthrough resolution of some significant problems requires concentrated resources over a short time frame. SHRP 2's intense, large-scale focus, requiring the integration of multiple fields of research and technology, is fundamentally different from the broad, mission-oriented, discipline-based research programs that have been the mainstay of the highway industry for half a century.

For information, please contact Mr. Francese at (954) 847-2785 or email to [Gaetano.Francese@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Gaetano.Francese@dot.state.fl.us).



*District Four SHRP 2 training.*

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# District Six: Summer at the SunGuide TMC!

By Javier Rodriguez, FDOT District Six

The Florida Department of Transportation District Six Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Program enjoyed an eventful summer this year. The office hosted a series of events to raise the public's awareness about the program's latest services and initiatives.

management. They also talked about future trends in transportation and about the initiatives being assessed to mitigate forecasted demands.

The events hosted by TMC staff are in line with the District's goal to advance the ITS Program's mission – *to enhance the safety, security, and efficiency of Florida's transportation system through the implementation of interoperable ITS technology in support of local, regional, and statewide mobility.* These events



*District Six SunGuide TMC.*

District Six partnered with members of the media, universities, and industry professionals to help promote the ITS Program. They kicked off the summer with a five-series tour for the Florida International University's student prep program. The series hosted a total of 125 students who were part of the university's six-week engineering intensive program. Students learned about the importance of using technology in traffic management as well as the innovative systems being developed to sustain Florida's transportation infrastructure today and in the future.

help raise awareness about the service benefits to all sectors of the general public. Increased understanding about our services helps drivers realize the importance of our program and sets the ground for future growth. District Six plans to continue similar activities throughout the upcoming fall season.

For information, please contact Mr. Rodriguez at (305) 407-5341 or e-mail to [Javier.Rodriguez2@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Javier.Rodriguez2@dot.state.fl.us).

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During this same period, the District also hosted three media events where journalists from local television stations were invited to the SunGuide® Transportation Management Center (TMC). The stations covered everything from "Back-to-School" stories, Road Ranger ride-a-longs, and general interest news. The pieces are being aired through the summer months to help inform drivers of the free resources available that will ease their summer travels and daily commutes.

Lastly, District Six also hosted a tour for the Florida Transportation Commission. TMC management led discussions about general program initiatives with the eight-member commission. They focused on the success of multi-modal projects, such as 95 Express, as well as on the importance of transit as a technique in congestion



*District Six gives Back to School Safety Tips to Drivers at the SunGuide TMC.*

# Exploring Safety

By Joseph Santos, FDOT Safety Office



In previous newsletters, I shared a general overview of national and state transportation safety efforts with you. The efforts mentioned included national efforts through legislation efforts (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century – MAP-21) and state efforts through the *Florida Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)*. The efforts of the *SHSP* bring together all of Florida's safety partners to focus on the 4Es (engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency medical services) of safety and includes the following emphasis areas: aggressive driving, intersection crashes, vulnerable road users (pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists), lane departure crashes, impaired driving, at-risk drivers (aging road users and teens), distracted driving, and traffic data. This month I would like to highlight some key excerpts from the 2012 *SHSP* on At-Risk Drivers – Teen Drivers.

*At-Risk Drivers, comprised of aging road users and teen drivers, is a new emphasis area for 2012. For data purposes in this emphasis area, aging road users are defined as 65-year-olds and older and teen drivers are 15- to 19-year-olds. Because of the unique challenges and specific needs of these two age groups, each group is discussed individually in the SHSP.*

*Motor vehicle crashes are the number one killer of teens. More teens die in crashes than the next three leading causes of death – homicide, suicide, and disease – combined. Motor vehicle crashes involving teen drivers (15- to 19-year-olds) not only kill an average of 11 teens each day, they also kill other drivers and pedestrians. Florida teen driver involved fatalities and serious injuries declined from 5,749 in 2006 to 3,313 in 2010. Over this five-year period, a total of 1,898 people died in teen driver involved crashes, and 20,644 were seriously injured. Male teen drivers accounted for nearly 60 percent of the fatalities and serious injuries from 2006 to 2010. Most of the fatal and serious injury crashes involving teen drivers occur in the spring months and peak in March.*

*Florida's Teen Safe Driving Coalition (FTSDC), with support from the National Safety Council (NSC) and The Allstate Foundation, was formed in 2011 to bring together safety and traffic practitioners, state and local officials, public health practitioners, injury prevention groups, teen and parent leaders, and others to implement programs that reduce the number of teens killed or injured in crashes. As a part of the At-Risk Drivers Emphasis Area, the FTSDC developed their strategic plan during the SHSP update process. The Coalition identified three goals: enhance teen safe driving laws and regulations, instill safe driving attitudes and behaviors among teen drivers, and expand the network of concerned individuals to build recognition and awareness as it relates to teen driver safety and support the FTSDC.*

*The FTSDC developed a conference guidebook for youth to create and implement their own teen safe driving action plans in their schools and communities. The FTSDC Youth Leadership Summit was identified as a best practice by the NSC and is being implemented in the nine other states with coalitions. Allstate and the NSC identified May as a youth teen safe driving awareness month. The FTSDC created a program called "Erase Teen Crashes" which 45 schools implemented during the first year. The program also was identified as a best practice and is being implemented in nine other states with a teen coalition*

*Florida's Teen Safe Driving Strategic Plan focuses on three emphasis areas, referred to as goals in the Plan, which are designed to impact teen driving fatalities and injuries. Following is an overview of the three emphasis areas in the Teen Driving Strategic Plan:*

- *Expand the network of concerned individuals to build recognition and awareness as it relates to teen driver safety and supports the Florida Teen Safe Driving Coalition;*
- *Create a safe driving culture for teen drivers through outreach and education; and*
- *Support initiatives that enhance safe teen driving related traffic laws and regulations*

The lead "E" selected for the At-Risk Drivers Emphasis Area to ensure the action plan is focused and stays on track is **Education**. More information concerning the Florida *SHSP* can be found online at <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/safety/SHSP2012/SHSP-2012.shtm>.

In my next article, I will cover the other component of the *SHSP* emphasis areas – at-risk drivers - aging road users.

For information, please contact Mr. Santos at (850) 245-1502 or e-mail to [Joseph.Santos@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Joseph.Santos@dot.state.fl.us).



## ITS Florida: Call for Board of Directors Nominations

ITS Florida is calling for recommendations for officer and director-at-large positions on the Board of Directors (Board). The current ITS Florida Board can be viewed at <http://itsflorida.org/about-us/board-committees/>.

Traditionally, officers “move up the ladder.” This year, Gregg Letts will run for President; Erika Birosak will run for Vice President; and Sara Calhoun will run for Secretary. The Treasurer position is open for nominations.

In addition to the officers, three director-at-large positions are open for nominations; these are balanced between public and private.

Positions that need to be filled for calendar year 2014 in this election are:

- President and Chairman of the Board (1-year term)
- Vice President (one-year term)
- Secretary (one-year term)
- Treasurer (one-year term)
- Directors-at-Large (three openings, each for a two-year term)

All ITS Florida members are invited to recommend potential candidates for these positions. Recommendations must come from a representative of an ITS Florida member organization in good standing and, of course, the recommended individual must be employed by an active member of ITS Florida. Names of ITS Florida members are available at <http://itsflorida.org/about-us/current-members/>. Self-recommendations are acceptable. To make a recommendation, complete the online form at <http://fs16.formsite.com/ITSFlorida/Nomination/index.html> and return it with a biographical sketch and vision statement no later than September 30, 2013.

Elections will be held by e-mail in October/November, with ballots sent to the primary representative of each member organization.

The by-laws of ITS Florida require a balance on the Board in terms of sector of employment and ITS America membership. Accordingly, the Nominating Committee requests that you identify the affiliation (company) of the nominee as a public agency, private enterprise, or academic group, and ITS America membership status.

The Nominating Committee actually nominates the slate of candidates for the Board's approval, and the Committee has the right to nominate its own candidates. A large number of candidates for any office is undesirable. Thus, it is possible that not all persons recommended will be nominated. The Board is always interested in "new blood," so we seek recommendations to diversify the Board membership. In evaluating potential candidates, the Committee considers potential candidates' past service to ITS Florida, ITS America, or even other state chapters, if recently moved to Florida. The Committee considers contributions to the intelligent transportation systems (ITS) profession as well as their sector of the ITS industry and ITS America membership, which is desired, but not required.

Please provide the following, in electronic format (preferably Microsoft Word) by September 30:

- Completed recommendation form; and
- Full name of the individual and other information on the form, which must be accompanied by a brief (half page maximum) biographical sketch, including a brief statement of the individual's expectations and vision for fulfilling his/her leadership role with ITS Florida, if elected to the position. Graphics or special formatting are not allowed; use 1" margins and font size of 12.

These statements will be emailed to the membership along with the ballot. If nominated candidates wish to communicate with the membership separately, ITS Florida will permit use of the Listserv. Any mailed communication will be at the candidate's expense.

Candidates should keep in mind that the ITS Florida Board of Directors will meet in person four to six times in 2014, with possibly four to six additional meetings by teleconference. Officers and directors are expected to participate actively in these meetings, and other assigned committee and task force activities during the course of the year. Potential nominees should ensure that their employer is willing to support the time commitment and cover travel expenses, as appropriate.



If you have any questions, please feel free to email [ITSFlorida@ITSFlorida.org](mailto:ITSFlorida@ITSFlorida.org) or contact any member of the Board listed on the web site.

Thank you for supporting ITS Florida. We look forward to hearing from you and hope that you will consider serving on the ITS Florida Board in 2014.

If you have any questions or wish to provide an article to ITS Florida, please contact Sandy Beck at [itsflorida@itsflorida.com](mailto:itsflorida@itsflorida.com).

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# Editorial Corner: The TERL - On a Mission to be ISO-Compliant

By Armelle Burleson, Atkins

ISO is short for International Organization for Standardization. This organization is headquartered in Switzerland and develops international standards widely used across the world including the United States. Readers with working experience in product manufacturing or quality assurance are most likely familiar with the better known ISO standard called “ISO 9001.” This standard is used by manufacturers and consists of requirements for their quality management systems. Companies use this standard to save time and cost, improve operational efficiency in the manufacturing environment, reduce liability, and ultimately improve customer satisfaction. Benefits to customers include:

- Improved product quality and service,
- On-time delivery,
- Right the first time attitude, and
- Fewer returned products and complaints.

Which brings up the Vendor Quality Assurance (QA) Program at the Florida Department of Transportation’s (FDOT) Traffic Engineering and Research Laboratory (TERL) for vendors seeking listing (or continued) of their products on Florida’s Approved Product List (APL). More than a decade ago, experiencing fabrication defects and variations in quality of products submitted for APL evaluation, the TERL realized the need for APL vendors to implement these ISO 9001 best practices. Although ISO 9001 certification is not required, the TERL began requiring compliance to selected clauses of the ISO 9001 standard in its Vendor QA Program. Some organizations are reluctant to implement the ISO 9001 standard because they perceive the procedural documentation development to be too burdensome. Yet, for example, well-defined and documented procedures improve the consistency of output, procedures ensure corrective action is taken whenever defects occur (and preferably, before defects leave the factory).

This brings up the TERL’s mission to be ISO-compliant for its own product certification services. Why only require ISO best practices of APL vendors? Why not lead by example? This is exactly what the TERL has set out to do. Benefits to the TERL and its customers/partners are similar to those previously described. The TERL’s ISO compliance effort is essentially a continuous improvement effort. It

is aligned with FDOT’s mission of consistency, predictability, and reliability, and demonstrates a strong commitment to the safety of the travelling public. Although the TERL could implement the same generic quality standard as manufacturers (ISO 9001 with exclusions), the standard called “ISO 17065” is better suited for its APL product certification operations. ISO 17065 is used by product certification bodies to demonstrate that they are competent, impartial, and reliable. This standard was developed specifically to give guidance to product certification bodies on both quality management and other requirements for the proper operation of a certification body. ISO 17065 and ISO 9001 have common quality management system requirements. ISO 17065 addresses certification specific issues such as:

- Impartiality of certification activities and mechanism for safeguarding impartiality,
- Technical competence and ethical behavior of personnel, and
- Use of required processes for (a) application review, (b) evaluation, (c) independent review of all information, (d) certification decision, (e) re-certification under revised standards, (f) reducing/suspending/withdrawing certification, and (g) handling complaints/appeals.

For comparison, FDOT’s State Materials Office is certified to the “ISO 17025” standard. ISO 17025 is a quality management system standard specific to product testing laboratories and has common requirements with ISO 17065. Organizations certified to ISO 17025 have demonstrated competence in product testing.

At this time, all required ISO 17065 procedural documentation is in place and in various stages of implementation at TERL. This includes a *Quality Manual* documenting operational policies, associated procedures, forms, and a *Product Certification Handbook* available online for vendors and end-users ([http://www.dot.state.fl.us/trafficoperations/Traf\\_Sys/TERL-PCH.shtm](http://www.dot.state.fl.us/trafficoperations/Traf_Sys/TERL-PCH.shtm)).

For information, please contact Ms. Burleson at (850) 921-7330 or e-mail to [Armelle.Burleson@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Armelle.Burleson@dot.state.fl.us).

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# Announcements

## ITS Florida TechForum2013



Make plans to attend the ITS Florida TechForum2013 being held on October 9-11, 2013, at the Rosen Shingle Creek in Orlando. This is ITS Florida's largest event of the year and one you won't want to miss. It combines the ITS Tecg Forum training

with the ITS Florida Annual Meeting/Awards Banquet, ITS Florida Board Meeting, and the United States Department of Transportation's intelligent transportation systems training course, Connected Vehicles 101.

For more information and to register for this conference, visit ITS Florida's web site at <http://itsflorida.org/technical-conference-2013/>.

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