

The INSIDE

LANE

A newsletter for employees of the Arizona Department of Transportation

OCTOBER 2022

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 10



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celebrates 55th anniversary**

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ADOT

LEADERSHIP

MATTERS

I'VE BEEN WITH ADOT for nearly eight years and I began working with the agency in the Multimodal Planning Division Aeronautics as the airport grants manager. I worked in the capacity for three years and that experience was incredibly valuable. Since January 2018, I've been the manager of the Grand Canyon National Park Airport.

How do you show respect for people?

I listen to them. One of the challenges that I heard when I started working at the airport is that employees felt like they were not well-equipped to do their jobs. My way of showing them how much I respect them was to supply them with the training, equipment and organizational structure that they felt they needed to be successful. The employees now have input into the tools and equipment that we purchase. I also sent our firefighters to specialized training and am constantly looking for more opportunities to help them grow their skill set and to improve our operational capability.

I also fully empower employees to make decisions that affect their work. The employees hadn't been exposed to the "fail fast" principle, so I confused them a bit when I first arrived. I like to experiment. I'll try something and if I can see it doesn't work, I get input from the employees and I change course based on the information or evidence they give me. At first, they thought I was wishy-washy. "This guy's always changing his mind!" — but over time they realized that I wasn't wishy-washy, but rather flexible and open. I have 11 employees who have experiences and insights that I don't have. I can't let that kind of talent go to waste. I listen to them.

How do you take time to reflect on how your actions may impact other groups?

This is a big one for us at the airport. We are so remote and specialized that we run the risk of being an island. When I came to the airport, I had several years of experience partnering with a variety of areas within ADOT. I applied this knowledge to work more closely with the various divisions and departments in the agency, and this has helped to make us more of an integral part of ADOT. After years of working at it, the airport is an example of "One ADOT." We have built a culture of cooperation, not just within the agency but also with our FAA partners and the local community. Because we depend on others for so much, the airport staff knows that we have to help others to help ourselves. So if you get assigned a task at the airport, you can know that you will be welcomed. We will do what we can to make your task easier to complete, and we will be genuinely grateful to you for a job well done. ☰



Matt Smith
Airport Manager

The INSIDE LANE

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ADDRESS ALL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS TO InsideLane@azdot.gov.

A WEB VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER CAN BE FOUND ON ADOTNET OR AT AZDOT.GOV/INSIDELANE.

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Share your best cover shot

Do you have photos showing off the scenic side of transportation in Arizona? Share them with us and we might put your photograph on the next cover of The Inside Lane. It can be a great picture of an MVD office, a beautiful highway shot or even an artsy photo of construction materials. Whatever the subject, the photo should highlight some aspect of the work happening here at ADOT. Submit your original, digital photographs to InsideLane@azdot.gov in JPEG format (no larger than 10MB). Along with the photo, please provide a brief description and your name/title.



On the cover

Grand Canyon National Park Airport Airport Operations Administrative Supervisor **Craig Talatzko** took this photo of a Grand Canyon Scenic Airlines plane landing at the airport in September. The airport terminal is celebrating its 55th anniversary in October. Grand Canyon airport is the sixth-busiest airport in the state in terms of passengers. See more coverage on **Page 3**.

GRAND CANYON AIRPORT TERMINAL CELEBRATES 55TH ANNIVERSARY



All the firefighters are aircraft rescue and EMT-certified, but they also do all the airfield maintenance, which includes plowing snow in the winter.

What is the status of the Grand Canyon National Airport's Master Plan Study?

The study was finished in 2018 and we have completed or programmed nearly half of the planned projects.

What renovations are planned for the airport entrance monument?

The entry monument renovation was designed by DWL Architects and procurement is preparing the bid package. The design calls for a fusion of the natural rock and traditional colors of the Grand Canyon with the modern look of metal and LED displays to help tourists find tenant businesses.

What are some fun facts about the airport?

For the last 20 years, the airport has hosted an annual holiday party for first-grade to third-grade students to decorate a Christmas tree and meet Santa. The airport also supports the annual Toys for Tots with the Marines to fly food and toys to the Havasupai tribe. The airport has hosted numerous celebrity visits. First Lady Jill Biden visited the airport in June 2022 while filming a National Geographic's docuseries, "America's National Parks." In 2009, then-President Barack Obama and his family arrived at the airport on Air Force One. ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

FOR MORE THAN a half century, the Grand Canyon National Park Airport in Tusayan has served as a hub for those visiting Arizona's most popular tourist attraction.

The Grand Canyon airport — owned and operated by the Arizona Department of Transportation — was the sixth-busiest Arizona airport in 2021, serving more than 75,000 passengers.

The current airport opened in 1965 and the airport terminal was dedicated on Oct. 20, 1967. In honor of the terminal's 55th anniversary, we asked Airport Manager **Matt Smith**, Operations Manager **Michael Cockrum** and Airport Operations Administrative Supervisor **Craig Talatzko** to take a look at the airport's past, present and future.

Are there plans to renovate the airport?

The Grand Canyon National Park Airport is the gateway to one of the seven natural wonders of the world, yet it remains much the same as when it opened in 1967. We are taking steps to change that. In 2021, ADOT completed a feasibility study and we are now at about 60% design for the terminal building. The restrooms are nearly finished being renovated. We must modernize the airport to improve customer experiences and better meet our tenants' business needs, increase

our energy efficiency, and provide greater accessibility for individuals with disabilities. We also need a proper TSA screening area dedicated for that purpose. Our next big challenge will be to fund this modernization project, which is estimated to cost approximately \$9 million, and we are working to identify grant funding.

How has the terminal building evolved over the years?

We replaced the roof from old wooden shake shingles to asphalt shingles about 15 years ago. A baggage room was added on the south end in the 1970s and the water treatment plant on the north end was built in the 1980s.

Please describe what's in the terminal building.

Tenants include Paragon Skydiving, Westwind Aviation and gift shop, Grand Canyon Rental Adventures (ATV Rentals) and GC-bikes (electric bike rental).

How many employees work at the Grand Canyon National Park Airport?

We usually have a staff of 14, including administrative, maintenance staff and firefighters.



Craig Talatzko, Grand Canyon National Park Airport



ADOT Photo Archive



Craig Talatzko, Grand Canyon National Park Airport

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MVD ranked top kaizen performer in FY 2022

Kaizens across agency make ADOT safer, better place to work

THROUGHOUT ADOT, employees are putting their heads together to create kaizens — making changes for the better — so the agency is a safer, more efficient place to work.

The Motor Vehicle Division led ADOT with the most standardized kaizens submitted for fiscal year 2021-22. Its 3,246 kaizens represented nearly 40% of the agency's 8,201 total kaizens. MVD had six of the 10 ADOT units with the most kaizens.

Program Administrator **Robert Smith** is proud that his MVD Third Party Program was the No. 1 unit with 607 kaizens.

“The Third Party Program is filled with about 40 dedicated lean-focused employees who are always looking to improve efficiency, reduce waste and increase productivity,” he added.

Kaizens focus on quality or safety. They address one or more of these wastes: overproduction, inventory, waiting, motion, over processing, defects, unutilized talent and transport.

Central District Drainage and Sweeping Operations Supervisor **Michael Culp** in the Infrastructure Delivery and Operations Division was the top-ranking ADOT employee with 150 kaizens.

“Kaizens are important for the agency so all employees can review, assess, implement and possibly improve to continue moving the agency in

New Kaizen Marketplace launches



The new Kaizen Marketplace makes it easy to submit, review and share kaizens with other units. Read more, [Page 5](#).

a more efficient direction for the future,” he said.

One of Culp’s kaizens involved modifying a water truck to accept an attenuating trailer, resulting in a 25% reduction of personnel needed for drain maintenance.

Tempe Roadway Maintenance Highway Operations Tech IV **Peter Verastegui** said his unit looks for new improvements no matter how small they might be.

“If it makes our lives safer and easier, it is worth the effort of applying it,” he added.

One of his team’s notable kaizens was about the [crash barrel funnel](#), which was spotlighted in a video.

MVD’s Driver Compliance Program Administrator **Leti Navarro** said her team experiences many benefits from using kaizen-thinking methods.

“They have reflected on those experiences with how they approach problems as opportunities,” she added.

One of Navarro’s team’s kaizens was [streamlining the revocation investigation](#).

MVD Driver Compliance Lead **Maria Isidoro** said the revocation application processing time was reduced from 35 days in August 2021 to just 10 days by January 2022.

“By working together and identifying what we could eliminate within our process, we were able to consistently decrease our processing time,” she added.

Financial Systems Supervisor **Rashmi Shah** said her team strives to improve processes in terms of accuracy, safety, effectiveness and efficiency.

“Understanding the issue and its underlying cause facilitates the development of a long-term fix as opposed to a temporary fix,” she added.

Business Process Analyst **Jason Gillmore** said kaizens are important because they help create a culture of employees reflecting on their work.

“As a new employee, I tend to ask why and how we can make it easier or faster to complete a task. The kaizen program makes me more aware of the steps I take when completing a task,” he added. ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

DIVISION	UNIT	KAIZEN COUNT
MVD	Regulatory Administration	607
MVD	Driver Compliance	513
IDO	Central Maintenance District Landscape Administration	251
MVD	Records Management	232
MVD	MVD Support Services	183
IDO	University Road Maintenance	180
MVD	Communications	171
FMS	Revenue and Tax Administration	151
FMS	Chief Financial Officer	143
MVD	Specialized Registration Services	98

EMPLOYEE	DIVISION	UNIT	FY 2022
Michael Culp	IDO	Central Maintenance District	150
Morgan Henling	MVD	Records Management	133
Maria Carlon	MVD	Driver Compliance	116
Maria Isidoro	MVD	Driver Compliance	114
Shawn Garcia	IDO	University Road Maintenance	106
Margarita Jimenez	MVD	Ignition Interlock	92
Rashmi Shah	FMS	Chief Financial Officer	90
Mark Silva	IDO	Central Maintenance District	58
Katherine Koster	FMS	Financial Planning	53
Jason Gillmore	FMS	Chief Financial Officer	50

DIVISION/GROUP	KAIZEN COUNT
Motor Vehicle	3,246
Infrastructure Delivery and Operations	2,357
Administrative Services	824
Financial Management Services	438
Information Technology Group	337
Transportation Systems Management and Operations	286
Employee and Business Development	197
Enforcement and Compliance	120
Communications	86
State Engineer's Office	61
TOTAL AGENCY-WIDE	8,201

KAIZEN KORNER

KAIZEN MARKETPLACE

With the new [Kaizen Marketplace on ADOTNet](#), employees can share their kaizen improvement ideas with other ADOT groups or adopt a shareable kaizen idea from someone else.

This year's Kaizen Challenge goals are:



- 7,200 overall agency kaizen target
- 100% of team members will implement at least one kaizen
- 100% of team members will identify at least one kaizen that could be implemented by another team
- Leaders will continue to support and recognize kaizen thinking

KAIZEN COUNT

The number of kaizens submitted by ADOT employees so far in fiscal year 2022-23.

1,124

For more information, visit the [Kaizen Challenge page](#) and the [Kaizen Marketplace page](#) on ADOT Net.

MEET THE TEAM

Statewide Permits Services

STATEWIDE PERMITS SERVICES includes four employees: Manager **Susan Austin**, Administrative Assistant **Jessica Gonzales**, Class C Permits Supervisor **Christina Pippin** and Class C Permit Technician **Cassandra Miller**. The team describes their group in the Q&A below:

Explain what your team does.

Statewide Permits Services issues and provides regulatory enforcement and administrative guidance on highway-related permits. Class C permits are issued for over-dimensional loads that require careful routing to ensure the safety of the traveling public and ADOT infrastructure. Outdoor Advertising Permits (primarily for billboards) are issued for advertising within view of, directed at or intended to be read from ADOT-regulated roadways to ensure compliance with the federal Highway Beautification Act of 1965 and protect federal transportation funding. Film permits are issued for filming activity performed on ADOT roadways, including the right of way or any ADOT property. We also maintain and support the digital database for statewide encroachment permits.

How does processing and issuing over-dimensional permits support construction projects?

Class C works directly with transport companies to ensure permits are issued in a timely manner, so loads can be delivered on schedule to avoid costly project delays. Class C also works to ensure that over-dimensional loads do not end up in the middle of an ADOT construction project or previously issued encroachment permit. We analyze the route of transport and verify with district personnel and project managers to determine if a load can safely maneuver through a restricted area.



Pictured (from left to right): **Susan Austin**, **Jessica Gonzales**, **Christina Pippin** and **Cassandra Miller**



ADOT Construction

A B-1 Bomber traveling through Casa Grande on westbound Interstate 10 in February 2013.

What is a recent success story for your team?

We have many success stories as we specialize specifically in loads of excess size and weight and coordinate with ADOT construction and maintenance, Department of Public Safety and local entities. Success is when the load gets delivered onsite, with little to no delay in transport.

How does your team embody AKA – The ADOT Way?


Susan Austin: In my short time with ADOT, I have observed the team makes well thought-out decisions to change processes that increased efficiency and decreased costs. One that comes to mind is reducing the amount of unnecessary color printing and copies of documents mailed to sign owners to facilitate their permit renewals. I am pleased to see the high standards each member of the team sets for themselves.

Tell us about a kaizen that improved a process for your team.

We needed data to help visualize an issue that we could see, but that others couldn't grasp since it didn't affect their daily work. We implemented a form that allowed us to track when Event Reporting System (ERS) entries were entered late, missing information or not entered at all. The data we collected from our own checks and balances led to improved training for all employees that utilize ERS to enter construction and maintenance restrictions. The entries have improved now that others understand the importance of how items are entered. This allows expedient issuance of permits with better communication within the agency. ■

~ Ashley Richards, Senior Communications Specialist

IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT WITH Mark Sanders



AT ADOT, it's difficult to sum up anyone's job in just a few words. That's why we're giving employees across the agency the chance to share a little bit about what they do every day. If you'd like to be featured in a future issue, please send an email to InsideLane@azdot.gov and we'll provide you with a questionnaire.

Mark Sanders has worked at ADOT for nine years. He is the director of the Office of International Affairs, which is part of Government Relations.

How do you describe your job to someone outside the agency?

My job is to conduct outreach to the community and local officials regarding transportation-related issues. I also work with elected officials in Mexico to ensure a safe and efficient flow of commerce, goods and services at our ports of entry.

What's your typical workday like?

My typical day consists of several meetings with local officials across the state. I also spend a great deal of time on phone calls from our border community and elected officials in Mexico. I also start the day with a team huddle.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

What I most enjoy in my job is resolving problems in the community, and also

being part of infrastructure projects that help the state.

If you won the lottery, what would you splurge on first?

A good financial advisor!

What's on the top of your bucket list?

To travel the world.

What's your favorite holiday?

Fourth of July.

Favorite documentary that you've watched?

"Magic and Bird 30 for 30", a documentary of the careers of Larry Bird and Magic Johnson.

Do you have a special talent that people would be surprised to know about?

I have been an assistant high school basketball coach for several years. It is very rewarding.

Favorite band/musician?

U2 and Pearl Jam

ATTENTION SHUTTERBUGS:

Enter our ADOT @ Work Photo Contest

WHETHER YOU'RE working in the field, in the office or remotely, we invite you to share photos of yourself and/or your co-workers at work for our ADOT @ Work Photo Contest.

Selected photos of ADOT employees working in various jobs around the state will be featured in a future issue of *The Inside Lane*. The grand prize winner will be chosen at random and will receive an Inside Lane goodie bag. Employee photos also will be featured in an ADOT Flickr photo album.

By Nov. 8, send your original, high-resolution, digital photographs for the ADOT @ Work Photo Contest to Insidelane@azdot.gov in JPEG format (no larger than 10MB). The photo contest is only open to ADOT employees.

Along with your photo, please provide a brief description about what the photo shows and where and when it



Ivan Racic, an air and noise planner for the Environmental Planning Group, works remotely.

was taken. Please provide your name, title, division and contact information. If you have other people in your photo, make sure you have their permission and identify them in the photo with their names and titles.

Send photos taken directly with your camera or smartphone, and not a photo downloaded from a

social media site. Online photos are highly compressed and would be unusable for publication purposes.

Check out our [Smartphone Photo Tips](#) about capturing stunning photos.

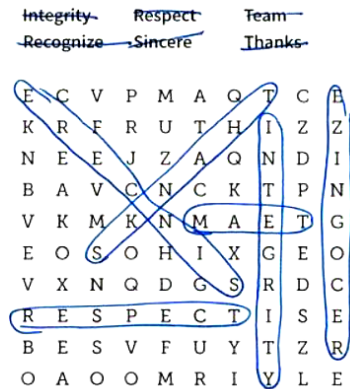
We can't wait to see your great photos!

WINNER, WINNER!



WE RECEIVED many entries in response to last month's word search contest, but there could only be one winner. Congratulations to Page/Tuba City MVD Customer Service Manager **Connie Bilagody**, who was randomly selected as the winner. She received a special gift bag, including a note cube depicting the Grand Canyon, an Arizona Highways magazine, stress ball, pen, lanyard and candy.

The word search answers are shown in this photograph submitted by Bilagody.



77% of customer-facing employees say appreciation helps improve the quality of customer experience.

Customer satisfaction has increased **41%** at companies with peer-to-peer recognition.

Let's create a culture of recognition!