

Q2 2024 NEWSLETTER

QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHT

Two 4-hour blocks of the National Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Responder (formerly SHRP2) course were facilitated on May 20 and 21—one each day—by Jeff Cotter and Ray King of AtkinsRéalis. The training was attended by Troop E of the Georgia State Patrol and Region E of the Motor Carrier Compliance Division. These groups included veteran troopers, state officers, recent academy graduates, and some communications specialists from the Department of Public Safety. A total of 63 people were trained between both days.

TIM training offers insight to better coordination and communication with responders on scene, safe vehicle positioning, proper utilization of personal protective equipment, setting up a traffic incident management area, and more, all while emphasizing the importance of safe, quick clearance.



WELCOME!

- In this edition:*
- Training Updates
- Lessons Learned
- Georgia TIM Team Member of the Quarter
- Regional TIM Team of the Quarter
- Innovation of the Quarter
- LMS Info

Photo courtesy of Jesse Thomas on behalf of Seymour's Towing & Recovery

This effort was coordinated with Captain Brad Mosher, Georgia State Patrol Troop E Commander, and Captain Dante Hackney, Motor Carrier Compliance Division Region E Commander. Both Captain Mosher and Captain Hackney made this training mandatory for all state troopers and state officers under their command.

This is the first Georgia State Patrol post and Motor Carrier Compliance Division region to make the training mandatory and have all their personnel attend. Captain Mosher and Captain Hackney hope that this will lead the way for other troops and regions to partake in the valuable training, better enhancing responder safety around the state.

TRAINING UPDATES

HEAVY WRECKER TECHNICAL RESCUE TRAINING FOR RESPONDERS

The Heavy Wrecker Technical Rescue Training for Responders is a free course that offers responders an opportunity to learn the capabilities of local heavy wrecker companies and how they can be a valuable tool during incidents involving large commercial trucks and vehicles.

Three training sessions totaling 81 attendees have occurred so far in 2024—in Henry County at Wrecker 1, Jackson County at Seymour’s Towing, and Chatham County at Sapp’s Wrecker. All three trainings had a great turnout with representation from fire, emergency medical services, law enforcement, Georgia Department of Transportation, Coordinated Highway Assistance and Maintenance Program, and more.

Responders, especially firefighters, are seeing the value of this unique and specialized training, as it works on building communication and coordination between fire rescue crews and tow operators to quickly and safely clear accidents.

The training lasts eight hours and covers a variety of subjects such as incident command, the heavy wrecker fleet, loose equipment that can be utilized, and training that the wrecker operators go through. The hands-on portion had a variety of scenarios that responders would likely encounter. These included a vehicle that ran under a school bus, a tractor-trailer that overturned on a vehicle, and side impact collision of a passenger vehicle going under a commercial vehicle. The heavy wrecker operators showcased how their vehicles and equipment can lift heavy vehicles with ease and in a timely manner.

After Henry County hosted their training, Henry County Fire had to assist with an incident that involved a commercial vehicle on top of a car. They were able to apply what they had learned in the training, which helped immensely on scene and allowed a quick rescue of the victims involved.

There was high praise and great feedback from those that attended the training. Questions were asked from all disciplines and abundant insight was gained. More trainings are planned in Crisp, Wayne, Effingham, and Chatham counties for the fall. Visit the [TIME Task Force calendar](#) to see TIM events around the state.

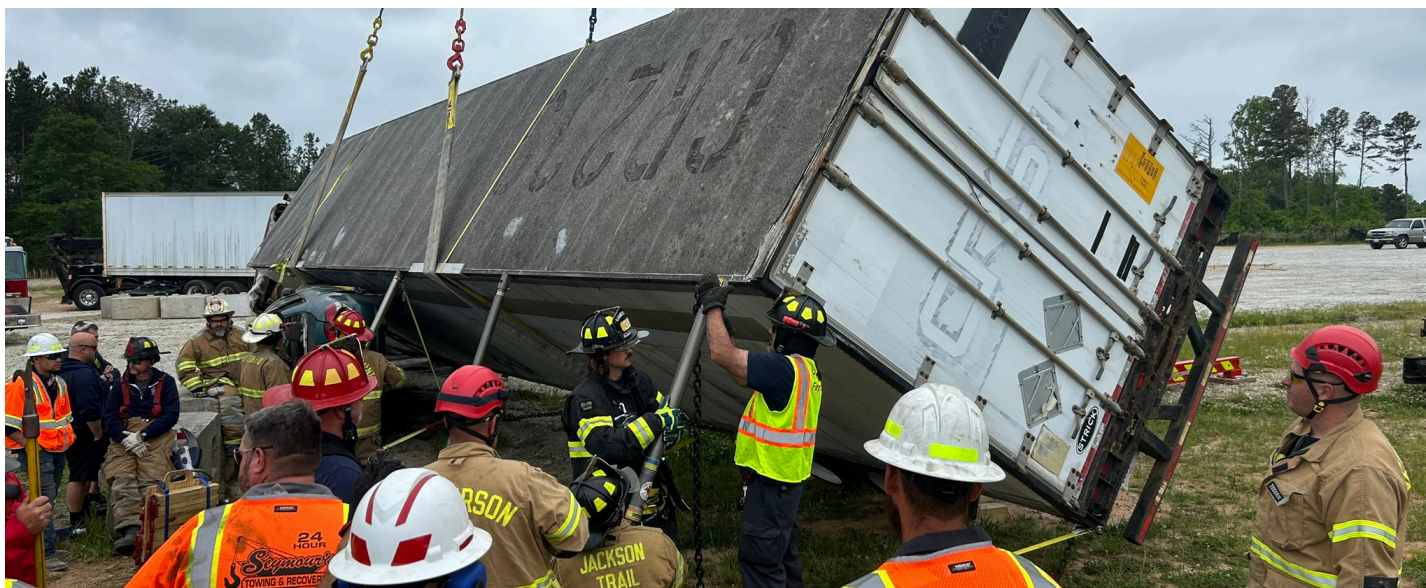


Photo courtesy of Jeff Cotter, Senior TIM Specialist, AtkinsRéalis

LESSONS LEARNED — AFTER INCIDENT REVIEW

TRAUMA AND FIRST RESPONDERS

Incidents involving traumatic injuries or death can have a severe, negative impact on first responders' mental health. The more awareness and support these responders have regarding the impact of these incidents, the better they can maintain their mental health in the long run.



Photo courtesy of andriiafanasiiev via Canva.com

Preventative actions

- First responders, and those close to them, must understand the impact of witnessing trauma. Awareness and open conversation help with processing difficult situations and recognizing when help is needed.
- Responders should seek out coping strategies and understand when to ask for help before their mental health takes a turn for the worse.
- Responders should know what resources are available to them, which can be found by speaking to other responders, being aware of what employee assistance programs their employer offers, or even an internet search for online or in-person support groups.
- Likewise, leaders in the first responder community should regularly make these resources known and available.

Signs to look out for

- Witnessing traumatic events repeatedly can lead to emotional numbing, intrusive thoughts, and avoidant behavior. Responders, along with their family, friends, and peers, should monitor for behavioral changes.
- If initial symptoms are not recognized and worked through, the trauma can manifest in various forms, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, and burn out.

Coping strategies

- Peer support groups can help remind responders that they are not alone and allow them to share their experiences with those who can empathize.
- Professional counseling and therapy are often impactful for processing trauma and tragedy.
- Practices like meditation, relaxation techniques, exercise, and building a supportive community can help responders maintain and improve their mental health.
- Formal programs such as Critical Incident Stress Management can also be accessed.

The more we make space for these conversations and recognize the mental health risks posed for first responders, the better they can access the support they need and deserve.

GEORGIA TIM TEAM MEMBER OF THE QUARTER

CHRISTINA BARRY



Christina Barry has had an impressive and extensive career, spanning 12 years, with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). Christina earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in civil engineering from Georgia Tech and went on to hold various traffic engineering roles at GDOT before taking on her current role as the Assistant State Traffic Engineer, Office of Traffic Operations. In her current role, Christina manages GDOT's active traffic management components for Georgia's freeways, including Transportation Management Center operations, GA511, and the intelligent transportation systems infrastructure. She also manages several large TIM-related contracts by providing guidance and oversight to consultant teams delivering a variety of work statewide.

Christina has had a distinct impact on the TIM community, overseeing day-to-day operations of the state's Towing and Recovery Incentive Program (TRIP) and serving as a member of the TRIP Advisory Board. Her role involves making critical decisions that guide the daily operation of the program and ensures its continued success. Through her work with TRIP, she helps implement strategies crucial to safe, quick clearance of large commercial vehicle incidents on Georgia's highways, thus creating a safer and more efficient travel experience for all motorists throughout metro Atlanta and across the state.

Christina makes it her mission to engage in TIM Team meetings and training classes around Georgia as often as she can, and her expertise adds value to discussions on many topics during these sessions. Stakeholders from all areas of the state appreciate her presence and the support she provides to them as a representative of GDOT.

REGIONAL TIM TEAM OF THE QUARTER: CONGRATULATIONS REGION 10!

The Region 10 Traffic Incident Management (TIM) community encompasses 10 counties, three of which have active TIM Teams—Macon-Bibb, Monroe, and Peach counties. These TIM Teams collaborate quarterly with members from all areas of public safety, including local towers, coroners, school districts, railway companies, electrical companies, regional emergency medical service teams, Georgia State Patrol (GSP), the Motor Carrier Compliance Division (MCCD) of the GSP, the Coordinated Highway Assistance and Management Program (CHAMP), and the Robins Air Force Base Fire Department. This level of collaboration sets a high bar in the Georgia TIM community.

Region 10 stands out for its commitment to offering training to advance its responders' and public safety professionals' skills at managing traffic incidents, namely through the National TIM Responder Training and the Towing and Recovery Incentive Program (TRIP) training, both of which require focus, funding, and resources from the Georgia Department of Transportation. Within Region 10, TRIP trainings have been conducted for the Macon-Bibb Fire Department Command Staff, Troop D Officers of GSP, Region D of the MCCD, the Bibb County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division, Traffic Division, E-911 Operators, and the Region 10 CHAMP Operators.

The National TIM Responder Training (formerly SHRP2) is a valuable free course from the U.S. Federal Highway Administration that teaches safe, quick incident clearance and scene management. Georgia has trained over 40,000 responders, or 80 percent of its responders statewide, ranking the state third in the nation for the percentage of trained responders. Region 10 has helped Georgia stand above most other states in the number of responders trained.

Within Region 10, Macon-Bibb County is the first area outside of Atlanta to have a TRIP region. Bibb County Sheriff David Davis and Fire Chief Shane Edwards were highly supportive in orchestrating the required training with the Sheriff Department's Patrol Division and 911 Operators. After an extensive application process, Kitchens Garage, Mike Adams Towing, and Ackerman's Wrecker Service were selected for a zone in the Macon TRIP region.

Requisite personnel were successfully trained, and eligible towers were inspected to be certified by midnight on August 2, 2023. TRIP went live on schedule, an achievement that required many early morning and late evening training sessions, meetings, and collaboration across multiple TIM disciplines.

Region 10 continues to improve, expand, and train to reduce adverse impacts on the motoring public, lessening the time public safety teams spend working crashes on the Interstate, which increases safety for everyone in this region.

As they say in Region 10, "We want our members to come to work, do their jobs, and return home. That's a great day!" Thank you, Region 10 TIM, for your commitment to safe, quick clearance and public safety!



Photos courtesy of Twiggs County, TIM Region 10

INNOVATION OF THE QUARTER

Mobile Barriers: a Purpose-Built Blocker for Responding to Roadway Incidents

By Kevin Groeneweg

Secondary incidents experienced while responding to roadway accidents present growing challenges for emergency responders and equipment. Some technology exists to protect response vehicles and personnel from these incidents, but they still leave gaps in safety. Mobile Barriers Emergency Response Barrier (ERB)®, a purpose-built blocker specially designed for responding to roadway accidents, is changing the tide in responder personnel and vehicle safety.



Photo courtesy of Mobile Barriers LLC

For responders, errant vehicles pose a serious threat.

Research indicates that the risk of severe injury or death for accident responders rises to approximately 50 percent at 30 mph and to over 85 percent at 40 mph. A crash cushion truck-mounted attenuator (TMA) at the rear of a firetruck provides minimal protection, as most TMAs are not designed for more than a 10-degree hit.

Additionally, when equipment is damaged, the cost and loss of service have a severe negative impact. For example, if a firetruck is hit by an errant vehicle, it may be out of service for months or take 2-3 years for replacement delivery if totaled.

Mobile Barriers ERB helps prevent these types of roadway accidents. These portable barriers offer about 1,000,000 pounds of strength to deflect and redirect hits with minimal damage, even in a 90-degree impact at speeds over 45 mph. These barriers can be quickly parked on either side to block multiple lanes and/or a shoulder, and the rear signage and TMA uniquely pivot toward traffic. The barrier itself can carry additional equipment and supplies, including up to 3,000 gallons of water.

Mobile Barriers ERB offers an innovative solution to the long-standing danger posed for first responders to vehicle accidents. The ERB was recently displayed at the Fire-Rescue International – 2024, hosted by the International Association of Fire Chiefs at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center, Dallas, TX. For additional information, see www.mobilebarriers.com.



Photo courtesy of Mobile Barriers LLC



Photos courtesy of Mobile Barriers LLC



Photo courtesy of Jeff Cotter, Senior TIM Specialist, AtkinsRéalis

UPCOMING EVENTS

For the latest information on training in your area, please check the [TIME Task Force calendar](#) or scan the QR code below to visit the website. NOTE: all dates, times, and locations are subject to change. Monitor the website calendar to verify before you travel to a meeting.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED IN A TIM TEAM



There are many ways to be active in TIM around Georgia. Interested in getting involved and attending a meeting? Visit [the TIME Task Force website](#) or scan the QR code to find your regional TIM Team and area analyst and contact TIMteams@dot.ga.gov for more information.



Photo courtesy of Jeff Cotter, Senior TIM Specialist, AtkinsRéalis

INTERESTED IN CONTRIBUTING TO THE NEWSLETTER?

Share an innovation your agency is implementing in your local community or a notable effort in traffic incident management.

LMS INFORMATION

GDOT’s learning management system (LMS) provides a free online centralized hub for registered users to have full access to and management of their training content. You can do things like view the course catalog, course enrollment, progress tracking, and view and download your course completion certificates.

We invite first responders and the TIME community to experience the platform firsthand. We have over 6,000 users, 39 courses available, and 24/7 access.

The LMS portal has training content in the areas of NIMS, National TIM Responder Training, TIM, professional development, and much more. These will be readily accessible to you by a quick login to the LMS platform after your user profile has been created.

Happy Learning!

To enjoy user benefits and create your account, please email us at TIM_Training@dot.ga.gov.