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# LESSON LEARNED

## Mass Casualty Incidents: Distributing Maps to Manage Traffic Flows

### SUMMARY

Emergency managers should consider revising plans to include procedures for distributing maps to motorists when mass casualty incidents force the closure of major traffic arteries. This can help manage the flow of traffic and decrease congestion.

### DESCRIPTION

Interstate-75 (I-75)/State Road 93 (SR-93) (see map below) serves as the primary east-west highway in southern Florida and is commonly known as "Alligator Alley." US Route 41 provides the only east-west alternate to Alligator Alley for this area.

At about 5:00 a.m. on January 25, 2002, dense fog contributed to a massive motor vehicle pile-up on I-75/SR-93 in a rural area of Collier County, Florida. The accident involved 17 tractor-trailers, 9 passenger vehicles, and 8 separate collisions spread out over a half a mile, which killed 3 people and injured 13 others. The accident forced the closure of the highway in both directions.

The Florida Highway Patrol, Collier County Sheriff's Office (CCSO), Collier County Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and Golden Gate Fire Control and Rescue District responded to the incident. Collier County EMS transported victims to Naples, Florida, for medical treatment at the Naples Community Hospital and the Cleveland Clinic of Naples. The accident shut down the highway for over 8 hours and caused traffic delays that extended to Florida's Gulf and Atlantic coasts. The lack of alternative routes and the presence of out-of-town motorists complicated efforts to divert traffic and contributed to the congestion.

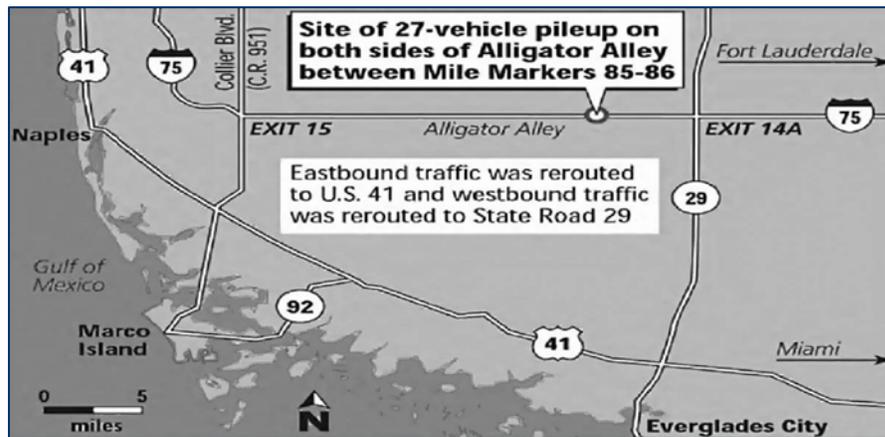
CCSO responded to the traffic control challenges by issuing maps of alternate routes at control and diversion points. The maps effectively managed the flow of traffic and eased congestion at the incident site. A report issued by the United States Fire Administration recommends that emergency managers revise their plans to include procedures for distributing maps to motorists when accidents force the closure of highways.



**I-75 Multiple Vehicle  
Collision, January 25, 2002**

For additional information on the accident and incident response, please see the [USFA I-75 Multiple Vehicle Collision/Mass Casualty Incident Report](#).

Emergency managers should consider revising plans to include procedures for distributing maps to motorists when mass casualty incidents force the closure of major traffic arteries. This can help manage the flow of traffic and decrease congestion.



Map of Route I-75/State Road 93/Alligator Alley  
in Southwest Florida

#### **CITATION**

Department of Homeland Security, United States Fire Administration. *Technical Report Series: I-75 Multiple Vehicle Collision/Mass Casualty Incident*. Jan 2002.  
<https://www.llis.gov/docdetails/details.do?contentID=26263>.

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