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10 December 2007

Tim Hughes
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CHRISTCHURCH

Dear Tim

IPENZ Transportation Group Submission on Draft RTS14 Guidelines for Blind and Vision-Impaired Pedestrians

The IPENZ Transportation Group ("IPENZ TG") welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the draft of RTS14 Guidelines for Blind and Vision-Impaired Pedestrians. The IPENZ TG consists of over 900 transportation and traffic engineering and planning professionals working in central government, local government, academia, and the private sector. The IPENZ TG represents a segment of considerable expertise in the fields of traffic and transportation and has a significant interest in managing the effects of transportation on society. This submission has been prepared by the National Committee of the IPENZ TG and recognizes that this submission may not necessarily represent the position of every member of the Group or their views given the diversity of members.

There are a number of comments we wish to make and these are covered in the attached submission.

The IPENZ Transportation Group is happy to discuss any of the comments contained in the submission and any queries can be directed to the Chairman of the IPENZ Transportation Group, Bruce Conaghan, City Traffic Engineer, Manukau City Council (☎) (09) 262 8900 ext 8770 / E-mail bruce.conaghan@manukau.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely

Bruce Conaghan
Chairman
IPENZ Transportation Group



***Submission to the Land Transport New Zealand,
on the Draft of :***

RTS14 Guidelines for Blind and Vision-Impaired Pedestrians

Prepared by:

IPENZ Transportation Group

December 2007

Introduction

The IPENZ Transportation Group (“IPENZ TG”) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the draft of Part 9 Level Crossings of the Manual for Traffic Control Devices. The IPENZ TG consists of over 900 transportation and traffic engineering and planning professionals working in central government, local government, academia, and the private sector. The IPENZ TG represents a segment of considerable expertise in the fields of traffic and transportation and has a significant interest in managing the effects of transportation on society. This submission has been prepared by the National Committee of the IPENZ TG and recognizes that this submission may not necessarily represent the position of every member of the Group or their views given the diversity of members.

General Comments on Draft RTS 14 Guideline

The draft RTS14 has been produced to a high standard and covers in detail all aspects of providing and maintaining facilities for the blind and vision-impaired pedestrians and will provide a useful reference document for road controlling authorities.

Specific Comments on Draft RTS14 Guideline

The IPENZ TG has a number of specific comments as follows:

1. On Page 19, the para which reads “*Most NZ paths are surfaced with dark asphalt. On these a luminance contrast of 70% is easily achieved with white or yellow TGSi.*” Has two typos and should be corrected to read “*Most NZ paths are surfaced with dark asphalt. On these a luminance contrast of 70% is easily achieved with white or yellow TGSi.*”.
2. In the third diagram in Figure 2 on Page 29, the holding rail should be angled for the direction of travel indicated by the warning indicators rather than parallel to the angle of the island.
3. Under 4.7.1 on Page 30, it may be appropriate that different colours be used to differentiate between controlled crossings and uncontrolled crossings as per the UK standards.
4. In Figure 4 on Page 34, the crossing facility on the approach to the roundabout should be identified as being located at least 6m from the limit line so as to enable pedestrians to pass behind a vehicle waiting at the limit line.
5. In Figure 5 on Page 36, the zebra crossing on the left turn slip lane should be identified as being located at least 6m from the limit line so as to enable pedestrians to pass behind a vehicle waiting at the limit line. In addition, while there is merit in having a speed table for the crossing, it is not standard practice and a note should be made to the effect that a speed table may be provided where there is an issue with the speed of left turning vehicles.

6. In Figure 5 on Page 36, while there is merit in having a speed table for the crossing, it is not standard practice with road controlling authorities. A note should be made to the effect that a speed table may be provided where there is an issue with the speed of vehicles turning left and is most likely to be appropriate on free flow left turn slip lanes. Where provided, any such speed table should be designed to adequately accommodate cyclists.
7. In Figure 5i on Page 40, this arrangement should not be recommended given that the crossing is in one direction only and has the potential to cause confusion for pedestrians. It would be better to provide a Figure where the crossing is located closer to the tangent point of the curve rather than on the centre of the curve.
8. In the 1st para on Page 43, the TGSi should not extend across the cycleway at a shared crossing as it can put a blind or vision-impaired pedestrian at risk if they end up on the cycle side of the shared crossing. It is recommended that directional indicators be provided on the walkway to assist direction for the vision-impaired or alternatively, a thermoplastic line separating the walkway and cycleway be provided.
9. Under 4.14.1 on Page 47, a fourth bullet point should be added as follows :
 - TGSi shall be kept free of weeds and other vegetation likely to reduce the visual contrast or create a trip hazard.
10. In the last bullet point under 5.5 on Page 49, it is recommended that pedestrian push buttons be not closer than 4m rather than 3m.
11. In the first para under “Distance between pedestrian push buttons” on Page 51, it is recommended that three metres be changed to four metres given the potential to confuse blind and vision-impaired pedestrians.

Additional Comments

1. Pages 47 onwards are not paginated.
2. I notice that there are two Photo 22s.
3. It is noted that the Guideline does not give any guidance on accommodating blind and vision-impaired pedestrians at railway level crossings. In this regard, tactile ground surface indicators should be installed (in accordance with RTS 14) at all level crossing points, in conjunction with other safety measures - such as audible signals, flashing lights etc. This will reinforce the level crossing and safety issues associated to ensure the level crossing points are highlighted for pedestrians and cyclists as well as convey important cues to blind and vision-impaired users. Furthermore pram crossings will be required if the level crossing is not flush with the footpath level.