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17 July 2009

Bob Gibson
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Dear Bob

**IPENZ Transportation Group Submission on Manual for Traffic Control Devices
Part 2 Direction, Service and General Guidance Signs**

The IPENZ Transportation Group ("IPENZ TG") welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the draft of Part 2 Direction, Service and General Guidance Signs of the Manual for Traffic Control Devices. The IPENZ TG consists of over 1,000 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 recognises 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, Senior Traffic Engineer, Dunedin City Council (((03) 474 3706 / E-mail bruce.conaghan@dcc.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

Bruce Conaghan
**Chairman
National Committee
IPENZ Transportation Group**



Submission to the New Zealand Transport Agency, on the Draft of :

Part 2 Direction, Service and General Guidance Signs of the Manual for Traffic Control Devices

Prepared by:

IPENZ Transportation Group

July 2009

Introduction

The IPENZ Transportation Group (“IPENZ TG”) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission on the draft of Part 2 Direction, Service and General Guidance Signs of the Manual for Traffic Control Devices. The IPENZ TG consists of over 1,000 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.

Comments on Draft Guideline

The IPENZ TG welcomes the decision to produce a New Zealand Manual for Traffic Control Devices of which the Direction, Service and General Guidance Signs Guideline is Part 2.

The guideline has been produced to a high standard and covers in detail all aspects and types of advertising signs including responsibilities, legal framework, placement and design. When finalised and formally adopted, it will provide a useful reference document for road controlling authorities in respect to direction, service and general guidance signage.

Appendix A contains responses to the comments identified in the draft of Part 2 Direction, Service and General Guidance Signs of the Manual for Traffic Control Devices.

Appendix B contains additional comments and/or suggestions on other issues identified by IPENZ TG members in the draft of Part 2 Direction, Service and General Guidance Signs of the Manual for Traffic Control Devices.

A final section of other general comments is provided in Appendix C.

Feedback on Comments in Part 2 Direction, Service and General Guidance Signs of the Manual for Traffic Control Devices

Page Number	Comment as taken from Part 2	Recommendation
2-2	Section 2 above is largely a repeat of a similar section contained in Part 1 and has been included for the purposes of consultation. However, it may be more appropriate to provide a single commentary of this type only in Part 1 rather than duplicating it here.	It is recommended that it would be more appropriate to provide a single commentary for each in Part 1 rather than duplicating it in each Part except where there is the need to provide further guidance to the respective Part of the Manual for Traffic Control Devices.
3-3	Section 3 above is largely a repeat of a similar section contained in Part 1 and has been included for the purposes of consultation. However, it may be more appropriate to provide a single commentary of this type only in Part 1 rather than duplicating it here.	It is recommended that it would be more appropriate to provide a single commentary for each in Part 1 rather than duplicating it in each Part except where there is the need to provide further guidance to the respective Part of the Manual for Traffic Control Devices.
4-5	As a result of this project the Working Group recommends that for greater consistency across networks that all general direction signs (i.e. other than cycle signs) should have white lettering on green background regardless of the type of road (state highway or local road) the sign is installed on.	From the responses received, there was a general consensus that the existing situation of using green and blue backgrounds be retained. Any change to using only green backgrounds does have financial implications and these can be significant especially for those cities that have in place comprehensive destination signage. In this regard, it may be better to identify that if a destination is on a State Highway, the background of the sign should be green otherwise the background of the sign should be blue.
4-6, 4-8, 4-11, 4-12, 5-3, 6-5, 7-5, 8-3 A-2	It is proposed the following detailed information of sign size, lettering details and dimensions be included in the TCD Specifications rather than in this Part of the TCD manual.	In general it would be useful to have all of the specification and dimensions etc in one document as it would provide one reference point. If however the document would be electronic then specific links to the relevant sections would be the most useful method. It is recommended that the standards for reflectorisation be covered in the specifications.
4-17	It has been suggested that heavy vehicle routes could be described by the use of the heavy vehicle symbol in much the same way as described for hospitals or	We would agree with the suggestion that heavy vehicle routes could be described in much the same way as that for hospitals and airports however it would be more

	airports. An alternative would be similar signs to those used for detours in the Code of Practice for Temporary Traffic Management.	appropriate that the signage be standalone signage rather than incorporated into advance direction signage. One issue at the present time is that if the increased weights are adopted, will the truck bypass routes be capable of taking heavier vehicles. In this regard, the heavy vehicle bypass may have supplementary signage indicating the maximum weight permitted on the bypass route although territorial local authorities could do this through a bylaw.
4-27	Should these signs (yellow fingerboards) only be used for places of interest rather than towns etc?	Yes. For towns, intersection direction signs should be used with the route to the towns signed accordingly.
4-30	As a result of this project the Working Group recommends that for greater consistency across networks that all destination signs - i.e. such as those shown in Figures 4.20, 21 and 22 - should have white lettering on green background regardless of the type of road (state highway or local road) the sign is installed on. This would be consistent with the proposal for advance direction, intersection direction and confirmation direction signs to have the same colour combinations along any route.	From the responses received, there was a general consensus that the existing situation of using green and blue backgrounds be retained. Any change to using only green backgrounds does have financial implications and these can be significant especially for those cities that have in place comprehensive destination and threshold signage. In this regard, it may be better to identify that if a destination is on a State Highway, the background of the threshold sign should be green otherwise the background of the threshold sign should be blue.
4-31	Should we have a section within this part on toll roads?	Yes. Some additional information e.g. repeater signage, etc would be beneficial.
5-1	The term commonly used in MOTSAM and other documents is 'motorist service sign'. We invite comment on this change as the new term 'service sign' includes information that will be provided for all road users, not just motorists.	Agree with the use of 'service sign' as the signs do provide for all road users.
5-14	There may be no need to distinguish some of the types of accommodation facilities such as guest house, B & B, hotel, motel etc when the 'bed' symbol may suffice. Is it necessary to use these types of word descriptors on accommodation services signs? Would it be desirable to only use symbols?	It is necessary to use word descriptors on accommodation services signs given that facilities do vary in terms of what is offered. This is probably more important for those seeking specific types of accommodation e.g. backpacking visitors or tourists. It would be appropriate to have a specific list of what types

		of accommodation services should be signed.
5-17	Would you like more guidance on symbol use and design standards for service signs? Are there service symbols not appearing in the TCD Rule that you think should be available for use? How many symbols do you think should be used on one sign?	More guidance on symbol use would be of benefit to practitioners. It is recommended that a maximum of six symbols be permitted on any service sign given that some communities have a number of services available at all reasonably expected times for the types of services provided.
6-3	Is there a need to review and better define what constitutes a tourist attraction that warrants signs i.e. there is no clear differentiation between major and minor attractions? Other guidelines use factors such as traffic or visitors generated per year or month, size of development, etc. Should there be guidance on the distance from a facility which advance direction should be provided e.g. based on traffic flows etc?	Yes, there is a need to review and better define what constitutes a tourist attraction that warrants signs so as to provide clear guidance to road controlling authorities, especially territorial local authorities, as to when such signage is warranted. There should be guidance on the distance from a facility which advance direction should be provided.
6-5	At present, no specific tourist related symbols are permitted to be used as part of the TCD Rule. However, many overseas jurisdictions use symbols for such facilities as art galleries, potteries, etc. Should we establish a range of such symbols? If so, what facilities do you think should be considered?	The principle is fine although some further work would be required to determine which tourist related symbols should be permitted.
7-2	There was some debate about the merits of including Table 7.2 in this document. Your comments on the information contained in the Table and whether it should be included or not in this document would be welcome.	Table 7.2 should be included as an important of any street name sign is its ability to be read during both day time and night time. Certainly, consistency throughout the country would be ideal however given that this is unlikely to occur unless regulated, street name signs need to be clearly visible to all road users during both day time and night time.
7-4	The Working Group considered it appropriate to develop a list of standard abbreviations for use on traffic signs. This need has been reinforced with some recent work by NZTA in relation to VMS signs and the testing of user comprehension of a number of different	A list of standard abbreviations for use on traffic signs would be appropriate. It is recommended that such a list also include abbreviations for the principal compass point directions (e.g. for split streets where one side may be East and the other side West) as well as abbreviations for

	abbreviations. We are seeking feedback on the use of abbreviations with the intention of developing an approved list.	the principal directions of travel.
7-5	The TCD Rule specifies street name signs as a rectangle. It is noted that some RCAs shape the sign to a point – either diagonal down to the left or right or as a chevron – to indicate a direction. In other cases this is achieved with the background reflectorised sheet and the backing plate remains a rectangle. It is suggested any of these options are acceptable and the TCD Rule should be amended to allow them.	It is recommended that the TCD Rule be amended to allow the options as discussed in the draft Part 2.
7-6	The following, section 7.2.7, does not strictly describe a street name sign. However, in the rural environment the use of the rapid numbering system does provide useful information for road users attempting to locate a destination. No attempt has been made to cover similar aspects of street numbering within urban or semi-urban environments other than where the range of numbers are contained within the street name plate.	Rapid numbers should be covered in this Part as they do serve as general guidance signs. It would be worthwhile providing some direction as to where further information on Rapid numbering can be found – NZ Post?
7-10	Is table 7.7 still required?	Yes.
8-4	The number of general interest sites provided in this section of the document have been significantly reduced from the original list provided in MOTSAM. This is due to a number of them being considered a type of tourist sign or not necessarily of significant importance for general interest. The basic principle is described in 8.1. Do you support this approach?	Yes, the reduction in general interest sites due to them being covered by tourist signs is an appropriate approach.
8-6	Should section 8-6 be included in the document? If so, what additional information should be provided particularly in relation to how other road controlling authorities might (or do) implement similar schemes on their networks?	Section 8.6 should be included in the document. This is probably more important in terms of asset management in that the location of assets such as bridges and culverts can be included in RAMM.

Additional Comment/Suggestions on Part 2 Direction, Service and General Guidance Signs of the Manual for Traffic Control Devices

Page Number	Chapter or Section	Comment/Suggestion
4-2	4.2.2 Stage and destination names	Guidance should be given as to how destinations are to be ordered on guide signs. Typically the practice is the first destination will be at the top of the list with subsequent locations in order of travel below that.
4-3	4.3.3 Destination signs	The last sentence "END' signs should be used where an indicated route finishes" should be the second paragraph under 4.3.1 Route indicators.
4-4	4.4.2 General layout and design	The last sentence at the bottom of this page makes reference to fingerboards being used to indicate destinations along minor roads. This should be changed so that general interest signs are only used as described in Chapter 8 General interest signs.
	4.4.2 General layout and design	Some guidance should be provided in regard to the use of panels of different colours on the guide signs. It is recommended that where a panel is of a different colour from the principal colour of the guide sign, the insert panel should have a white border to improve readability of the information on that sign.
4-12	4.6.2 Urban route indicators	Bullet point 2 on Page 4-12 "Urban route numbers should avoid the numbers used for state highways in the region" should read "'Urban route numbering is not to use the same numbers as state highways in the region".
4-13/4-14	Table 4.3	The 'END' urban route indicator should be shown in Table 4.3
4-14	4.6.3 Tourist or scenic drive or route	A table similar to Table 4.3 but for Tourist or scenic drive or route indicators should be provided.
	4.7.1 Advance direction signs	One concept used with the Auckland Advance direction signage is to have brackets around a route which is not yet reached but a road user would have to take to get to the destination shown on the sign.
	4.7.1 Advance direction signs	Map signs to assist with lane guidance at complex intersections is not covered in the draft Part 2. There are a number of such intersections, typically roundabouts, in New Zealand where such signage has been installed.
	4.7.1 Advance direction signs	It would be worthwhile providing guidance on the use of street name signs with Advance direction signs. In Auckland, the street name sign is placed above the Advance direction sign typically to identify the roads the road user

		would take to get to the destinations identified.
4-19	4.7.1 Advance direction signs	Guidance would be required in respect of placement of the directional arrows on stack signs e.g. the arrow would be on the LHS for the through and left turn directions while it would be on the RHS for the right turn direction. An example to reinforce this would be of assistance.
4-22	4.7.2 Advance lane designation signs	Consideration should be given to providing appropriate destinations on Advance lane designation signs in conjunction with the road that the off-ramp leads to. One example often referred to is at Exit 420 Esmonde Road where the only information to assist motorists with destinations (Takapuna/Devonport/Northcote) is some 200 metres back from the off-ramp on the left hand side so motorists in the far right lane have little chance of seeing it and miss the correct off-ramp.
	4.7.2 Advance lane designation signs	The layout for standard lane designations should correctly reflect which lanes can be used to reach the destination shown. Fig 4.17 shows that the centre lane is for Upper Hutt while the right hand lane is for Masterton yet motorists can stay in either the centre lane or the right hand lane at that point to get to both destinations. Guidance on improved advance lane designations signage should be provided in this Part.
	7. Street name signs	Where a street name sign is provided on the state highway, it is recommended that any street name sign provided on a state highway be identical in nature and style to that used by the respective territorial local authority adjacent to that state highway to provide consistency of street name signage in that territorial local authority area.
7-7	7.3.2 Lateral offset	Lateral offset should relate to all signs and not just street signs. It is recommended that there be a section relating to lateral offset for all signs.
7-11	7.3.5 Mounting height.	Mounting height should relate to all signs and not just street signs. It is recommended that there be a section relating to mounting height for all signs.
	Appendix B	There is a need for consistency of colour for the guide sign layouts. A number of the Figures have signs shown in blue and white and green and white.
B-6	Figure B-6	The yellow and black signs should be replaced with an Intersection direction sign given that the yellow and black signs are only to be used as described in Chapter 8 General interest signs.
	Figure B-11	There is no Figure B-11.

	Appendix C	It would be worthwhile providing a Figure showing the typical layout for services in a bypassed community where the bypassed community has between 4 and 6 services.
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Other General Comments

- Policy of incorporating Stage destination names at each entry point on motorways . In areas where there are close spacing of interchanges active traffic management is more important given the complexity of the driving task. The plethora of fixed signs needed to sign destinations on the upgrade of CMJ from the North-western motorway created a series of message set on gantries which are difficult to follow. In that instance there are four different route options to handle.

The need for and location of fixed destination signs needs to be considered within the context of active VMS and LCS signs and gantries now part of traffic management and driver information systems.

There is a “fight” for road space for signs and there is a strong need for a proper evaluation of sign protocols to get the most effective mix. Research shows that the percentage of traffic travelling through Auckland is only about 5% of totals, that is most traffic stop off somewhere within the urban area. There are about 900,000 vehicle movements per day both onto and off the motorways each day and consequentially the needs for “local” travel on that part of the State highway network needs to be fully catered for. There is a need to also consider motorways in other centres but the traffic intensity is significantly lower and only Wellington currently has the electronic signs.

- The Rule currently allows/requires both up and down arrows on signs particularly at ramps. The protocols for each arrow type is “lost” on drivers and most are not aware of the differences. The down arrow signs can be very confusing on curvilinear sections of motorway as the sign represents lane assignment directly under the gantry. It is contended that the up arrow system showing splits and curved arrows are much more readily understood by the driver and should be adopted with fixed signs. There seems to be some conflict between the urban route indicator in table 4.3 and the signs referenced above in 4.7.2.
- The use of exit numbering signs has been approved and these are erected on ALL off-ramps on the Auckland motorway network. These are special directional signs and are intended, in part, to be used with VMS messages. It is considered important that these are included in a Rule and are not shown in Part 2.
- Part 2 contains reference to Temporary detours or emerging routes at 4.3.5. Increasingly detours will be shown on VMS on the motorways, where remote signs are being erected on significant State highway routes or on temporary trailer mounted VMS. Provision should be made on how message sets on such signs should be formatted.
- The use of VMS on motorways and other roads is increasing and acceptable protocols must be prepared for the use of these signs. While some use is directed at temporary traffic control, under COPTTM there are no provisions for the use of these signs. Indeed considering all VMS as Temporary Traffic Control is not correct and increasingly there will be the use of signs for more traffic management, closures or other needs. There needs to be protocols developed for the use of such devices that set out standards, message set protocols, alternating screen messages and the like.

- Lane Control Signals (Lane Use Signals) may need a fundamental rethink on applications and use. On the Auckland motorways the signs are “benign,” that is a lane is open unless a “change lane” or “lane closed” sign is displayed. Tunnels require “positive” lane signs including green arrows for lanes that are open. The first tunnels with these signs are open and consistency now needs to be considered for routes approaching and leaving tunnels. The commitment to Victoria Park tunnel means that alignment will be required with that facility, the Harbour Bridge and Central Motorway Junction where LCS are currently installed. This may require modifications to current signal units.
- It is important that greater consideration be given in educational information and the Road Code to motorway driving. While Auckland’s State highway network represents only about 4% of the national network it carries 21% of the total traffic on a VKT basis. This indicates the importance of this complex, high demand network and the need to fully consider the practicality of the signs and information systems erected for the benefit of motorists.