

Oregon Traffic Control Devices Committee

[July 18, 2014](#)

Meeting Minutes

ODOT [Technical Leadership Center](#), 4040 Fairview Industrial Drive SE, Salem, Oregon

Members Present: [Mike Caccavano](#), City of Redmond, Chairperson; [Ed Chastain](#), Lane County, Vice Chair; [Bob Pappe](#), Secretary, ODOT State Traffic Engineer; [Brian Barnett](#), City of Springfield; [Alex Georgevitch](#), City of Medford; [Pam O'Brien](#), DKS Associates; [Jim Rentz](#), OSP; [Jeff Wise](#), ODOT Region 5

Members Absent: [Joseph Marek](#), Clackamas County; [Cynthia Schmitt](#), Marion County

Others Present: Nick Fortey, FHWA; Terry Hockett, Kevin Hottmann, City of Salem; Jabra Khasho, City of Beaverton; Matthew Machado, City of Portland; Sarah Owens, Washington County; Doug Bish, Craig Black, Scott Cramer; Kevin Haas, Katie Johnson, Mike Kimlinger, Justin King, Kathi McConnell, Chris Rowland, Amanda Salyer, Heidi Shoblom, ODOT Traffic/Roadway Section; Bert Hartman, ODOT Bridge Section. *Others present via i-Link:* Scott Beard, Kittelson & Associates

Introduction – Approval of Minutes – Additional Agenda Items

Chair Mike Caccavano called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and called for introductions from all attending. Brian Barnett then moved, Jeff Wise seconded, and the committee approved the [May 2014 OTCDC Meeting Minutes](#). Two additional agenda items were brought forward: Kevin Haas on “Tattle-Tail” Lights, and Heidi Shoblom on Weight Limit Reduced signs.

Business from the Audience/Public Comment on Non-Agenda Topics

None to report.

NCUTCD Meeting Update

Scott Beard then gave a [summary](#) on events at the June meeting of the NCUTCD in Minneapolis.

For the General Session, there were 253 attendees. Oregon attendees consisted of Peter Koonce, Tom Lancaster, Randy McCourt, Eric Niemeyer, Lee Rodegerdts, Jesse Boudart, and Scott Beard.

Scott said the National Motorists Association (NMA) has withdrawn their application to be a sponsor of the NCUTCD so this is no longer under consideration. He noted the National Committee has put out an RFQ for redesign of their website to include a searchable database

of council recommendation and the ability to do on-line comments and voting on sponsor applications. Future meetings of the NCUTCD are scheduled as follows: June 2015 – San Antonio, TX; June 2016 – Savannah, GA; and June 2017 – Pittsburg, PA.

Moving on to the FHWA Report: The federal Office of Management and Budget ([OMB](#)) has decided the next MUTCD will constitute significant rulemaking and will require an economic analysis. It's not yet clear whether this will include current standards or just changes to the current Manual. Either way, it will be a significant effort.

Scott went over the timeline for the next edition. The June meeting was the last opportunity for the NCUTCD to provide input for the new manual. In August, the feds plan to have a complete final draft of the Notice of Proposed Amendment (NPA), including economic analysis. Then from September 2014 to April of 2015, there will be internal OMB and Secretary of Transportation ([OST](#)) reviews, followed by publishing of the NPA in the Federal Register in May of 2015. This will kick off a 6-month docket comment period and they are currently expecting to finalize the MUTCD and final rule notice in October of 2016 and have a final rule take effect in 2017.

FHWA will publish a request for comment on the strategic plan Gene Hawkins has been developing for the MUTCD.

FHWA has issued Revision 1 to the 2012 Supplement to the Standard Highway Signs Manual ([SHSM](#)). It doesn't appear to yet be available on line. It reportedly includes all signs, pavement markings, arrows from the 2009 MUTCD. A future full revision is now planned to be concurrent with the (new) 2017 MUTCD.

Among items of interest from the Signals Technical Committee:

- Text on bike signals approved (substantial revision to the interim approval FHWA currently has out) and will go to FHWA as a recommendation on bike signals in the next MUTCD.
- New railroad preemption text with significant changes approved for recommendation to FHWA.
- Yellow change interval formula – STC reaffirmed January vote to remove FHWA recommendation to include formula.
- Bimodal Flashing Yellow Arrow: Motion to allow FYA in green and yellow indications failed. Reverts to January recommendation to only allow in yellow indication to avoid confusion in driver expectation of having two possible locations for the FYA to appear.
- Approved revision to crash warrant based on research and not finding a reason for the current 5 crash requirement. It will be included in the next MUTCD, tied to the Highway Safety Manual research.

In RRFB Research, Kay Fitzpatrick compared circular and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons in daytime and nighttime staged crossings. She found out brightness matters, but you can be too bright and not see pedestrians. Placement of RRFB above the sign performed

better. FHWA will likely adjust flash pattern (wig-wag, dark period, simultaneous) which gets your attention and the dark period makes a pedestrian more visible.

Craig Black asked about the Signal Technical Committee discussion on the FYA regarding using a separate wire in order to be able to monitor the FYA as Oregon does. Scott said this hadn't been discussed by the Committee. He said not running a separate wire makes it easier to retrofit a signal to the FYA.

Kevin Haas asked whether FHWA was looking at more interim approvals given the expected additional delay in issuance of a new MUTCD (in 2017 or possibly later). He's heard the Bike Committee is asking for them. Scott said there has been some discussion about this, related to the strategic plan discussion. In the short term, it's a thought but he doesn't think FHWA has made such a decision.

Bob Pappé noted a question from the AASHTO Subcommittee on Traffic Engineering SCOTE meeting prior to the NCUTCD meeting regarding layout and levels of mandate for standards. Scott said this is still a part of the MUTCD strategic planning Gene Hawkins is working on but it's not going to be included in the next MUTCD.

Brian Barnett asked for more detail about what would be replacing the crash warrant in the next revision to the MUTCD discussed above. Scott said it is varied with rural and urban components, etc. He promised to send a copy of a table with the details from NCHRP rather than try to describe it. The table excerpt is here.

Sign Policy and Guidelines for the State Highway System Update – Roll-up Signs

Justin King reviewed for the committee the SP&G Chapter 6 Edits for Chapter 6, adding guidance language for roll-up sign use. They can be used for any sign type in accordance with the SP&G, Standard Specifications, QPL and the MUTCD unless otherwise stated. They may be used when needed at a single location for no more than 48 consecutive hours, should be mounted on both sides of traffic when used with two or more lanes going in the same direction and should not be mounted on vehicles in most cases. Individual signs removed the roll-up reference as follows: CW11-1, CW11-1a, CW11-2, CW11-2a, CW15-5, CW15-5a, CW15-5b, and CW20-7b.

For some individual signs the roll-up reference is being maintained (CR1-1, CW 20-1a, CW21-9).

In the case of Sign No. CW23-14 (CONSTRUCTION VEHICLE - DO NOT FOLLOW) there is instruction added the sign shall be mounted on a rigid substrate.

In addition there is some proposed housekeeping to include "fluorescent" with orange and "retroreflective" with various sheeting and clarifying the sign legend is not referred to as sheeting on Sign No. CG20-8.

Decision: Brian Barnett moved, Alex Georgevitch seconded and the committee agreed with these changes to the Sign Policy and Guidelines.

Distracted Driving and Rumble Strips

Mike Kimlinger reviewed his request at the last meeting for feedback on the topic of rumble strips and distracted driving. Designed to make noise to caution drifting drivers and get them to correct course before there is a crash, the noise is enough to seriously bother houses in the areas where they are installed, which causes complaints and may end up with the rumble strips having to be removed if sufficient complaints become a political issue. He had asked members to report back on what they're observing in terms of driver behavior and possible methods of installing rumble strips.

Alex Georgevitch said he noted vehicles moving about within their lane and onto rumble strips mostly by commercial truck on four lane roads, county roads and I-5.

Mike Caccavano said he saw very little of it on new rumble strips between Redmond and Bend, possibly because they're new in his area. There aren't any within the City of Redmond.

Bob said it might be there is a better effect when there aren't too many of the rumble strips in use because they're not used to them.

Mike said he was interested in what people are seeing whether or not there are rumble strips because there is research showing there may be more distracted driving everywhere in the last 15-20 years. He noted there is a new version of the grinding treatment which resemble a wave in shape as opposed to the discreet cylindrical milled in rumble strips currently used. These new rumble strips (called sinusoidal, or "mumble strips") reportedly make less sound outside a **vehicle** and still seem to be audible inside a vehicle. ODOT intends to take a closer look at those in the next year to determine if they are a good alternative. A YouTube video [at this link](#) gives some idea of the difference. Mike would still like to get feedback from others on distracted driving and the effect rumble strips seem to be having.

Lieutenant Jim Rentz agreed there is more distracted driving now and said he likes the rumble strips because they do seem to work, especially if there are passengers hearing them and telling the driver to stay in the lane.

Mike said he had concerns about a recent project where the construction crew left big gaps in the strips around houses because vehicles do leave the road there too. He understands the concern about public backlash but hopes the sinusoidal strips can be an effective replacement. Alex agreed with that assessment.

Bob said especially after hearing about "mumble strips", we are advising our construction crews to leave bigger gaps in residential areas in hopes of not generating a backlash and we can come back next year with something that's quieter. There have been states taking the rumble strips out because of the backlash from the public (including Oregon) and we'd like to avoid having to take out more ourselves. This is mostly dealing with edge lines as opposed to centerlines to help prevent head-on collisions although where there are passing lanes we may also be more conservative about the rumble strips in the centerlines.

Notching for recessed reflector installations do provide some noise but they are much more expensive to maintain and, like raised durable striping with the notches on them, the cost is prohibitive. Mike is still interested in more feedback on this subject.

NOA – Single-Unit-Vehicle Weight Limit Signs

Heidi Shoblom presented information on new [Single Vehicle Max Weight Signs](#) which would replace [Specialized Single-Unit Truck Weight Limit Signs](#) approved by the committee in January. The replacements are due to feedback from the trucking industry ([Oregon Trucking Association](#)). They say these signs are too complicated, hard to read and they'd prefer to just have the one weight for all special vehicles with 4-plus axles.

The committee had some concern the lower total weight would reduce the payload of these trucks and might cause concern for some truckers who can't carry as much at one time. Oregon Bridge Engineer Bert Hartman said you would think the single-unit vehicle drivers would prefer the flexibility of the current signs but this isn't the case. There was concern it wouldn't be long before we'd be getting pressure to revert back to the current signs. After some discussion, it was clarified this weight limit applies only to specialized single-unit trucks and the committee was generally reassured. The weight limit shown on the sign is an example only. The actual weight will vary with each individual bridge.

Decision: Ed Chastain moved, Pam O'Brien seconded and the committee agreed with the new signs.

Action Item: Bert Hartman will see to notifying the affected members of the trucking industry local industry owners, OTA and the Bridge Section website of the change and who exactly it applies to, with a copy to Heidi. Heidi will work with Bert to develop and add an additional note in the SP&G to make it clear this sign change applies only to these special multi-axle, single unit vehicles so nobody is confused and local agencies don't misuse the signs.

ODOT's Safety Division Program/Grant Opportunities for 2015

Troy Costales discussed [Oregon's Highway Safety Program](#) for the committee beginning with some statistics on Oregon's average traffic fatalities per year in two three year periods – 2003-2005 and the most recent available, 2009-2011. The statistics focus on three select crash factors: speed, alcohol and no seat belts. The statistics have gone down significantly in the last six years, both in terms of the selected crash factors and in fatal crashes/total deaths. In fact the 2013 total death rate of 315 is the lowest since 1944.

Troy went over the 2014 Public Education Campaigns Calendar which includes elements for Bike/Ped Safety, Driver Education, Impaired Driving, Motorcycle Safety, Occupant Protection, Safe Routes to School Speed, Work Zone, and Youth Safety.

Next Troy reviewed training available which include:

- Teen driver education program (not required) – those who go through it have lower citation, crash and suspension rate than those who are taught by their parents. They also don't have to take the behind-the-wheel test in order to get their driver's license.
- Motorcycle training (required for new bikers) – after taking the training, Motorcycle riders don't have to take the driving test in order to get their motorcycle license.

Finally, Troy discussed local grants available in 2015:

- Bicycle Transportation Alliance Jumpstart Program – provides the JumpStart Bicycle Feet program to communities demonstrating readiness to establish a bike safety program in local schools
- Local PD DUII Overtime – DUII overtime enforcement grants for city police departments participating in High Visibility Enforcement events
- County DUII Overtime – DUII overtime enforcement grants for county sheriff's offices participating in High Visibility Enforcement events
- Local Safety Belt Overtime – Safety Belt overtime enforcement grants for city police departments that conduct three two-week enforcement blitzes, coordinate with media and acquire related training
- County Safety Belt Overtime – Safety Belt overtime enforcement grants for county sheriff's offices that conduct three two-week enforcement blitzes, coordinate with media and acquire related training
- Local Pedestrian Safety Enforcement – Pedestrian safety enforcement mini-grant program to include operations, training and evaluation, and diversion classes
- Safe Routes to School – Safe Routes to School mini-grant program for the administration of SRTS action plan development.
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NOA – Red-Signal Enforcement (Tattletale) & Bike Detection Indication Lights

Kevin Haas said Joel McCarroll alerted him the City of Bend and Redmond have installed “tattle-tale” lights for enforcement of red light runners. The same kind of light is also being used by the City of Portland as part of bicycle detection notification (See [this link](#)). The former allows police officers downstream of a traffic signal to tell when a light has turned red and thus, when a driver has run a red light. The latter lights up after a bicyclist stops their bike on top of the bike detector stencil so the bicyclist can tell they've been detected and will get a green light in due course. FHWA has not formally declared the former not a traffic control device although their Intersection Safety unit has said *“There are no compliance issues with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, as Red-Signal Enforcement Lights are not traffic-control devices.”* (See <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersection/resources/techsum/fhwasa09005/>).

However there is complete silence regarding whether the same kind of light, used for bike detection notification is a traffic control device. And since the bike community is highly communicative, we expect to see more requests for bike detection indication lights to be installed. Because of their location aimed at traffic, they may be seen by the public more than a pedestrian push button lighting up or the red light indication use typically aimed downstream from traffic and this – along with increased use of red light “tattletale” lights – may finally bring pressure for a definitive proclamation by the feds. This is a head's up item, no action needed at this time.

Local Jurisdiction Issues - Discussion

Lieutenant Jim Rentz asked about a report of flashing yellow lights which may cycle back to green and then directly to red without warning. It was clarified this should not be the case and if it is happening, it should be brought up with the agency who maintains the light in question.

There was some discussion on the fatality rate for the last three years of 71 people who weren't wearing seat belts even though we have a 98% compliance rate in the state – are they risky drivers in other ways? There is some indication this is the case. Lieutenant Rentz also noted while fatality rates are dropping, crash rates are staying pretty constant at about 36,000 crashes a year. So some combination of safer roadways, safer vehicles must be having a good effect, not just better driving behavior.

Agenda Items for Future Meetings

Bicycle Detection Lights (eventually), 3-section vs 4-section signal head for FYA

Adjournment

Mike adjourned the meeting at 11:14 a.m.