



SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL ITS COALITION

February 2, 2005 Meeting Minutes

DATE: Wednesday, February 2, 2005

TIME: 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm

PLACE: Florida Department of Transportation District 4 / Broward County Traffic Engineering Transportation Management Center(TMC) Conference Room
2300 West Commercial Boulevard
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309

MEMBERS PRESENT: See Attached List

INTRODUCTION OF ATTENDEES

Mr. Jesus Martinez of the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) District VI ITS office called the meeting to order. Self-introductions for all attendees followed. Mr. Girish Kumar of the HNTB Corporation distributed the handouts that included a copy of the Current Goals and Objectives, December 2004 Coalition Meeting Minutes and sign-in sheet. He also requested all attendees to sign the February sign-in sheet. He asked if there were any comments on the December 1, 2004 meeting minutes. No comments were offered, and Girish added that none had been received via email either prior to the meeting.

EXECUTIVE SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Jesus Martinez began the Executive Sub-committee report stating that the Sub-committee had met on January 12. He reported that a unique URL was being created for the 511 service in South Florida. The URL, www.511southflorida.com, which is expected to be up by next month, should offer the same ease of use as the similar 511 website serving the Tampa Bay area.

He also explained that Smart Route Systems (SRS) was working towards adding the SunGuide logo to all television broadcast video feeds which are currently being provided by FDOT and MDX cameras to local news programs. The benefits of adding these logos are twofold: they will improve the credibility of the images and will increase exposure of the SunGuide service.

Next he reported that while the current contract with SRS ends in November 2005, a new contract extending their service was being reviewed. Mr. Martinez told the group that Mr. James Murphy has been hired by SRS and has put together a marketing plan for 2005. He also stated that transit information will be added to the 511 service soon.

Lastly, Mr. Martinez brought up an issue concerning the dispatching of Road Rangers. At the present time, Road Ranger dispatching must be handled through the TMC's or through *FHP, but in the future there may be a 1-800 phone number for drivers to request assistance.

TECHNICAL SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Ivan del Campo of the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority (MDX) and chair of the technical sub-committee began this portion of the meeting by giving a presentation titled *Real Time Video Sharing Over the Internet*. This presentation focused on two possible means of sharing video feeds over the internet. The first of these methods would be used to provide real time streaming video feeds to emergency agencies, such as police and fire departments, as well as to commercial businesses. The second possible use would be to provide the general public a video "tour" of a selected roadway over the internet that would refresh every three to five seconds. This is expected to be a significant improvement over the current system which only offers a static image along one point of a roadway which refreshes every two minutes. He also went on by stating that there is currently a strong demand for this type of information. This demand could provide a source of revenue which would serve as a means of financing the hardware improvements required to offer such a product. Currently, a similar system is being employed by CALTRAN. A trial of this system is currently underway through the joint effort of FDOT



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District 6 and MDX. Mr. Martinez stated that if this pilot program is successful, changes would be made to the existing SRS website to provide video streaming.

OPERATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Steve Corbin of FDOT District 4 and chair of this sub-committee gave a summary of the Southeast Florida Regional TMC Operations Committee (SEFRTOC) activities. He announced that he gave a presentation at the recent Transpo2004 conference in Jacksonville, and that 50 electronic and hard copies of the SOG were distributed. He continued with a discussion on the Amber Alert system by stating that it was a big issue in South Florida right now and that FDOT's Central Office was trying to integrate a satellite system into all regional TMC's. He also stated that this program should take advantage of all 200 plus miles of Florida's Turnpike, by issuing the alerts not just regionally, but throughout the full length of the facility. Mr. Martinez (FDOT) raised a problem regarding this program by stating that when these alerts are issued, traffic congestion upstream of the DMS boards increases dramatically while drivers slow their vehicles to read the message. Mr. Martinez also stated that when the alerts are issued, they are only to be posted for several hours, but that many times they are displayed for extended periods. The group felt that better coordination was necessary to prevent unwanted traffic problems as a result of these alerts.

Mr. Corbin continued his presentation by acknowledging that District 6 and Palm Beach County have provided the Broward/D4 TMC with video feeds from their areas, and he also added that the Turnpike would be providing their feeds in the near future. He also requested that the ITS equipment coverage maps be updated.

Mr. Corbin finished his presentation with a discussion on the upcoming SunGuide computer software. He acknowledged that deployment of the initial version of the software was being delayed as a result of the findings at a recent test session in San Antonio, Texas. He further explained some of the problems being encountered regarding computer software programming. One of the lessons learned from the ongoing testing of the software in District 4 was that programmers needed to work closely with the end users. This would facilitate the delivery of a functionality as intended by the operators, rather than them leaving it up to a programmers interpretation of terminology unique to their trade.

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES/PROJECT UPDATE

REGIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Mr. Kumar asked the representatives of the group's various subcommittees if they were in need of assistance during their individual meetings, be it for taking meeting minutes, or for technical support. Mr. Martinez stated that if necessary, the group should request assistance on any task that would require outside expertise.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Mr. Kumar stated the MOU item was in different stages of signatures, with many organizations having turned their copies in, but that there were some which were still outstanding.

Spencer Stoleson of Broward County Transit stated that his agency did not have the authority to sign their MOU and that the issue would have to be handled by Broward County Traffic. Enrique Zelaya of the Broward County MPO concurred with Mr. Stoleson and stated that the MOU would have to go before the Broward County Commission before it could be approved and signed.

UPDATED REGIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Mr. Kumar started this portion of the meeting by referring to the handout for the current Coalition goals and objectives. He then noted that Goal's 4 and 5 were recent additions created by the Executive Sub-committee. Since Goal 5 deals with the topic of increasing customer awareness of benefits of the SunGuide program, it was recommended by the Executive Sub-committee that a Marketing/Public Outreach Sub-committee be formed. John Easterling of Florida's Turnpike Enterprise stated that because his organization is already recognized by



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the public because of some of its programs, such as the SunPass toll collection system, that they would be willing to chair this sub-committee. He also stated that there was a real need for the group to make a coordinated effort to improve public awareness about ITS, since the general public opinion is that South Florida's roadways are clogged with traffic and that the public agencies aren't doing much about it. Mr. Martinez stated that was the impetus behind this goal. Mr. Kumar continued this discussion by saying that the MPO's in the group need to understand that they already have public forums for disseminating ITS information which would enable the group to maximize current opportunities. One possible effort might include the creation of a standard informational board which could be regularly displayed at public meetings. It was generally agreed that the new Public Outreach Sub-committee would be responsible for Goal 5 and developing its objectives for that goal.

The next part of this discussion dealt with Goal 4 and the need to coordinate safe and efficient evacuation efforts. Mr. Martinez commented that each individual agency has done a good job of creating evacuation plans, but there has not been sufficient coordination between agencies on this matter. Mr. Easterling agreed on this matter, and gave an example of when during the past year, many people were unaware of the fact that the Turnpike was considering a contra-flow situation. He continued by saying that the Operations Sub-committee would be the best possible forum for this coordination. Mr. Martinez stated that if there were specific evacuation items of concern to other agencies, such as the Coast Guard, and airport, they should be invited to the Operations Sub-committee meetings. It was generally agreed that the Operations Sub-committee would be responsible for Goal 4 and developing its objectives.

REGIONAL ITS ARCHITECTURE UPDATE

Mr. Martinez updated the group about the Central Offices lead role for updating the Regional ITS architecture. Mr. Martinez asked the group to consider what they envision for the future of ITS. He further added that if budgetary constraints were removed, what efforts should be undertaken within our region to use ITS for improving safety, traveler information, and roadway efficiency. Mr. Zelaya of the Broward County MPO recommended that ITS be included within the Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach County Long Range Plans to provide a regional network.

ATIS PROJECT STATUS

Mr. Mike Millard of SmartRoute Systems (SRS) stated that 240,000 calls were received by their agency during January 2005, which was a ten percent increase over December 2004. Mr. Millard continued by explaining several problems which were being addressed by SRS. On the topic of expansion, Mr. Millard indicated that SRS was expanding to the Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River Counties, and that traveler information for the Turnpike would be given as one segment through those three counties. Mr. Easterling also offered that the Orlando 511 service was expanding its coverage area to Osceola County.

AGENCY UPDATES

Mr. Dong Chen of FDOT District 4, Mr. Jesus Martinez of FDOT District 6, Mr. John Easterling of Florida's Turnpike Enterprise, and Ivan del Campo of the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority provided brief updates of their ongoing and upcoming ITS projects.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on March 30, 2005 at the FDOT District 4 / Broward TMC, at 1:30 PM.

South Florida Regional ITS Coalition Meeting
Sign-in Sheet - February 2, 2005 - 1:30 PM at FDOT District 4/Broward County TMC



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