

# FINAL MEETING MINUTES

## Traffic Incident Management Team Meeting - 95 Corridor

<b>Date/Time:</b>	February 19, 2025		10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
<b>Location:</b>	Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) North Dade Maintenance Crew Room 1773 NE 205 Street, Miami, Florida, 33179		
<b>Hosts:</b>	Nikolas Muriel and Don Avery		
<b>Attendees:</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
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### 1. Purpose of Meeting

This Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Team 95 Corridor meeting serves as a discussion platform for agencies impacted by Florida Department of Transportation District Six's roadways along the eastern region of Miami-Dade County, including I-95, 95 Express, I-195/Julia Tuttle Causeway, I-395, and the MacArthur Causeway. This provides local fire-rescue, law enforcement, asset maintenance, Florida Highway Patrol, and other agencies the opportunity to coordinate and share information regarding special events, construction projects, activities, initiatives, and issues specific to the area.

### 2. TIM Updates

#### FDOT District Six

Incident Management Program Manager, Nikolas Muriel, welcomed attendees to the meeting and requested everyone to introduce themselves. Nikolas provided the purpose of the meeting related to incident management in the eastern region of Miami-Dade County.

Nikolas started his update by highlighting the key topics for this year's 95 Corridor meeting.

- Special Events

- Transportation Management Center
- Responder Safety
- Rapid Incident Scene Clearance

Nikolas identified upcoming special events taking place in Miami-Dade County. These events typically cause localized increase in traffic.

- South Beach Wine & Food Festival - February 20-23, 2025
- 305 Half Marathon & 5k - March 2, 2025
- Calle Ocho Music Festival - March 9, 2025
- Miami Open 2025 - March 16-30, 2025
- Ultra Music Festival - March 28-30, 2025
- Miami Grand Prix - May 2-4, 2025
- Jazz In The Gardens - March 8-9, 2025
- Rolling Loud Festival - TBA
- Miami Dolphins Games - Beginning August 2025
- Miami Hurricanes Games - Beginning September 2025
- FIFA Club World Cup 2025 - June 14, 16, 18, 20, 23, 25, 29 and July 1
- FIFA World Cup 2026 - June 11-19, 2026 (Notable mentions the Quarterfinal and Bronze Final matches)

Spring Break season was discussed, with closures being considered for both Miami Beach and the entertainment districts. The City of Miami Beach plans lane closures on the causeways for the weekends of March 7-9 (MacArthur Causeway only), March 14-16, and March 21-23. Nikolas highlighted the City of Miami Beach Spring break initiative, 'Reality Check,' which aims to reduce public congestion by focusing on several key objectives.

Nikolas noted that the District Six TMC celebrated its 20-year anniversary and presented a video celebrating the history of the TMC. The video highlighted numerous achievements and advancements since 2004. The TMC has managed 863,000 traffic events, assisted with 948,000 road ranger calls, and reduced incident clearance times by 40%. Additionally, the TMC has introduced a range of innovative projects, including:

- First managed lanes project in the state, 95 Express
- Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) program
- Monroe County Traffic Signals Systems Operations and Maintenance
- First district connected vehicles project, Keys COAST (Connecting Overseas to Advance Safe Travel)
- Bridge Notification System
- Wrong Way Driving Detection Systems

The collective efforts of the TMC have enhanced driver safety and increased the efficiency of our roadways.

Nikolas presented a Roadway Clearance Time (RCT) graph that tracked average clearance times from 2008 to 2024. He noted that, while the historical RCT has been under the 50-minute baseline from 2008, the trend has been increasing over the past five years. Nikolas explored potential factors contributing to this rise in clearance times, beginning with a higher number of traffic events. A graph illustrated the annual number of events, revealing an increase in lane blockage incidents between 2023 and 2024, making it the second highest in the past decade. Increased traffic volume could also be a factor. The TMC is looking to see if more incident management resources are needed and/or strategic changes to patrol beats and staging areas. Construction projects in the region could increase traffic congestion and alter traffic patterns. More complex recoveries now necessitate RISC activations for clearance. Fatalities over the past 5 years were reviewed. There was a rise in fatalities (37) in 2024 compared to (20) in 2023. These events often result in longer clearance times due to the nature of the incident and potential post-event investigations that close portions of the highway. Nikolas then opened the floor to further suggestions, asking if anyone could identify other factors that might have contributed to increased clearance times. Vladimir Buitrago suggested the growing population in South Florida, driven by an influx of families, could be a contributing factor. Nik said the RCT will be analyzed in the coming months.

Nikolas showed an example of adjusting incident management resources with the new I-195/I-395 beat. This beat features a pickup truck equipped with necessary tools and fuel. Since February 2023, the I-195/I-395 beat has handled 3,555 events and 5,344 activities. Building on the success of this initiative, the TMC introduced the I-75/SR 826 beat, also equipped with a pickup truck and essential resources. This new beat has further improved clearance times and helped bridge the gap left by the relocation of the I-75 flatbed to support the GGI project

Don Avery presented on the topic of Wrong-Way Detection Systems (WWDS), noting that 14 detection devices are currently operational. FDOT is installing WWDS in four phases. Phase 2 has 25 additional locations under construction, with an estimated completion date of December 2025. Phase 3 was just awarded including 15 WWDS with completion expected in 2026. Phase 4 is in the concept development phase. Some of the WWDS have been included in ongoing construction projects. Ultimately there will be a total of 95 WWDS installed along off-ramps throughout Miami-Dade County. Luis Enrich inquired whether the Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) auto-populate when the Wrong-Way Detection system sends a notification. Don explained that the notifications are sent to operators at the TMC, who then manage the event and update the DMS accordingly. Ralph asked if all the Wrong-Way Driving Detection systems are from Tapco. Don clarified that 4 devices are Tapco, while the remainder are from GovComm. Barbara Swan raised concern about false alerts and which manufacturer is more reliable. Don said both have their pros and cons. Don mentioned that GovComm has a device with LIDAR and a demonstration is planned in the coming months.

Nikolas highlighted Crash Responder Safety Week, which took place from November 18-22, 2024. FDOT Central Office conducted Road Ranger interviews and ride-alongs to share daily experiences on the roadway through social media posts. The initiative featured multiple videos each day to raise safety awareness for first responders. One of the videos was presented at the meeting and featured an interview with Road Ranger Julian Wright, who urged motorists to slow down when approaching traffic incidents to ensure the safety of those on scene.

Nikolas outlined recent safety measures implemented by the TMC. Rear-facing red lights have been installed on all Road Ranger and Incident Response Vehicles (IRV), with positive feedback indicating that motorists are noticing the lights and moving over. Sequential flares have also been introduced to improve visibility and provide multiple lighting modes to encourage safer traffic merging. Each Road Ranger and IRV truck is equipped with 20 sequential flares. Wearable lights have been provided to IRV Operators to enhance visibility at night; these lights can be attached to the chest, shoulder, or hat.

Nikolas said this year's TMC annual workshop, which promotes team building among TMC Operators, Road Rangers, and IRV Operators, will take place in April. These team collaborations have become an annual event to foster discussion and the development of new ideas to improve incident management.

Nikolas discussed the annual Move Over press conference held in Davie on January 23, 2025. Nikolas recalled an incident in Broward County that tragically resulted in the fatality of a FDOT District Four Road Ranger on New Year's Day. FHP hosted this multi-agency news conference to urge motorists to adhere to the Move Over Law.

Nikolas presented graphs showing the number of RISC events and the monthly average performance over the past 10 years. On October 16, 2024, new RISC contracts with new incentive plans were implemented. The new contract provides vendors with additional incentives to continue quick mobilization and clearance.

Nik reviewed a significant RISC event which occurred on Sunday, September 1, 2024, on southbound I-95 before NW 103<sup>rd</sup> Street involving an overturned fuel tanker with a ruptured tank and approximately 500 gallons of fuel spilled onto the roadway. Downtown Towing arrived on the scene to remove the tanker from the highway. This complex recovery required assistance from Cliff Berry Inc. to assist with the fuel cleanup. The entire event lasted 11 hours, due to the need to drain the fuel tanker and clean the roadway. In response to this incident, Cliff Berry Inc. organized a multi-agency training program focused on improving communication and coordination among agencies on scene. During the training, Cliff Berry Inc. conducted a mock event with a fuel tanker. Nikolas showed pictures from the mock event.

Nikolas took the opportunity to introduce Fabian Arizmendi as the new Incident Management Coordinator.

### **Golden Glades Interchange (GGI) Enhancement Project**

Sergies Duarte started his update by noting the one-year anniversary of the project in March. The project schedule spans from March 2024 to the Fall of 2031, with a projected cost of \$908 million. Sergies emphasized that the GGI project is a key component of the 'Moving Florida Forward Infrastructure Initiative,' aimed at ensuring the state's transportation infrastructure meets the needs of both current and future residents.

The project limits were presented along with the project benefits. The GGI Project follows the FDOT Compass that includes the following key points:

- Communities: Constructing 32 new bridges to improve regional mobility and strengthen connections between communities.
- Safety: Upgrading lighting and enhancing emergency access with the addition of new lanes and ramps.
- Resiliency: Installing 50,000 feet of new drainage pipes to improve infrastructure and extend the lifespan of facilities.
- Supply Chain: Acting as a key freight connector with direct access to South Florida's seaports and airports.
- Technology: Implementing wrong-way detection systems and installing 72 traffic monitoring cameras.
- Workforce Development: Creating job opportunities during construction and boosting economic activity.

Ralph asked if the District Six Road Rangers supplementing the GGI area also assist with incidents on the Turnpike Spur within the project limits. Nikolas responded that the Road Rangers are 'Dispatch Only' for the section of highway between the Turnpike and FDOT District Six within the construction limits.

The first bridge to be completed will provide a direct connection from SR 826 eastbound to I-95 northbound. Recently, the steel beams for this bridge were installed. The next phase involves creating a direct connection between the 95 Express and Florida's Turnpike. Sergies also discussed plans to widen I-95 in the NW 151<sup>st</sup> Street area and the installation of a new toll gantry between Opa Locka Boulevard and NW 135<sup>th</sup> Street.

Don noted the amount of progress achieved in just one year. Sergies responded that the CEI and contractor are working aggressively with the goal of completing the project ahead of the projected schedule.

Elijah Pestana asked about the public information outreach. Sergies highlighted the various ways they notify the public, including setting up community pop-up events at local businesses, hosting community presentations, providing electronic project updates, and maintaining a website, [Go-GGi.com](http://Go-GGi.com), among others. Sergies was proud to share that this is the first FDOT project with its own X account @GoGGI\_FDOT

Drone footage was shown, highlighting the progress of the project, including the steel beams that have been installed for the SR 826 eastbound to I-95 northbound connection. Barbara asked if drones were used for bridge inspections. Sergies explained that some of the CEIs use drones not only to inspect the bridges but also to document the project's progress.

Sergies concluded the presentation.

Oscar Gonzalez with the I-395/SR 836/I-95 Design-Build Project was scheduled to give an update on the project but was called away for an emergency.

### 3. Open Discussion Items

Pedro Ruiz inquired about the Road Rangers and FHP patrolling the GGI project limits. Are these resources provided by the contractor? Nikolas responded that the Road Rangers are provided by FDOT under the existing Road Ranger contract. Raj Rangaswamy elaborated, explaining that having the TMC monitor the roadways directly is more efficient than contacting the GGI contractors for incidents. Off-duty FHP officers are used in construction zones. Pedro expressed interest in collaborating with FDOT District Six to better understand how the contracts are structured between Road Rangers and construction contractors. Don discussed the use of FHP Hireback for the Express Lanes and construction projects.

### 4. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjourned. All presentations are available on the SunGuide.info website (<https://sunguide.info/incident-management-service/tim-team/tim-meetings/>).