

HB

133



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February 19, 2009

Representative Peggy Wilson
State Capitol, Room 408
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Re: Support for House Bill No. 133

Dear Representative Peggy Wilson:

I am writing to express my support for House Bill No. 133. As Traffic Engineer for the City of Fairbanks, I support the use of the Alaska Traffic Manual as a standard for uniformity of traffic control devices throughout Alaska. While many of the standards it sets out are "shall" conditions and therefore mandatory, there are also many standards that are "should" situations, where engineering judgment must be applied to determine what traffic control devices will work best for that particular situation. That was the intent of how the Alaska Traffic Manual was written—to maintain uniformity while allowing use of judgment, rather than prescribe a recipe to apply to all field situations.

There are many factors affecting the type of traffic control used at a location, including clarity of devices, unique road geometry, visibility conditions, accident history, etc., which must be considered in a decision to place a traffic control device. The *Guerrero* Ruling takes away an engineer's ability to use his or her professional judgment to determine the best traffic control devices for a particular situation. Since House Bill No. 133 seeks to rectify this situation, I would like to express my strong support for it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

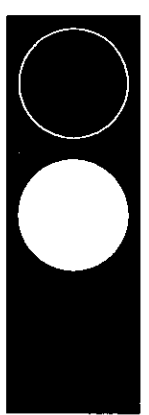
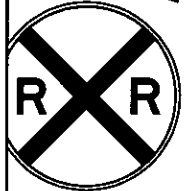
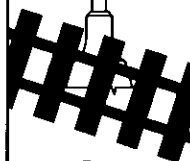
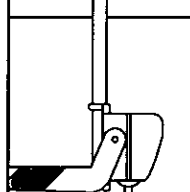
Sincerely,

Kathleen Vincent, P. E.
City of Fairbanks Traffic Engineer

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|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Cc: Representative Jay Ramras | Senator Joe Thomas |
| Representative Mike Kelly | Senator Joe Paskvan |
| Representative Scott Kawasaki | Kurtis Smith, AKDOT Headquarters |
| Representative David Guttenberg | Mayor Terry Strle, City of Fairbanks |



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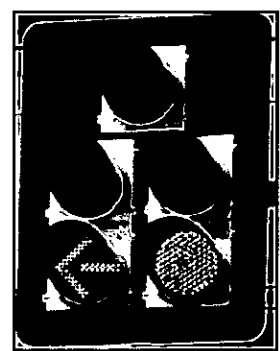
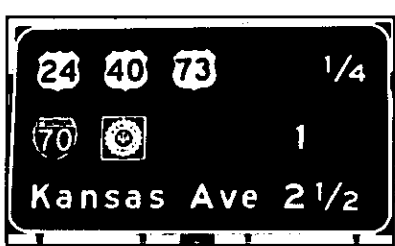
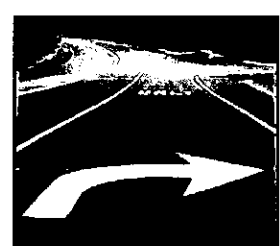


Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

for Streets and Highways

2003 EDITION

Including Revision 1 dated November 2004



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

SCHOOL



MANUAL ON UNIFORM TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

INTRODUCTION

Standard:

Traffic control devices shall be defined as all signs, signals, markings, and other devices used to regulate, warn, or guide traffic, placed on, over, or adjacent to a street, highway, pedestrian facility, or bikeway by authority of a public agency having jurisdiction.

The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) is incorporated by reference in 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 655, Subpart F and shall be recognized as the national standard for all traffic control devices installed on any street, highway, or bicycle trail open to public travel in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 109(d) and 402(a). The policies and procedures of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to obtain basic uniformity of traffic control devices shall be as described in 23 CFR 655, Subpart F.

Any traffic control device design or application provision contained in this Manual shall be considered to be in the public domain. Traffic control devices contained in this Manual shall not be protected by a patent, trademark, or copyright, except for the Interstate Shield and any other items owned by FHWA.

Support:

The need for uniform standards was recognized long ago. The American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO), now known as the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), published a manual for rural highways in 1927, and the National Conference on Street and Highway Safety (NCSHS) published a manual for urban streets in 1930. In the early years, the necessity for unification of the standards applicable to the different classes of road and street systems was obvious. To meet this need, a joint committee of AASHO and NCSHS developed and published the original edition of this Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) in 1935. That committee, now called the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (NCUTCD), though changed from time to time in name, organization, and personnel, has been in continuous existence and has contributed to periodic revisions of this Manual. The FHWA has administered the MUTCD since the 1971 edition. The FHWA and its predecessor organizations have participated in the development and publishing of the previous editions. There were eight previous editions of the MUTCD, and several of those editions were revised one or more times. Table I-1 traces the evolution of the MUTCD, including the two manuals developed by AASHO and NCSHS.

Standard:

The U.S. Secretary of Transportation, under authority granted by the Highway Safety Act of 1966, decreed that traffic control devices on all streets and highways open to public travel in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 109(d) and 402(a) in each State shall be in substantial conformance with the Standards issued or endorsed by the FHWA.

Support:

23 CFR 655.603 adopts the MUTCD as the national standard for any street, highway, or bicycle trail open to public travel in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 109(d) and 402(a). The "Uniform Vehicle Code (UVC)" is one of the publications referenced in the MUTCD. The UVC contains a model set of motor vehicle codes and traffic laws for use throughout the United States. The States are encouraged to adopt Section 15-116 of the UVC, which states that, "No person shall install or maintain in any area of private property used by the public any sign, signal, marking, or other device intended to regulate, warn, or guide traffic unless it conforms with the State manual and specifications adopted under Section 15-104."

The Standard, Guidance, Option, and Support material described in this edition of the MUTCD provide the transportation professional with the information needed to make appropriate decisions regarding the use of traffic control devices on streets and highways. The material in this edition is organized to better differentiate between Standards that must be satisfied for the particular circumstances of a situation, Guidances that should be followed for the particular circumstances of a situation, and Options that may be applicable for the particular circumstances of a situation.

Throughout this Manual the headings Standard, Guidance, Option, and Support are used to classify the nature of the text that follows. Figures, tables, and illustrations supplement the text and might constitute a Standard, Guidance, Option, or Support. The user needs to refer to the appropriate text to classify the nature of the figure, table, or illustration.

Standard:

When used in this Manual, the text headings shall be defined as follows:

1. **Standard**—a statement of required, mandatory, or specifically prohibitive practice regarding a traffic control device. All standards are labeled, and the text appears in bold type. The verb shall be typically used. Standards are sometimes modified by Options.

Table I-1. Evolution of the MUTCD

Year	Name	Month / Year Revised
1927	Manual and Specifications for the Manufacture, Display, and Erection of U.S. Standard Road Markers and Signs (for rural roads)	4/29, 12/31
1930	Manual on Street Traffic Signs, Signals, and Markings (for urban streets)	No revisions
1935	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (MUTCD)	2/39
1942	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways — War Emergency Edition	No revisions
1948	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways	9/54
1961	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways	No revisions
1971	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways	11/71, 4/72, 3/73, 10/73, 6/74, 6/75, 9/76, 12/77
1978	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways	12/79, 12/83, 9/84, 3/86
1988	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways	1/90, 3/92, 9/93, 11/94, 12/96, 6/98, 1/00
2000	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways — Millennium Edition	7/02
2003	Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways	

2. **Guidance**—a statement of recommended, but not mandatory, practice in typical situations, with deviations allowed if engineering judgment or engineering study indicates the deviation to be appropriate. All Guidance statements are labeled, and the text appears in unbold type. The verb should is typically used. Guidance statements are sometimes modified by Options.
3. **Option**—a statement of practice that is a permissive condition and carries no requirement or recommendation. Options may contain allowable modifications to a Standard or Guidance. All Option statements are labeled, and the text appears in unbold type. The verb may is typically used.
4. **Support**—an informational statement that does not convey any degree of mandate, recommendation, authorization, prohibition, or enforceable condition. Support statements are labeled, and the text appears in unbold type. The verbs shall, should, and may are not used in Support statements.

Support:

Throughout this Manual all dimensions and distances are provided in the International System of Units, a modernized version of the Metric system, and their English equivalent units are shown in parentheses.

Guidance:

Before laying out distances or determining sign sizes, the public agency should decide whether to use the International System of Units (Metric) or the English equivalent units. The chosen units should be specified on plan drawings. The chosen unit of measurement should be made known to those responsible for designing, installing, or maintaining traffic control devices.

Except when a specific numeral is required by the text of a Section of this Manual, numerals shown on the sign images in the figures that specify quantities such as times, distances, speed limits, and weights should be regarded as examples only. When installing any of these signs, the numerals should be appropriately altered to fit the specific signing situation.

Support:

The following information will be useful when reference is being made to a specific portion of text in this Manual.

There are ten Parts in this Manual and each Part is comprised of one or more Chapters. Each Chapter is comprised of one or more Sections. Parts are given a numerical identification, such as Part 2-Signs. Chapters are identified by the Part number and a letter, such as Chapter 2B-Regulatory Signs. Sections are identified by the Chapter number and letter followed by a decimal point and a number, such as Section 2B.03-Size of Regulatory Signs.

Each Section is comprised of one or more paragraphs. The paragraphs are indented but are not identified by a number or letter. Paragraphs are counted from the beginning of each Section without regard to the intervening text headings (Standard, Guidance, Option, or Support). Some paragraphs have lettered or numbered items. As an example of how to cite this Manual, the phrase "Not less than 12 m (40 ft) beyond the stop line" that appears on Page 4D-12 of this Manual would be referenced in writing as "Section 4D.15, P7, D1(a)," and would be verbally referenced as "Item D1(a) of Paragraph 7 of Section 4D.15."

Standard:

In accordance with 23 CFR 655.603(b)(1), States or other Federal agencies that have their own MUTCDs or Supplements shall revise these MUTCDs or Supplements to be in substantial conformance with changes to the National MUTCD within 2 years of issuance of the changes. Unless a particular device is no longer serviceable, non-compliant devices on existing highways and bikeways shall be brought into compliance with the current edition of the National MUTCD as part of the systematic upgrading of substandard traffic control devices (and installation of new required traffic control devices) required pursuant to the Highway Safety Program, 23 U.S.C. § 402(a). In cases involving Federal-aid projects for new highway or bikeway construction or reconstruction, the traffic control devices installed (temporary or permanent) shall be in conformance with the most recent edition of the National MUTCD before that highway is opened or re-opened to the public for unrestricted travel [23 CFR 655.603(d)(2)]. The FHWA has the authority to establish other target compliance dates for implementation of particular changes to the MUTCD [23 CFR 655.603(d)(4)]. These target compliance dates established by the FHWA shall be as follows:

Section 2A.19 Lateral Offset—crashworthiness of sign supports—January 17, 2013 for roads with posted speed limit of 80 km/h (50 mph) or higher.

Section 2B.03 Size of Regulatory Signs—increased sign sizes and other changes to Table 2B-1—10 years from the effective date of the Final Rule for the 2003 MUTCD.

Section 2B.04 STOP Sign (R1-1)—4-WAY plaque requirement—January 17, 2004.

Section 2B.06 STOP Sign Placement—signs mounted on back of STOP sign—10 years from the effective date of the Final Rule for the 2003 MUTCD.

CHAPTER 1A. GENERAL

Section 1A.01 Purpose of Traffic Control Devices

Support:

The purpose of traffic control devices, as well as the principles for their use, is to promote highway safety and efficiency by providing for the orderly movement of all road users on streets and highways throughout the Nation.

Traffic control devices notify road users of regulations and provide warning and guidance needed for the reasonably safe, uniform, and efficient operation of all elements of the traffic stream.

Standard:

Traffic control devices or their supports shall not bear any advertising message or any other message that is not related to traffic control.

Support:

Tourist-oriented directional signs and Specific Service signs are not considered advertising; rather, they are classified as motorist service signs.

Section 1A.02 Principles of Traffic Control Devices

Support:

This Manual contains the basic principles that govern the design and use of traffic control devices for all streets and highways open to public travel regardless of type or class or the public agency having jurisdiction. This Manual's text specifies the restriction on the use of a device if it is intended for limited application or for a specific system. It is important that these principles be given primary consideration in the selection and application of each device.

Guidance:

To be effective, a traffic control device should meet five basic requirements:

- A. Fulfill a need;
- B. Command attention;
- C. Convey a clear, simple meaning;
- D. Command respect from road users; and
- E. Give adequate time for proper response.

Design, placement, operation, maintenance, and uniformity are aspects that should be carefully considered in order to maximize the ability of a traffic control device to meet the five requirements listed in the previous paragraph. Vehicle speed should be carefully considered as an element that governs the design, operation, placement, and location of various traffic control devices.

Support:

The definition of the word "speed" varies depending on its use. The definitions of specific speed terms are contained in Section 1A.13.

Guidance:

The actions required of road users to obey regulatory devices should be specified by State statute, or in cases not covered by State statute, by local ordinance or resolution consistent with the "Uniform Vehicle Code."

The proper use of traffic control devices should provide the reasonable and prudent road user with the information necessary to reasonably safely and lawfully use the streets, highways, pedestrian facilities, and bikeways.

Support:

Uniformity of the meaning of traffic control devices is vital to their effectiveness. The meanings ascribed to devices in this Manual are in general accord with the publications mentioned in Section 1A.11.

Section 1A.03 Design of Traffic Control Devices

Guidance:

Devices should be designed so that features such as size, shape, color, composition, lighting or retroreflection, and contrast are combined to draw attention to the devices; that size, shape, color, and simplicity of message combine to produce a clear meaning; that legibility and size combine with placement to permit adequate time for response; and that uniformity, size, legibility, and reasonableness of the message combine to command respect.

Standard:

All symbols shall be unmistakably similar to or mirror images of the adopted symbol signs, all of which are shown in the "Standard Highway Signs" book (see Section 1A.11). Symbols and colors shall not be modified unless otherwise stated herein. All symbols and colors for signs not shown in the "Standard Highway Signs" book shall follow the procedures for experimentation and change described in Section 1A.10.

Guidance:

Aspects of a device's design should be modified only if there is a demonstrated need.

Support:

An example of modifying a device's design would be to modify the Side Road (W2-2) sign to show a second offset intersecting road.

Option:

Highway agencies may develop word message signs to notify road users of special regulations or to warn road users of a situation that might not be readily apparent. Unlike symbol signs and colors, new word message signs may be used without the need for experimentation. With the exception of symbols and colors, minor modifications in the specific design elements of a device may be made provided the essential appearance characteristics are preserved. Although the standard design of symbol signs cannot be modified, it may be appropriate to change the orientation of the symbol to better reflect the direction of travel.

Section 1A.04 Placement and Operation of Traffic Control Devices**Guidance:**

Placement of a traffic control device should be within the road user's view so that adequate visibility is provided. To aid in conveying the proper meaning, the traffic control device should be appropriately positioned with respect to the location, object, or situation to which it applies. The location and legibility of the traffic control device should be such that a road user has adequate time to make the proper response in both day and night conditions.

Traffic control devices should be placed and operated in a uniform and consistent manner.

Unnecessary traffic control devices should be removed. The fact that a device is in good physical condition should not be a basis for deferring needed removal or change.

Section 1A.05 Maintenance of Traffic Control Devices**Guidance:**

Functional maintenance of traffic control devices should be used to determine if certain devices need to be changed to meet current traffic conditions.

Physical maintenance of traffic control devices should be performed to retain the legibility and visibility of the device, and to retain the proper functioning of the device.

Support:

Clean, legible, properly mounted devices in good working condition command the respect of road users.

Section 1A.06 Uniformity of Traffic Control Devices**Support:**

Uniformity of devices simplifies the task of the road user because it aids in recognition and understanding, thereby reducing perception/reaction time. Uniformity assists road users, law enforcement officers, and traffic courts by giving everyone the same interpretation. Uniformity assists public highway officials through efficiency in manufacture, installation, maintenance, and administration. Uniformity means treating similar situations in a similar way. The use of uniform traffic control devices does not, in itself, constitute uniformity. A standard device used where it is not appropriate is as objectionable as a nonstandard device; in fact, this might be worse, because such misuse might result in disrespect at those locations where the device is needed and appropriate.

Section 1A.07 Responsibility for Traffic Control Devices**Standard:**

The responsibility for the design, placement, operation, maintenance, and uniformity of traffic control devices shall rest with the public agency or the official having jurisdiction. 23 CFR 655.603 adopts the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices as the national standard for all traffic control devices installed on any street, highway, or bicycle trail open to public travel. When a State or other Federal agency

CHAPTER 2A. GENERAL

Section 2A.01 Function and Purpose of Signs

Support:

This Manual contains Standards, Guidance, and Options for the signing within the right-of-way of all types of highways open to public travel. The functions of signs are to provide regulations, warnings, and guidance information for road users. Both words and symbols are used to convey the messages. Signs are not typically used to confirm rules of the road.

Detailed sign requirements are located in the following Chapters of Part 2:

Chapter 2B—Regulatory Signs

Chapter 2C—Warning Signs

Chapter 2D—Guide Signs (Conventional Roads)

Chapter 2E—Guide Signs (Freeways and Expressways)

Chapter 2F—Specific Service (Logo) Signs

Chapter 2G—Tourist-Oriented Direction Signs

Chapter 2H—Recreational and Cultural Interest Area Signs

Chapter 2I—Emergency Management Signs

Standard:

Because the requirements and standards for signs depend on the particular type of highway upon which they are to be used, the following definitions shall apply:

- A. Freeway—a divided highway with full control of access;
- B. Expressway—a divided highway with partial control of access;
- C. Conventional Road—a street or highway other than a low-volume road (as defined in Section 5A.01), a freeway, or an expressway; and
- D. Special Purpose Road—a low-volume, low-speed road that serves recreational areas or resource development activities, or that provides local access.

Section 2A.02 Definitions

Support:

Definitions that are applicable to signs are given in Sections 1A.13 and 2A.01.

Section 2A.03 Standardization of Application

Support:

It is recognized that urban traffic conditions differ from those in rural environments, and in many instances signs are applied and located differently. Where pertinent and practical, this Manual sets forth separate recommendations for urban and rural conditions.

Guidance:

Signs should be used only where justified by engineering judgment or studies, as noted in Section 1A.09.

Results from traffic engineering studies of physical and traffic factors should indicate the locations where signs are deemed necessary or desirable.

Roadway geometric design and sign application should be coordinated so that signing can be effectively placed to give the road user any necessary regulatory, warning, guidance, and other information.

Standard:

Each standard sign shall be displayed only for the specific purpose as prescribed in this Manual. Determination of the particular signs to be applied to a specific condition shall be made in accordance with the criteria set forth in Part 2. Before any new highway, detour, or temporary route is opened to traffic, all necessary signs shall be in place. Signs required by road conditions or restrictions shall be removed when those conditions cease to exist or the restrictions are withdrawn.

Section 2A.04 Excessive Use of Signs

Guidance:

Regulatory and warning signs should be used conservatively because these signs ~~if used to excess, tend to lose their effectiveness.~~ If used, route signs and directional signs should be used frequently because they promote reasonably safe and efficient operations by keeping road users informed of their location.