



National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

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Agenda Item III.6, June 2014

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2 **TECHNICAL COMMITTEE;** Regulatory & Warning Signs

3 **DATE OF ACTION;** January 9, 2014

4 **TASK FORCE;** Randy McCourt & Jim Pline

5 **TECH COM APPROVAL DATE:** 1/09/14

6 **TECH COM APPROVAL DATE FOLLOWING CHANGES:** 3-21-14

7 **TRANSMITTAL TO SPONSORS:** April 2014

8 **RWSTC APPROVAL FOLLOWING SPONSOR COMMENTS:** 6-25-14

9 **COUNCIL APPROVAL DATE:** **June 26, 2014**

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11 **TOPIC:** Word Messages

12 **AFFECTED PORTIONS OF MUTCD:** Section 2A.13 (Relocated to 2A.08)

13 **SUMMARY:**

14 In December 2013 we received FHWA edits to Chapter 2A along with other chapters. This proposal from
15 FHWA reorganized Chapter 2A in order to enhance the usability of the Manual both printed and
16 electronic editions. Continued development of the web and application based programs necessitates
17 organizing the document in a manner that can more easily be viewed and searches by various electronic
18 devices per FHWA.

19 Also, FHWA has included all the previously approved NCUTCD Council approved items verbatim and has
20 indicated the date and RW item # approved by Council.

21 FHWA's intention is to issue an NPA in November 2014, requested NCUTCD input by July 2014.

22 **RESEARCH:** None

23 **DISCUSSION:**

24 The Technical Committee agrees with the plan to reduce the Manual size and generally agree
25 with the revisions as proposed by FHWA. When reviewing this Section, it was noted that the
26 Support paragraph addresses primarily sign layout, would be of interest to sign fabricators and
27 limited interest to Manual users. Additionally, the Standard Highway Signs publication has been

28 adopted as a Standard specifically addressing the design, legend and layout of all signs included
29 in the Manual. The appropriate place for this Support paragraph on letter height and application
30 would be that publication that provides the provisions for sign fabrication.

31 The RWSTC recommendations are shown in red in Section 2A.08 below. It is considered
32 necessary to send this revised FHWA text to the Sponsors for their comments prior to the final
33 consideration and approval in June 2014.

34 **RECOMMENDED MUTCD PROVISIONS/REVISIONS:**

35 **Note:** Proposed changes to the MUTCD in addition to the FHWA changes are shown in
36 underline red and removed text are shown in ~~strikethrough red~~.

37 The revised FHWA edit text is shown in blue underline and removed text are shown in
38 ~~strikethrough blue~~.

39 | **Section ~~2A.13~~ ~~2A.09~~ 2A.08 Word Messages**

40 **Standard:**

41 **Except as provided in Section 2A.06, all word messages shall use standard wording and letters**
42 **as shown in this Manual and in the “Standard Highway Signs ~~and Markings~~ and ~~Markings~~” ~~book~~**
43 **book publication (see Section 1A.11).**

44 *Guidance:*

45 | *Word messages should be as brief as ~~possible~~ practical to convey a clear, simple meaning, and the*
46 *lettering should be large enough to provide the necessary legibility distance. A minimum specific ratio of*
47 *1 inch of letter height per 30 feet of legibility distance should be used.*

48 | *Abbreviations (see Section 1A.15) should be kept to a minimum, except as otherwise prescribed in*
49 *this Manual.*

50 | *Word messages should not contain periods, apostrophes, question marks, ampersands, or other*
51 *punctuation or characters that are not letters, numerals, or hyphens unless necessary to avoid confusion.*

52 | *The ~~solidus slanted line~~ is intended to be used for fractions only and should not be used to separate*
53 *words on the same line of legend. Instead, a hyphen should be used for this purpose, such as “TRUCKS -*
54 *BUSES.”*

55 **Standard:**

56 **Fractions shall be displayed with the numerator and denominator diagonally arranged about**
57 **the ~~solidus slanted line~~ The overall height of the fraction is measured from the top of the numerator**
58 **to the bottom of the denominator, each of which is vertically aligned with the upper and lower ends**
59 **of the ~~solidus slanted line~~. The overall height of the fraction shall be determined by the height of**
60 **the numerals within the fraction, and shall be 1.5 times the height of an individual numeral within**
61 **the fraction.**

62 **Support:**

63 | The “Standard Highway Signs ~~and Markings~~ and ~~Markings~~” ~~book~~ book publication (see Section
64 1A.11) contains details regarding the layouts of fractions on signs.

65 *Guidance:*

66 *When initials are used to represent an abbreviation for separate words (such as “U S” for a United*
67 *States route), the initials should be separated by a space of between 1/2 and 3/4 of the letter height of the*
68 *initials.*

69 *When an Interstate route is displayed in text form instead of using the route shield, a hyphen should*
70 *be used for clarity, such as “I-50.”*

71 **Standard:**

72 **All sign lettering, numerals, and other characters shall be of the Standard Alphabets in upper**
73 **case letters in upper case letters as provided in the “Standard Highway Signs and Markings” and**
74 **Markings book book publication (see Section 1A.11), unless otherwise detailed provided in this**
75 **Manual for a particular sign or type of message. specified .provided in this Manual for a particular**
76 **sign or type of message.**

77 **The sign lettering for names of places, streets, and highways shall be composed of a**
78 **combination of lower-case letters with initial upper-case letters. The sign lettering for other legends**
79 **shall be composed of upper-case letters, unless otherwise provided in this Manual for a particular**
80 **sign or type of message.**

81 Support

82 ~~Letter height is expressed in terms of the height of an upper case letter. For mixed case legends~~
83 ~~(those composed of an initial upper case letter followed by lower case letters), the height of the lower~~
84 ~~case letters is derived from the specified height of the initial upper case letter based on a prescribed ratio.~~
85 ~~Letter heights for mixed case legends might be expressed in terms of both the upper and lower case~~
86 ~~letters, or in terms of the initial upper case letter alone. When the height of a lower case letter is specified~~
87 ~~or determined from the prescribed ratio, the reference is to the nominal loop height of the letter. The term~~
88 ~~loop height refers to the portion of a lower case letter that excludes any ascending or descending stems or~~
89 ~~tails of the letter, such as with the letters “d” or “q.” The nominal loop height is equal to the actual height~~
90 ~~of a non rounded lower case letter whose form does not include ascending or descending stems or tails,~~
91 ~~such as the letter “x.” The rounded portions of a lower case letter extend slightly above and below the~~
92 ~~baselines projected from the top and bottom of such a non rounded letter so that the appearance of a~~
93 ~~uniform letter height within a word is achieved. The actual loop height of a rounded lower case letter is~~
94 ~~slightly greater than the nominal loop height and this additional height is excluded from the expression of~~
95 ~~the lower case letter height.~~

96 **Standard:**

97 **When a mixed-case legend is used, the height of the lower-case letters shall be 3/4 of the height**
98 **of the initial upper-case letter.**

99 **The unique letter forms for each of the Standard Alphabet series shall not be stretched,**
100 **compressed, warped, or otherwise manipulated.**

101 Support:

102 Section 2D.04 contains information regarding the acceptable methods of modifying the
103 length of a word for a given letter height and series.

104

105 **TECH COMMITTEE VOTE 3-21-14 :**

106 **For: 18 Against: 2 Abstentions: 1**

107 **TECH COMMITTEE VOTE FOLLOWING SPONSOR COMMENTS 6-25-14:**

108 **For: 23 Against: 3 Abstentions: 0**

109 **COUNCIL VOTE: 6-26-14 For: 38 Against: 1 Abstentions: 0**

110 **C:ncutcd/june 2014/RW # 6 Section 2A.13 word messages revised 2-26-14, updated 5/28/14,**
111 **approved by RWSTC 6-25-14 following sponsor comments, approved by COUNCIL 6-26-**
112 **14**