

## Q3 2024 NEWSLETTER



### QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHT

In September, the fourth edition of the National Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Responder Training Program (formerly Strategic Highway Research Program 2, or SHRP2), was released by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). TIM program contacts and Master Instructors, appointed by the Georgia FHWA, reviewed the new material during a half-day workshop. Currently, these Master Instructors are adding Georgia-specific touches to the new training presentation.

Once these touches are complete, Georgia will have a newly updated version of the course material with all the applicable Georgia laws and lessons learned included and all active Georgia trainers will be provided with instructions on how to access the new material.

### WELCOME!

*In this edition:*

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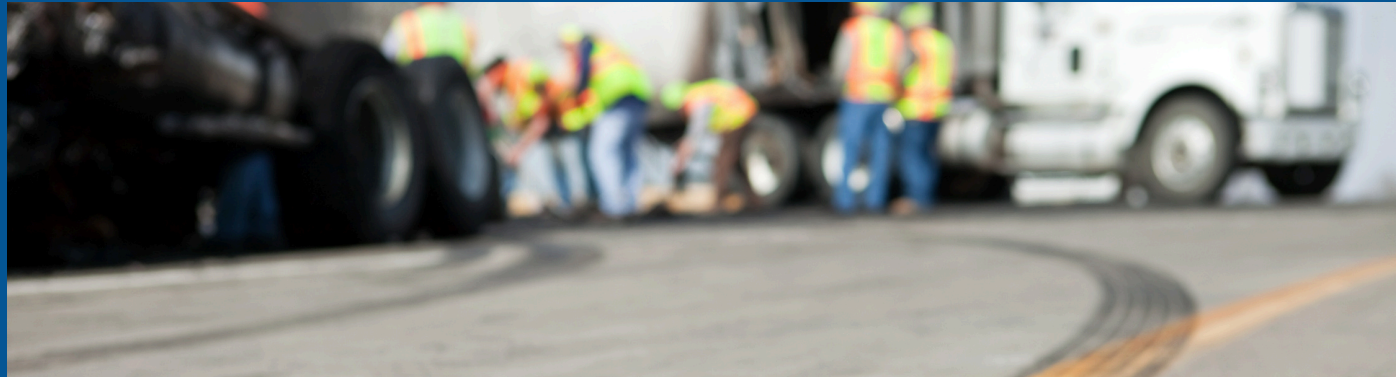
*Photo courtesy of Mike Hatcher, Senior TIM Specialist, AtkinsRéalis*

The goal is to keep all Georgia responders up to date on the latest safe, quick clearance strategies. Two train-the-trainer courses will be offered in the near future to anyone who would like an opportunity to deliver this critically important message in their area of the state.

For more information, contact us at [TIM\\_Training@dot.ga.gov](mailto:TIM_Training@dot.ga.gov).



# QUARTER 3 LESSONS LEARNED AFTER INCIDENT REVIEW



*Photo courtesy of BanksPhotos via Getty Images*

Traffic incident management (TIM) progress is accelerated through mass communication so that a lesson learned in any part of Georgia can be applied statewide. During quarter three, several incidents indicated room for improvement in risk assessment, hazardous material response, continued training, and situational awareness. Responders and agencies across Georgia should reflect on how these quarter three takeaways can be applied locally, so we all improve one incident and one lesson at a time.

## **Risk Assessment**

### *No two incidents are the same*

Risk assessment of any incident involves receiving information about the incident, processing and analyzing that information, and applying that analysis to limit incident risk to responders, the public, and stakeholders. A responder's ability to evaluate risk is heavily dependent on their previous experience with similar situations. However, a recent incident in Georgia reminded us that no two incidents are the same, and neither are their risks.

While Georgia responders should apply previous experience when assessing risk, we want to remind responders statewide that proper risk assessment requires a healthy dose of skepticism. It is critical that responders avoid accidental oversight at an incident scene by not only recognizing the similarities of an incident compared to the past, but also the differences.

## **Hazardous Materials Responses**

### *Slow down the tempo*

A TIM Region 6 hazardous materials (HazMat) team has the following motto: Make No Mistake. Contrary to conventional wisdom surrounding emergencies, HazMat incidents often require slowing down the tempo of a response. During quarter three, a particular HazMat incident demonstrated that it is incumbent on responders to proceed thoughtfully and deliberately to avoid a critical error when dealing with unfamiliar substances in high-risk circumstances.



## ***Arrive Prepared***

We encourage all responders on HazMat scenes to consult the Emergency Response Guidebook for immediately accessible information prior to arriving on scene. Once a hazardous material is identified, it is the responsibility of all personnel on scene to assist responders with mitigating the emergency as safely as possible.

Additionally, managing a HazMat incident requires early preparation and planning with local response agencies/companies for a timely response. We were reminded this quarter that legal and logistical considerations must be thought through ahead of time, and the party responsible must be identified and notified of their liability. In particular, responders must apply Georgia Code 32-6-2, the authority removal law, when selecting the most appropriate remediation contractor.

## **Continued Training**

### ***Refresh What You Know***

This past quarter, we saw first-hand that, as time goes by, we can become complacent when performing high-frequency or routine tasks in TIM, which exponentially increases risk. We encourage responders and agencies to partake in regular refresher training, as it is vitally important to responder safety at roadway incident scenes. Regular refresher training keeps strategies fresh in our minds and minimizes this risk.

## **Situational Awareness**

### ***Share the Load***

Situational awareness requires continuous monitoring and assessment of the incident scene and surrounding traffic conditions. In the third quarter, responders at one incident saw that clearly defining roles and responsibilities for each responder could have prevented confusion and ensured that everyone knew their specific tasks.

For example, in situations where there may be a prolonged wait time in the traffic queue, the traffic incident commander may have an extensive list of tasks to deal with, so it is useful to have someone monitor and even communicate with the queued traffic. This helps reduce the risk of motorists becoming distracted and creating secondary backups or delays in traffic.



*Photo courtesy of LuckyBusiness via Getty Images*



# TRAINING UPDATES

## CABLE BARRIER TRAINING

On July 11, 2024, the Banks County TIM Team held a comprehensive median cable barrier systems training session to improve skills and the knowledge of both emergency responders and road maintenance crews when managing and maintaining cable barriers. This training was essential to ensure roadway safety and reduce the severity of highway crashes.

Participants engaged in a practical demonstration, gaining hands-on experience with the installation, maintenance, and repair of median cable barrier systems. This approach ensures that they can effectively apply their knowledge in real-world situations.



Richard Butler of Brifen USA, an industry expert with extensive experience in road safety and highway barrier systems, facilitated the training. Mr. Butler provided invaluable insight and guidance on median cable barrier best practices and the latest safety technologies. Protocols were emphasized to ensure all procedures were carried out without compromising the safety of personnel and the public, including the proper use of personal protective equipment and adherence to safety guidelines. Participants were encouraged to ask questions and discuss challenges they face in the field, fostering a collaborative environment and deeper understanding.

Overall, the Banks County median cable barrier systems training was a resounding success, equipping both emergency responders and road maintenance crews with necessary skills and the knowledge to enhance roadway safety and effectively manage median cable barrier systems.

Visit the [TIME Task Force calendar](#) to see TIM events around the state.



*Photo courtesy of Scott Malcolm, Senior TIM Specialist, AtkinsRéalis*



# GEORGIA TIM TEAM MEMBER OF THE QUARTER CHIEF BRIAN DARBY



*Photo courtesy of Liberty County Fire*

Fire Chief Brian Darby, a U.S. Army veteran, has served the Liberty County Fire Services (LCFS) for 11 years, seven of which he served as Chief. Chief Darby's background in public safety and government administration has allowed him to develop crucial skills such as FF1 and FF2 airport firefighter, emergency medical responder, and National TIM Responder Training, training operations, fire officer, and HazMat training instructor.

Chief Darby became interested in TIM and its implementation, saying: "I have learned that not all public safety understands why it is or what it is each discipline does on the scene of a traffic accident. For example, after I completed teaching a [National TIM Responder] training, which had law enforcement in it, I was approached by an LEO [law enforcement officer] who said 'Chief, now I understand why your fire trucks park the way they do.'"

Now the LCFS conducts National TIM Responder Training for all new hires as well as conducting retraining or update training annually and makes it a mandatory part of their drivers' training program. Chief Darby is now the Georgia Region 12 TIM Champion and is actively involved in the Liberty County TIM Team, attending local, regional, and state TIM events. He even represented the state of Georgia at the National TIM Symposium (held at the National Fire Academy).

TIM-related activities will soon be transferred to Assistant Chief Roney, but Darby's hope is to see training continued at LCFS and that they will also continue to voice opinions, ideas, and lessons learned to the TIM coordinator. Roney, who has served as Darby's Fire Marshal and Department Safety Officer, is described as a 'driving force' for training and meeting Open Roads Policy expectations.

In general, Chief Darby hopes to see more resources and funding for TIM Teams that reflect the immense effort they give to support the TIM mission and to see the area coordinators be given more support to respond to major events.

Chief Darby has been an asset to the TIM mission, saying: "TIM is a great program, it's all about the effort the agency is willing to put forth, your life and the public safety officials' lives depend on safety. TIM helps provide that safety."

Thank you and congratulations to our TIM Team Member of the Quarter, Fire Chief Brian Darby!

# REGIONAL TIM TEAM OF THE QUARTER: CONGRATULATIONS CARTERSVILLE-BARTOW!



*Photo courtesy of Scott Malcolm, Senior TIM Specialist, AtkinsRéalis*

TIM Region 1 in northwest Georgia has long been a strong proponent of traffic incident management (TIM). Several agencies within most of the region's nine counties have been engaged in TIM practices since the national training program kicked off in 2012. But one TIM team stands in the spotlight for the third quarter of 2024—the Bartow/Cartersville TIM team.

The Bartow/Cartersville TIM Team has the distinction of being one of the first TIM teams in the state, formed in 2010. They are currently the longest functioning TIM team in Georgia, persevering through the COVID-19 pandemic and numerous personnel changes. Retired City of Cartersville Fire Department Deputy Chief Ray King, supported by retired Roswell Police Department Captain Rory Howe, started the team in 2010 with only a handful of eager participants. Their efforts encouraged the growth of the team to some 25 participating agencies, with regular participation of 35-45 responders.

The team brings in first-rate presenters and speakers at each quarterly meeting. The team focuses on best practices by conducting regular debriefs of critical incidents identifying instances when things went well at the scene, but never hesitating to also discuss and learn from times when perhaps things didn't go so well. Their meetings are generally hosted by and held at LifePoint Church in Cartersville.

Congratulations to the Bartow/Cartersville TIM team, our TIM Team of the Quarter! Keep up the good work and continue to shine as a role model for the rest of the state! Each agency and member deserves a round of applause for their efforts and commitment to safe, quick clearance.



# INNOVATION OF THE QUARTER

## Leveraging Drones for Traffic Incident Management: Insights and Applications

By Josh Pruitt with Aloft

The application of drones in traffic incident management (TIM) has brought about marked improvements in emergency response, scene investigation and management, and roadway safety. Across the United States and abroad, various public safety agencies and departments of transportation, including the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), have integrated drone technology into their operations, enhancing their capabilities in incident response, scene management, and considerations for safety in highway design.

### **Key Workflows and Examples**

#### Incident Assessment and Monitoring

- **Enhanced Situational Awareness:** Drones provide live video feeds to transportation management centers (TMC) and emergency teams. For instance, the North Carolina DOT (NCDOT) utilizes tethered drones to bridge gaps in camera coverage along interstates and deliver high-quality video over extended periods during both normal traffic flows and emergency response operations. In Virginia, the DOT uses drones for bridge inspections and traffic monitoring.
- **Better Response Coordination:** In Iowa, DOT drones assist the Highway Helper Program with highway incident clearance, thus enabling faster restoration of normal traffic flow. Massachusetts DOT deploys drones for infrastructure inspections and monitoring construction sites.

#### Traffic Management

- **Real-time Traffic Adjustments:** Drones assist in adjusting traffic signals and rerouting traffic based on incident severity and location. NCDOT's pilot programs have demonstrated how drones can manage traffic efficiently at crash scenes, providing an "eye in the sky" view to monitor the crash scene. GDOT utilizes drones to monitor traffic conditions and manage incidents on highways.
- **Accurate Traveler Information:** By providing up-to-date information to TMCs, drones enable the dissemination of precise traffic updates to the public, enhancing overall traffic management and safety. In Texas, the DOT produces detailed aerial views from drones that are essential for post-incident analysis, helping to refine response strategies and reduce the time needed to clear accident scenes, thereby minimizing traffic disruptions.

#### Post-incident Analysis

- **Comprehensive Documentation:** High-resolution images and videos captured by drones are crucial for post-incident analysis. This data allows agencies to study and refine their response strategies, helping to better manage future incidents.

## Hardware Options

### Fotokite Tethered Drones

- Model: Fotokite Sigma
- Features: Think of this aircraft less as a drone and more so as a dynamic pole camera. These drones are portable and can fly up to 150 feet providing continuous real-time video feeds. NCDOT's Incident Management Assistance Patrol (IMAP) vehicles use these drones to enhance situational awareness during traffic incidents.

### DJI Drones

- Popular Models: Mavic Enterprise series, Matrice 300 and 350, Matrice 30, and DJI Phantom 4 Pro V2.
- Use Case: Various DOTs favor DJI drones for their reliability, high-quality imaging, and ease of deployment. These versatile drones can be equipped with different sensors to capture detailed footage and data during incidents.

As more state agencies adopt drone technology, the effectiveness and scope of TIM will continue to evolve, making roadways safer and more efficient for all travelers.



*Photos courtesy of felixmizioznikov via Getty Images*



# HERO TO THE RESCUE!

The Georgia Department of Transportation's (GDOT) Highway Emergency Response Operator (HERO) program offers an array of services on metro Atlanta's highways to keep motorists safe and quickly restore traffic flow. On July 3, a box truck was struck by a semi-truck on the highway, knocking out part of the median wall and leaving debris scattered on the highway lanes. Injuries were reported, and traffic came to a halt. GDOT's Towing and Recovery Incentive Program was activated, but more positive scene protection was needed to help protect responders and citizens at the incident. Thankfully, HERO was there for the job. A HERO truck arrived on scene to help block off traffic and provide safety for responders managing the incident, allowing them to work diligently to clear lanes.

HEROs assist the motoring public on Atlanta's highways daily, but incidents such as these are testaments to their ability to rise to the call of action when severe events occur. The quicker these incidents can be cleared, the less risk there is of secondary incidents occurring.

Way to go, HERO! This is an excellent example of the difference your services make to TIM in Georgia.



*Photo courtesy of Corey Anderson, HERO Supervisor 512*



Learn more about the HERO Program's history and future on GDOT's [Ahead of the Curve Podcast interview with Jason Josey](#).

Celebrating

30 Years of HERO



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](mailto:TIMteams@dot.ga.gov) for more information.



Photo courtesy of Mike Hatcher, 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, enroll in courses, track progress, and view and download your course completion certificates.

We invite first responders and the TIME Task Force 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](mailto:TIM_Training@dot.ga.gov).**