

# Oregon Traffic Control Devices Committee

January 26, 2007

## Meeting Minutes

Marion County Public Works  
Salem, Oregon

Members Present: [Randall Wooley](#), Chair, City of Beaverton; [Alan Hageman](#), Vice-Chair, OSP; [Brian Barnett](#), City of Springfield; [Ed Fischer](#), Secretary, ODOT State Traffic Engineer; [Robin Lewis](#), City of Bend; [Joseph Marek](#), Clackamas County; [Eric Niemeyer](#), Jackson County; [Charles Radosta](#), ITE/Kittelson & Associates; [Cynthia Schmitt](#), Marion County

Member Absent: [Joel McCarroll](#), ODOT Region 4

Others Present: Dave Lanning, Alan Sovey, ODOT Rail Section; Doug Bish, Debby Corey, Kevin Haas, Sheila Lyons, Gary Obery, Chris Rowland, Greg Stellmach, ODOT Traffic-Roadway Section; Robin Ness, ODOT Transportation Data Section; Craig Black, Angela Kargel, ODOT Region 2 Tech Center; Rick Braden, Oregon State Parks; Jim Renner, Oregon Travel Information Council; Ed Chastain, Lane County; Kevin Hottmann, City of Salem; Tom Larsen, City of Eugene; Michael Mills, Sarah Murchison, Washington County; Julia Wellner, City of Bend; Jerilyn Wen, Marion County

### **Introduction – Approval of Minutes – Additional Agenda Items**

Chairperson Randy Wooley was presented with his new gavel and called the meeting to order. Attendees introduced themselves. There were two additional agenda items. Joe Marek then moved to accept the September 25, 2006 meeting [minutes](#), Alan Hageman seconded and they were approved.



### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Sign Policy & Guidelines Update**

Greg Stellmach introduced the latest segment of [proposed changes](#) to the publication and reviewed as many as possible within the time available, stopping at the end of Chapter 4. All proposed changes were approved by consensus with minor edits as delineated below:

- Under Evaluation of Yellow Sign Flag Boards, the committee agreed that the purpose of the boards was a) to increase attention to traffic control devices in order to b) gain compliance with traffic control devices in order to c) reduce accidents

- The word, "Accident" should be replaced with "Crash" wherever appearing.
- The question "How will you know if compliance of Yellow Sign Flag Boards is increasing?" was deleted.
- A notation on Information Center and Welcome Center sign designs (OD5-7a & OD5-9a) should be inserted indicating that they are supplied by the state and may be purchased by qualifying facilities. The ODOT-proposed change to these signs was to take the directional information on the bottom of the existing sign and design it as a rider. During the discussion it was pointed out that there were issues regarding the current logo, the size of the signs and what difference the public might perceive between the two signs. This will receive further attention at the OTCDC meeting in May.
- The END SAFETY CORRIDOR sign (OD-449) "Shall" (not "Should") be installed at the end of a designated safety corridor.
- A note making reference to what type of Speed Reduction sign should be used on the interstate system should be added to the note that the OW3-5 sign shall not be used on the interstate.
- The notation prohibiting the TRAFFIC CIRCLE plaque (W16-12p) being used with the Circular Intersection symbol sign (W2-6) should have the "on the state highway system" clause deleted so that it is applicable off the system.

Jim Renner, for the Travel Information Council expressed the hope that ODOT will also consider "real world" variations to address "practical concerns" in the field in addition to engineering judgment for TODS and Logo signing.

- ✓ Action Item – Greg Stellmach will consult with the Travel Information Council and other interested parties regarding Welcome and Information Center signing in preparation for revisiting the issue at the May 18th OTCDC meeting.

## [ODOT Crash Data](#)

Robin Ness, from ODOT's Crash Analysis and Reporting Unit, was invited to give an [overview](#) of the unit's mission and answer questions from the committee. The committee had concerns with the availability of local crash data in a timely manner. Robin discussed issues associated with receiving crash reports from DMV and coding crashes into the Statewide Crash Data System. She said one of the biggest problems for local jurisdictions is the lack of a linear referencing system on their local street network. Robin referred to a MS Access database called the "Decode Database" summarizing local jurisdiction crashes that can be provided to individual jurisdictions which can be useful. She reminded committee members that the entire process for receiving crash reports from DMV to coding them into the Statewide Crash Data System can take



anywhere from 30 days up to 12 months depending on the expediency in receiving police and citizen crash reports and the complexities of the crash.

Randy asked if there were plans to make the data convertible into a [SPIS](#) (Safety Priority Index System) list. Doug Bish said that a cooperative initiative known as the Oregon Transportation network ([OR-Trans](#)) for [GIS](#) is prototyping a tool to map crash data using GIS coordinates. A common linear referencing system is key to doing analysis on both state highways and local roads.

Ed Fischer said the Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC), administered out of ODOT's Transportation Safety Division, is working to advance several issues to improve the accuracy and expedite the availability of crash data in a timely manner. He encouraged local jurisdictions to volunteer for openings on the committee or just come to the open meetings and participate.

Cindy Schmitt was concerned with the timeliness of fatal crash data from ODOT. Robin said she hadn't heard about this being a problem but she'll be happy to work with the county. She said that some fatal crash reports can be delayed because of litigation or may not qualify as a Motor Vehicle Crash by ANSI standards. ODOT has a practice of responding to media requests following a series of approvals for information releases related to fatal crashes. The initial source of information on fatality crashes is bulletins from the [Law Enforcement Data System](#) (LEDS).

Doug Bish reported a new requirement for 2009 that ODOT [report](#) the top 5% of of all public roads exhibiting the most severe safety needs. This is the next phase in a new requirement which started this year by requiring a report of the top 5% of hazardous segments of state highways. Ed said one of the many opportunities associated with this is the fact that some jurisdictions are not collecting traffic volumes on all roads. Since SPIS calculations have a rate-based component (which involves traffic volumes), getting this data in is important to support accurate comparisons of road segments. Options may include revising SPIS definitions, a new strategy for collecting volume data, or perhaps some assumptions will need to be drafted around assigning traffic volumes based on the roadway type.

✓ Action Item – The committee agreed they would like to have Robin Ness come back to the committee at a future meeting for further work on crash data issues.

### **Portable Stop Sign Use at Intersections with Non-Functioning Signals**

Alan Hageman brought up a recent incident where a vehicle accident knocked out the controller at a signal-controlled intersection. State police were advised that a temporary STOP sign was not permitted in the interim before the controller was fixed and put back on-line. The main issue for ODOT appears to be liability issues in the event a signal comes back on line with signal indications that conflict with the STOP sign. This could be a safety issue for traffic at the intersection during signal outage. The committee discussed safety and the different types of temporary signal outages.



Further discussion ensued regarding the issues and possible drawbacks to seeking change of state law regarding how drivers should respond to a “dark” intersection where the signals are not functioning. They also discussed the possibility of programming signals to come back on in all-way “Stop” flashing mode until physically modified by a technician on site.

The fact that different jurisdictions have different policies was brought out, which may make a statewide policy a good idea if the issues can be dealt with.

- ✓ Action Item – Gary Obery will look at possible software changes for controllers as well as possible policy language to go into the Oregon Temporary Traffic Control [Handbook](#) and report back to the committee at a future meeting.

### **MUTCD Changes to Public Road and Substantial Conformance Language**

Kevin Haas updated the committee on the Federal Highway Administration’s [response](#) to concerns expressed by Oregon and other states/jurisdictions regarding the proposed “clarification” of the terms “Open to Public Travel” and “Substantial Conformance” in the [MUTCD](#).

Kevin provided a [handout](#) summarizing the FHWA’s decision to go forward with the changes but making clear that state or local agencies are not required to police private properties open to public travel to ensure compliance with the MUTCD. While FHWA has been actively encouraging States to adopt Section 15-116 of the Uniform Vehicle Code, 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.”*, Oregon has no such law and no current plans to modify ORS 801.305 or ORS 810.200 to reflect the UVC.

Committee consensus was that there was no need to change state law at this time.

- ✓ Action Item – Kevin Haas will return to the committee with information on any needed changes to Oregon’s [Supplements](#) to the MUTCD subsequent to FHWA’s decision.

### **ADA Rule Making for Multi-Lane Roundabouts - Update**

Robin Lewis updated the committee on subcommittee work on issues associated with the [Draft Guidelines](#) for Accessible Rights-of-Way. The subcommittee, composed of herself, Brian Barnett, Charles Radosta, Joe Marek and Gary Obery were tasked at the September 2006 [meeting](#) to evaluate the Access Board Proposal (pedestrian signals required at multi-lane roundabouts) and report back to the committee on possible comments to the draft guidelines. The draft guidelines are due out this Spring with a 90-day comment period to follow.



The subcommittee broke the issue into smaller pieces including:

- coalition building with others (states) that would be affected
- types of designs strategies could be used to implement the ruling if it comes out – is there a way to signalize pedestrian crossings at roundabouts?
- operational impacts of installing the signals – develop VSIM simulation?
- Pedestrian safety research at all kinds of intersections – are there specific pedestrian safety issues at multi-lane roundabouts? Is the proposal fear based or fact based?

States we know of who have roundabouts include Colorado, Florida, Kansas, Maryland, New York and Wisconsin. Ed said he wants to be included in communications with other interested states. He is willing to facilitate contacts with affected states, could broadcast a call for any other states affected. It might be good to bring up subject at the summer AASHTO meeting in Lake Tahoe.

### **Transportation Issues in 2007 Legislature**

Ed Fischer and Kevin Haas briefed the committee with a [handout](#) of transportation-related bills introduced or possibly still bubbling up in the current Legislature. Some highlights: HB 2439 would have ODOT do a study of speed bumps with an eye towards developing standards. HB 2297 would allow a new statutory 15 MPH speed limit for “narrow roadways” in residence districts. HB 2466 would change the rules for photo radar signing.



### **Traffic Signal Doghouse with Flashing Yellow Arrow**

Eric Niemeyer introduced the [document](#) handed out by Dr. David Noyce at the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices ([NCUTCD](#)) meeting earlier in January entitled “Evaluation of the Flashing Yellow Arrow Permissive Left-Turn Indication Field Implementation”. His desire is to find a way to get FHWA to approve statewide the use of flashing yellow arrows in doghouses so that cities like Medford don’t have to have two standards for protected-permissive left turns. He wants to avoid waiting for it to be in the MUTCD or getting individual experimental approvals from FHWA. Eric cited research showing drivers have an intuitive understanding of the FYA in a doghouse PPLT head. He showed video of how the signal looks and how drivers respond to it in Bend. Ed said he’d be willing to support a request to FHWA for interim or experimental use of this configuration statewide on a [retrofit](#) basis as long as those doing it are prepared to do any required crash reporting.



- ✓ Action Item – Gary Obery will work with Eric to explore the possibilities of applying to FHWA for a statewide interim approval or statewide experimental approval for use of the FYA in doghouse PPLT heads.

## **2007 Meeting Dates**

The committee agreed to hold the remainder of this year's meetings as follows: March 9, May 18 (in conjunction with ITE), July 20, September 21 and November 16.

## **Non-Agenda Items**

NCUTCD Meeting report – Ed said that the HAWK (High-intensity Activated Crosswalk) signal (pedestrian crossing beacon) was recently approved by the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (NCUTCD) with warranting conditions – mid-block or intersection - to go to FHWA for inclusion in the next MUTCD edition. He said he'd provide members a copy of the technical committee recommendation from the meeting. He reported that FHWA plans to get an early draft of the next MUTCD to their legal people by March, so with the various review/responses that are to follow, the new Manual should be out in early 2009.



Close-Up of HAWK Signal Head

## **Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will be held Monday, March 9, 2007. It will be at 9:00 a.m. at the [Marion County Public Works](#) in Salem, Oregon

## **Meeting Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned promptly at noon.