

TEO TTC Committee – Quarterly Meeting Minutes

November 5, 2013 - Arden Hills Training Center

CO Members:	Greater MN Members:	Metro Members:	Guests:
X - Ken Johnson	- Jim Miles D1	X - Tiffany Dagon	X - Janelle Anderson
X - Ted Ulven	X - David Mavec D1	- Jonathan Re	X - Tom Dumont
X - Michelle Moser	- Todd Larson D2	X - Mike Engh	X - Will Stein
X - Craig Mittelstadt	- Jerilyn Swenson D3	X - Kevin Farraher	
X - Leigh Kriewall	- Tim Janski D3	X - Sheila Johnson	
X - Bob Vasek	X - Les Bjerketvedt D4	X - Dave Tody	
X - Sue Lorentz	X - Jeff Rieder D6	- Jeff Gibbons	
X - Todd Haglin	- Luke Bourassa D6	- Rod Clark	
X - Kathy Schaefer	- Scott Thompson D7	- John McClellan	
	X - Brad Bruegger D7		
	- Jeff Knofczynski D8		
	- Ryan Barney D8		
	X - Rachel Guan D8		

DISCUSSION TOPICS (Updates, new business, and questions for the committee):

Minutes from the August meeting:

The minutes and action items from the last meeting were reviewed and approved. Rachel Guan joins the committee as an additional representative from D8.

Possible inclusion of a “Do not follow into work zone” sign (mounted on haul trucks) into the Standard Signs Manual:

A sign design of a “Do not follow into work zone” sign was presented to the committee. This is nearly identical to an Iowa DOT standard sign that is widely used in that state and often seen in Minnesota on Iowa based trucks. OTST has on occasion had requests for a sign design from MnDOT District Traffic personnel. It is in effect, a low cost alternative to an IWZ trucks exiting system.

This was addressed at the August meeting and the committee was favorable to this action but expressed a desire for a ground mounted sign that could be used near haul truck entrances. Upon further investigation it was concluded that ground mounted signs will vary greatly in size and shape due to the space limitations and the specific purpose of each project. Ground mounted signs of this type may continue to be designed project specific and included in TTC plans, preferably as part of an IWZ system. If a standard design and sizes are determined, this sign type will be considered for inclusion in the Standard Signs Manual and Summary.

Action item:

Ted will work with the signing and standards section of our office to add this to the G series signs.

Proposed changes to MN MUTCD:

- Section 6F.23 and Field Manual layout 51 (New layout 52) disagree on the maximum speed for which a center lane may be closed. The restriction of 40 mph or less for this layout, as indicated in the Field Manual, was deemed to be the correct guidance. It will be recommended to the MN MUTCD committee that the Minnesota Standard, in 6F.23 restricting its use to 30 mph or less, be removed.

- The sign code number for the “No Shoulder” sign that we have long used in Minnesota work zones is W21-X1. The sign has now been adopted by the FHWA and is also used in permanent applications. The FHWA sign code is W8-23. Since the only difference is the background color, the work zone sign code will be removed and it will henceforth be referred to as W8-23. In section 6F.44.3, the figure numbers will also be changed to correspond to those in the new Field Manual.
- 6F.49 describes the “Double Reverse Curve Signs” and its use. Minnesota created these signs about 10 years ago and assigned sign code numbers of W1-X1 and W1-X1b. The FHWA has adopted these signs but assigned code numbers W24-1 and W24-1a. Section 6F.49 should be changed to reflect the new sign numbers.
- Section 6J, which is the Long Term TTC zone layouts, was reviewed. Several minor typos and old references were corrected. A new TTC distance chart page was inserted to be consistent with Section 6K. Flashing lights on road closed signs and barricades were removed as had been agreed to in Section 6K. On page 6J-14 two notes were changed from 800 to 600 feet to conform to FHWA guidance. Advance warning signing shown on page 6J-23, does not show MnDOT standard signs, but was left as is since other agencies may want to design their own signs. New TPAR layout sheets similar to those in the new Field Manual replaced existing layouts. Page 6J-11 generated much discussion regarding the “Look both ways” sign. Since no acceptable alternative was discovered, it will remain as is currently shown. The FHWA will be consulted to determine alternate messages.

Action item:

The recommendations of this committee, shown above, will be presented to the MN MUTCD committee at their next meeting for inclusion in the December update of the MN MUTCD.

Update of the request for the Traffic Control Lump Sum pay item to include other minor pay items.

As reported to the committee, Ken and Ted met with Tim Swanson to clarify the intent of what items may be included in the Traffic Control Lump Sum pay item. It was agreed that the existing language in 1404 for TC LS does cover the inclusion of some items typically paid for at a unit price. When the TC LS pay item is to include items that otherwise would be paid for on a unit basis, it should be made clear to those reading the plan documents that this is the case. Usually the items will be shown or referred to on TTC plan sheets and/or typicals but not itemized on the Statement of Estimated Quantities. A note on the plan sheets or SEQ that certain items are not paid for individually but in TC LS would accomplish this requirement.

District 7 added that items they are considering include tubular markers, TRPM’s, and barrier delineators. PPCB and Attenuation would not be included and continue being itemized as a pay item.

Discuss training needs and possible ATSSA course for 2014:

Training issues generated much discussion. There are still questions regarding what is adequate training, a training schedule, levels of training, and documentation or a proof of knowledge. Further meetings of the training task force will discuss these concerns.

Leigh Kriewall stated that OCIC has 3 courses for Traffic Control Supervisor in 2014 and several recertification courses open at this time. Kathy Schaefer has a Field Manual update course available and D1 & D3 have already arranged this for their people. Ted will work with National ATSSA to bring the WZ Grant course “Work Zone Traffic Impact Analysis” to Minnesota. The morning of January 31 has been reserved for a half day TPAR class at the MnDOT Arden Hills Training Center.

Action Item:

- A meeting of this committee's task force focused on training issues will be arranged to discuss further.
- Ken and Ted will work with Todd Grugel put together a half day class on TPAR requirements.

Intelligent Work Zone discussion:

Observations of some IWZ systems that operated this past summer were discussed.

- In Metro, on the 35E Cayuga Bridge project, some CMS's were displaying actual traffic speeds. This was thought to be similar to the advisory speeds displayed on permanent CMS's on the UPA projects. It is a warning to the motorist that slower speeds will be encountered ahead. Several members saw this and the message was not clear. Was it to be an advisory speed, an average, or what is actually ahead? With the confusion, it was decided not to modify the IWZ tool box. Typical messages stating stopped, slow, or free flowing traffic are better understood. Actual speed information may be helpful in certain situations such as a blind approach, but that should be detailed in a TTC plan.
- D6 reported they used a stopped traffic ahead system with good results. There was an issue with the trailer mounted signs the contractor provided. The legend was very small for the panel size and speed of the roadway. It also contained the flashing lights within the sign panel. The errors in the sign design and light placement indicate the contractor used something in stock and did not check MnDOT specifications. The discussion led to a question of what message is better: "Stopped Traffic Ahead" or "Prepare To Stop" both with a "When Flashing" plaque? A subgroup of this committee will discuss this further but for now the entire committee is asked to respond to Ted or Ken with their preference.
- The intensity of the flashing beacons was questioned. Angularity of LED's can affect how motorists perceive the setup. Should we investigate how Signals specifies flashers and add some specifications to our requirements?
- There are several "When Flashing" plaques in the standard sign manual. Should they be more uniform?
- The IWZ layouts for stopped traffic may be more effective if "bins" are used to determine the warning message. For example, when the detectors show speeds 0-15, the signs display "stopped traffic" and when it is 16-45 they display "slow traffic".

Action item:

A smaller group will follow up on these questions and report back to the committee. Please send your preference of a "Stopped Traffic Ahead" or "Prepare To Stop" message to Ted or Ken.

Illinois has a separate publication for Quality Standards while ours is in the Field Manual. Should we consider publishing separately?

There was much interest in this for several reasons. It would be more visible as a stand-alone document and could be referenced in Spec. Prov. 1404. Since it will not be in the MN MUTCD, MnDOT standards can be incorporated. More items can be included, such as PPCB and sign mounting details.

Action item: Ken Johnson will proceed with the preparation of a document to present the committee.

Update on the Construction Season and OCIC initiatives (Craig):

Of specific concern is the possibility of losing the use of a sign shown on long term layout 6J-11, "Look Both Ways". This situation occurs many times every construction season and that sign is believed to be imperative at getting the motorist to use due caution. It was very strongly felt by several members that this sign should be continued to be available for use in workzones where the intersection's stop area is moved.

Other possibilities included using a "Traffic Control Change" sign to supplement the WZ signing. Alternate messages on the same black/white plaque may be considered, such as "Traffic Both Ways". As for now, the layout will not be changed in the December update due to lack of a consensus on exactly what to change.

Action item: Ted will contact Ken Wood of the FHWA to seek alternatives and find out what other states are doing.

Round Robin:

- Tom Dumont reports success with the TH 94 IWZ project this past summer. There was not a posted alternate but several parallel routes existed so the public was pleased to receive travel time information to better plan their trip. The travel time information was combined with a stopped traffic warning system to reduce crashes in the queues. The twin objectives of increasing safety and increased traffic information for motorists is an excellent example of what an IWZ system can accomplish.
- Sue Lorentz has kicked off regular meetings of the Statewide Maintenance Work Zone Safety committee. They will meet quarterly and she will bring their concerns about Work Zones and Traffic Standards to this committee.
- Jeff Rieder had a couple discussion items. They have a Design/Build contractor working on a project that includes some median crossovers and need to specify a design speed for it. The committee agreed that there is not any statewide guidance and a reasonable goal would be 55-60 mph for an interstate project. Through the state, they are always custom designed and considerations include elevations, slopes, drainage, and expense. Most thought 45 mph would be a minimum design speed. D6 wanted to know if anyone used overhead lane use signs for a TTC zone where a lane was an exit-only. Signs like that could be installed on span wire but then the poles should be crashworthy. Most would use ground mounted signs and possibly surface mounted tube type delineators before the gore area.
- Will Stein shared Metro District's policy of setting aside a portion of the road user costs for mitigation. Early in the scoping process money is budgeted for some mitigation strategies that may include IWZ, strengthened shoulders, etc. Could this be a statewide policy? The districts said they would discuss with their management.

Next Regular Meeting: January 28, 2014 at Arden Hill Training Center Rm 11, 9:00 AM