

TEXAS TIM

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF TxDOT TIM TEAMS | 3RD QTR 2023

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BREAKING NEWS

NTTA will host it's Third Annual Push/Pull/Drag Training Class at their Plano Training Facility in November for ALL HERO/SSP/Courtesy Patrol organizations. All first responder disciplines are invited to see how local safety service patrols are an essential element of Traffic Incident Management. For more information and registration, email: kwilliams8@ntta.org

For newsletter comments, contact: TIM@txdot.gov



MESSAGE FROM THE STATEWIDE TIM COORDINATOR, DAVID MCDONALD



David McDonald

Greetings to you all! What a summer we've endured this year. Hopefully some cooler weather (and wet weather) is in our future. I want to update you all on some of the stats we started collecting on the state crash report as of April 1st, 2023.

As of August 31st, statewide we have captured 3,180 crash reports where the secondary crash box was checked. In addition, we have had 359 crashes with the Responder Struck box checked. After reviewing several of the 3,000 plus secondary crashes reported, there seems to be

some confusion on the intent of that box.

Instructions from the CR100 are available at https://ftp.txdot.gov/pub/txdot-info/trf/crash_notifications/2023/cr100-v26.1.pdf. Also, of the 359 crashes with the Responder Struck box checked, only 70 of those reports met the criteria. On a positive note, we are seeing less errors over time. The same link above can be used for instructions on when the Responder Struck box should be checked.

Over the summer we prioritized training and traveled to all four corners of the state to provide training to hundreds of responders. If you would like to request training in your area you can email TIM@txdot.gov.

As I close, your statewide team is here to support you, the boots on the ground, and those working in the “Crosshairs” of “D” drivers. Our number one goal is to provide the training and support so that Everybody Goes Home. Feel free to reach out and let us know how we can help.



The Emergency Responder Safety Institute (ERSI) stated that recent research reports first responder struck-by-fatalities on US Roadways remain high, climbing from 46 in 2021 to 51 in 2022, after peaking at 65 in 2020. As of August 2023, there have 26 first responders struck and killed nationwide on roadways.

A DRAMATIC INCREASE IN DRUG USE AMONG COMMERCIAL DRIVERS

By Cecil Arient, San Antonio TIM Coordinator, AECOM

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) created the Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse, which went into effect on January 6, 2020. Part 382 of FMCSA, Controlled Substances and Alcohols Use and Testing, requires employers and their service agents to populate the clearinghouse with employee DOT drug and alcohol violations. The establishment of the Clearinghouse provides the FMCSA, law enforcement, and employers the necessary tools to identify drivers prohibited from operating a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) based on federal and state DOT drug and alcohol program violations.

Recent testing has revealed that positive drug tests for cocaine among CMV operators have increased from 7,940 in 2020 to 10,953 in 2022, an astounding 32% increase. Positive drug tests for marijuana metabolite have risen from 29,511 in 2020 to 40,916 in 2022, a 32% increase. Marijuana metabolites are produced when the body breaks down THC. Drug tests for cannabis detect THC metabolites, not the THC itself, because the metabolites remain longer in the body. Since the Clearinghouse's inception in 2020 until May 1, 2023, there have been 114,039 positive drug tests for the marijuana metabolite.

With the yearly rise of states legalizing drug use, particularly marijuana, more commercial drivers will likely test positive and fail to return to the road, leaving a shortfall of drivers in an already driver-critical industry. One can only imagine the increased dangers to First Responders and the motoring public with 80,000 pounds of high-speed steel and impaired drivers on the roadways; an already difficult job becomes exponentially more dangerous. Law enforcement officers should be ever vigilant for these commercial "D" drivers so **everybody goes home!**

The US DOT Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse April 2023 Monthly Summary Report is available on FMCSA's website at https://clearinghouse.fmcsa.dot.gov/content/resources/Clearinghouse_MonthlyReport_April2023.pdf.

The screenshots illustrate the user interface of the FMCSA Drug & Alcohol Clearinghouse. The main page features a navigation bar with 'Register' and 'Log In' buttons, and a 'Learn About Contact' menu. The central banner reads 'Welcome to the Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse' and describes it as an online database for real-time information on CDL driver drug and alcohol program violations. Below the banner, there are instructions on what users need to do, such as accessing violation information or querying records. The 'April 2023 Monthly Summary Report' section includes a 'REGISTRATIONS' section with a bar chart showing the number of CDL/CLP holders and organizations registered since September 28, 2019. The 'VIOLATIONS REPORTED TO CLEARINGHOUSE' section features a bar chart comparing total test results with violations by year (2020, 2021, 2022) and by month (April) across three years.

TEXAS LEGISLATURE PASSES FIRST RESPONDER SAFETY BILLS

By Jim Comfort, AECOM



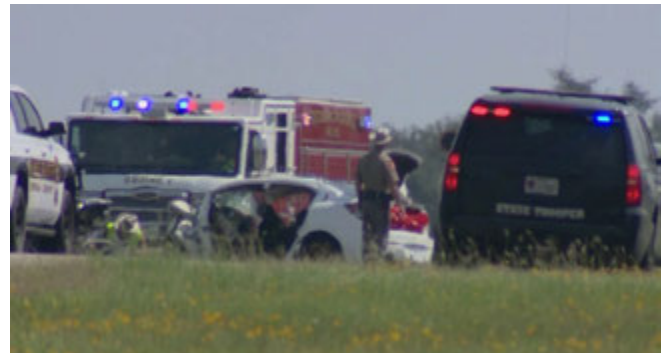
The 88th Texas Legislative session began on January 10th, 2023, and ended on May 29th. Meeting every other month for five months, the legislature has an enormous amount of proposed bills to develop, present, and on which to vote. Despite these obstacles, several important pieces of legislation have been passed that directly affect the TIM community throughout the state of Texas. These pieces of legislation will have a significant impact on the well-being of first responders on incident scenes. It is important that first responders be familiar with these new laws to ensure theirs and their fellow first responders safety is the top priority.

Texas Senate Bill 2200 amended Texas Transportation Code (TTC) 201.206. Part C of that code now reads, "If a person makes a donation to the department's roadside assistance and safety service patrol program, the department may post an acknowledgment of the donation on a vehicle or equipment the department uses for the program." This bill allows SSP/HERO/Courtesy Patrol organizations to receive sponsorships for their programs in any form (realty, money, materials, services) and from any source (businesses or individuals). The bill became effective on June 18th, 2023. The vehicle may not display descriptions of products, services, or facilities. In addition, The commission may adopt rules, such as one sponsor per vehicle (this is to avoid the "NASCAR(TM)" look with multiple stickers from multiple sponsors). To read the complete bill click on the following link, [SB 2200](#).

Texas Senate Bill 1413 amended TTC 545.3051(b) to include Fire Departments as entities authorized to remove property if it blocks the roadway or endangers public safety. It also includes fire departments as eligible for reimbursement for the reasonable cost of removal and disposition of the property (Section 545.3051d), and releases liability for damage to personal property removed from the roadway (Section 545.3051e), if it is not removed in a negligent manner, the same direction that applies to law enforcement for property removal. There are limitations to removing property from the roadway, such as in cases of fatality or major injury crashes, or for criminal incidents requiring law enforcement investigation. Section (f) of this bill states, "The governing body of a political subdivision that has a fire department shall develop and implement a policy concerning the fire department consulting with law enforcement agencies regarding the removal of personal property from the roadway or right-of-way." To read the complete bill, click on the following link, [SB 1413](#).

Texas House Bill 898 increases the penalties for violations of the "Move Over or Slow Down" law (TTC 545.157). The amendment to the bill will increase penalties for violators that do not move over or slow down for responders on roadways. It increases the minimum fine from \$200 to \$500 for a first offense and a misdemeanor with a fine of no less than \$1,000 for a second offense. It is now a Class A misdemeanor for a violation that results in bodily injury and a state jail felony for a subsequent offense. To read the complete bill, click on the following link, [HB 898](#).

Texas House Bill 1885 creates a Variable Speed Limit (VSL) for use on Texas roadways. Variable speed limits is an active traffic management strategy that uses dynamic speed limit signs to slow traffic before and through adverse road conditions to improve safety and keep traffic moving efficiently. The VSL in Texas will be used for three typical applications: (1) freeway segments with recurring congestion, (2) adverse weather conditions, and (3) construction work zones. Before VSLs can be deployed, an engineering study must be done on the proposed area. It is recommended that deployment areas have a posted speed limit above 45mph, and they must be posted on regulatory signs to be enforceable by law enforcement. To read the complete bill, click on the following link, [HB 1885](#).



DFW TIM TRAINING

AVAILABLE CLASSES

NCTCOG First Responder & Manager's course
2023 class schedule
616 Six Flags Drive, Arlington, TX, 76005



North Central Texas
Council of Governments

Date	First Responder	Contact
	The last TIM Class of the year was September 13-14. For a list of classes in 2024, visit https://www.nctcog.org/trans/quality/safety/transportation-safety/traffic-incident-management/tim-training-program	bwalsh@nctcog.org
Executive Level Course - A two-hour course designed to give department executives a general overview of the TIM program.		
November 2, 2023	(In-Person) 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m. NCTCOG 616 Six Flags Dr. Arlington, TX 76005 This course is available for all TxDOT Area Engineers, DTO, and DOOs.	bwalsh@nctcog.org

For SHRP2 TIM Training classes contact Camille Fountain: cfountain@nctcog.org

TIM TRAINING CLASSES HAVING AN IMPACT ON RURAL FIRST RESPONDERS

TIM MEETINGS

Texas Statewide TIM Webinar

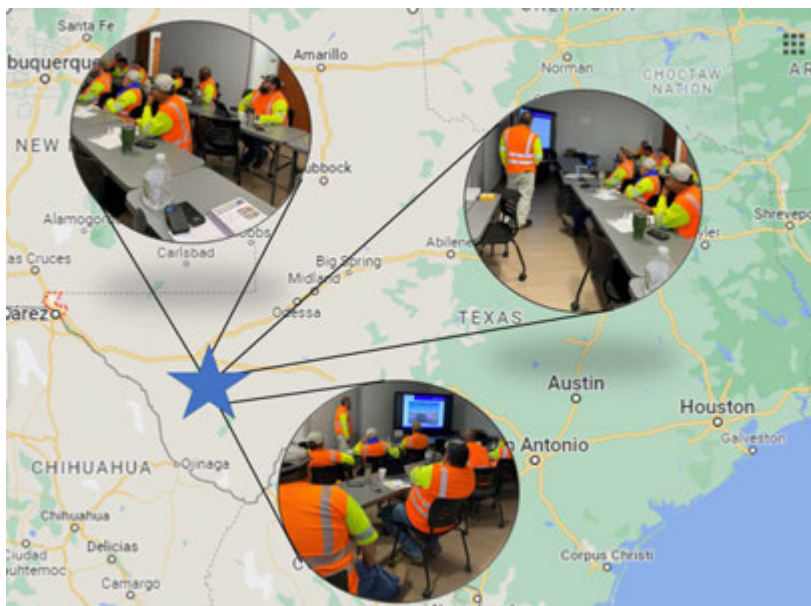
Oct. 18, 2023, 9:00 a.m.
Dec. 13, 2023, 9:00 a.m.
Feb. 21, 2024, 9:00 a.m.

Every third Wednesday, every other month.

The cities of Austin, Childress, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio all have local TIM meetings that discuss local TIM operations.

For Meetings and Webinar information, contact:
TIM@txdot.gov

Does TIM training have an impact on rural TIM operations? Absolutely! Just ask the first responders in Alpine, TX. The El Paso TIM team hosted a TIM for First Responders training class for the small town about 25 miles east of Marfa and only 90 miles from the USMexico border. The safety of first responders on roadways is no less dangerous in the country than in the city. The Statewide TIM Program Manager said that rural agencies are showing up for TIM training in significant numbers. Are you one of those agencies? You can contact us for training at TIM@txdot.gov to schedule your free training.



TEXAS TIM TEAM TRAINING POST BIG NUMBERS AROUND THE STATE

By Jim Comfort, AECOM

Texas Statewide TIM Program Manager, David McDonald has put a heavy emphasis on training for the Statewide TIM Team. Trainers from around the state have answered the challenge and posted big training numbers in the past few months. Between June and August of 2023, the state Tim Team trained 225 students, including 78 new TIM trainers.



Al Hernandez teaching the TIM for First Responders Class in El Paso in June.

4-Hour TIM for First Responders Classes

06-03-23 Jacksboro	14 Students
06-07-23 Boerne	27 Students
06-12-23 Boerne	15 Students
06-26-23 Matador	11 Students
06-26-23 Austin	16 Students
07-17-23 Wheeler	27 Students
07-21-23 Austin	27 Students
08-29-23 Austin	10 Students

TIM Train the Trainer Classes

08-9/10-23 Train the Trainer, Kilgore, 14 Students
 08-23/23-23 Train the Trainer, Austin, 32 Students



HFD Capt. Jason "Bear" Wilson assisting Cecil Arient in teaching the 4-Hour course in Boerne.



The Statewide TIM Team, David McDonald, Cecil Arient, and Nicole Tyler instruct fourteen students in the FHWA Train-the-Trainer class in Kilgore, TX, August 8th & 9th.



Austin Train-the-Trainer Class August 22nd & 23rd, with 32 students.

NTTA TO HOST THIRD HANDS-ON PUSH/PULL/DRAW TRAINING IN NOVEMBER

In November, the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) will host a live, hands-on Push/Pull/Draw (PPD) training class at their facility in Plano. The training is open to all HERO/SSP/Courtesy Patrol organizations from around Texas and the surrounding states. The training will cover safe, quick clearance techniques by using the latest equipment and state-of-the-art techniques and procedures. Previous PPD training included a driving obstacle course, pushing disabled vehicles using tow and SSP trucks, correct use of law enforcement vehicle push bumpers, using Go-Jaks to easily remove vehicles blocking the roadway, and many other tips, tricks, and tools of the trade. There will also be an opportunity for operators to display their vehicles to show other organizations the equipment they carry to service the motoring public. The exact dates and more details will be released and distributed when they become available to the Statewide TIM Team.





TEXAS HERO /SAFETY SERVICE PATROL /COURTESY PATROL

Much More Than a Tire Change



Throughout 2022, HERO/Safety Service Patrol/Courtesy Patrol operators have shown how essential their service is to the motoring public and first responder agencies throughout the great state of Texas. In this issue of the Texas TIM Newsletter, we are proud to feature men from the Austin HERO that saved lives in a crash and protected first responders on the highway. Thank you to all of our “Highway Heroes”!

AUSTIN

CL miles covered142
Incidents 9,055
Service to public..... 12,352



DALLAS COURTESY PATROL

CL miles covered 304
Incidents 3,064
Service to public.....6,010



EL PASO HERO

CL miles covered 212
Incidents 6,367
Service to public..... 18,910



FORT WORTH COURTESY PATROL

CL miles covered 461
Incidents 99
Service to public..... 5,494



April-June 2023

Texas Totals

Total Lane Miles – 2,032
Incidents – 37,844
Services to Public – 101,589

Incidents - blocking/assisting in crashes
Services - Tire changes, gas, etc.

The FHWA offers a manual for Safety Service Patrol Priorities and Best Practices available for download. For more information, visit <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop16047/index.htm>

HOUSTON MOTORIST ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

CL miles covered278
Incidents 6,482
Service to public.....21,169



NORTH TEXAS TOLLWAY AUTHORITY

CL miles covered 156
IncidentsN/A
Service to public.....13,720



NORTH TARRANT TEXPRESS NORTH TARRANT TEXPRESS 3 LBJ TOLLWAY

CL miles coveredN/A
IncidentsN/A
Service to public.....N/A

SAN ANTONIO HERO

CL miles covered 261
Incidents 12,234
Service to public..... 30,598



CRASH RESPONDER SAFETY WEEK



November 13-17, 2023
Protect those that protect you!
#RoadsideHeroes

Every minute of every day, law enforcement, fire and rescue, emergency medical services, public works, transportation, towing, and other responders work the roadside to make roadways safe for all motorists. These first responders put their lives at risk when clearing each of the nearly 7-million annual motor vehicle crashes or the broader range of incidents such as stalled vehicles or roadway debris.

CRSW is an opportunity to promote road user awareness and adherence to Move Over laws and Traffic Incident Management (TIM) training for all traffic incident responders. The FHWA encourages national, state, and local organizations to amplify the visibility and message of this important week by unifying the voices of first responders from across the country to promote roadway safety for everyone on the nation's roadways.

Beginning in 2016, Traffic Incident Management (TIM) responders and organizations became familiar with National Traffic Incident Responders Awareness Week (NTIRAW), a week promoted by the FHWA Office of Operations TIM Program. As a keystone event each year, NTIRAW gave TIM supporters a unique opportunity to share key road safety messages with responders and public audiences. Over the years, participating member organizations noted that while the mission of NTIRAW is critical, the name could have been more effective in helping the TIM communities achieve that mission.

Crash Responder Safety Week (CRSW), introduced in 2021, retains the essential meaning of NTIRAW while giving supporters a name that is easier to use, easier to remember, and more engaging for audiences being introduced to TIM. The new name better supports the goals of this campaign: to save the lives of traffic incident responders and road users.

Texas TIM teams will host several events during CRSW throughout the state to promote first responder safety awareness to the motoring public, including (1) DMS messaging, (2) impact statements and videos from responders that have been struck and survived, as well as from family members of responders that did not survive, (3) distribution of CRSW fliers at Texas public rest areas, and (4) the state TIM Team will teach a Train the Trainer class in Conroe, TX.

If any agency throughout the state is planning to hold special events for CRSW, please contact TIM@txdot.gov so that the state TIM Team can help to promote the events.

Parts of this article are taken from the FHWA CRSW website at: https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/tim/crash_responder.htm

FACES OF THE FALLEN – REMEMBERING OUR COMRADES

Texas is indeed fortunate that no first responders were killed in Texas in the second quarter of 2023. The last newsletter release without a first responder death in Texas was in the fourth quarter of 2022. Our thoughts and prayers for fast and full recovery go out to those first responders who have been struck and injured in this period.

We share the grief of our sister agencies around the country and mourn the first responders that have given their lives in the line-of-duty on United States highways this year.

