

NCUTLO/Uniform Vehicle Code (UVC) Task Force Report
June 2010

General:

The suspension of activities by the NCUTLO has created a disconnect between the Uniform Vehicle Code (UVC), Rules of the Road and Definitions Chapters, and the MUTCD changes that result from the normal evolution of the art and science of traffic control device design and application. Unless engineering, enforcement, and adjudication work in harmony, there can be no uniformity in road user understanding of and response to traffic control devices. The inevitable result is an unacceptable rise in crash rates, injuries and deaths. Imposing such upon road users is an unacceptable abrogation of professional responsibility by those who practice in this field.

Several national organizations have been asked to take the NCUTLO under their wing and have, so far, apparently declined. As the party with the greatest self-interest in the rules of the road, the NCUTCD, has, by default, a role in developing and maintaining the above noted chapters, which is by no means a bad thing.

Recommendation:

It is our recommendation that a Rules of the Road Committee (RORC) modeled on the Edit Committee be appointed and be given the task of reviewing each Chapter of the MUTCD to find any disconnects between what is expected of the road users by the MUTCD and what the current UVC recommends for adoption by state and local jurisdictions relative to actions required of their road users.

Once the problems have been identified and coordinated among the Chapters, the RORC will prepare recommended amendments to the UVC as last published by the NCUTLO. The new language will be circulated in the normal fashion except that each jurisdiction will be encouraged to send the proposed recommendations to their legal departments as well as to their engineering departments. After final text revisions are adopted by the NC, the updated UVC sections will be published on the Web for all jurisdictions to use. Actually, the UVC and all definitions related thereto should be published as well.

For on-going work, each Technical Committee (TC) and the Pedestrian Task Force (PTF) should have a person responsible for alerting the RORC to any changes in their respective areas that might require adjustments to the UVC.

The major activities of the RORC would be conducted between NC meetings using electronic meeting methods. This will minimize disruption of NCUTCD

meeting activities and will encourage outside participation by law enforcement officers and judges who handle traffic cases as the only cost to them will be their time. While they would be welcome to join in our annual meetings, it is not a requirement for their participation, so no travel or lodging budget would be required of them.

The question of a participation fee to cover any costs related to RORC activities is left to the Executive Committee.

A secondary reason for using between meetings methods is that ample time would be available to have this "other side of the house" better represented in the work of each TC. Even when law enforcement regularly attended, it was usually one person who served where his interest was highest. The other TC's got scant attention. That needs to change if the revisions to the UVC are to be widely accepted.

Committee Structure:

Initially, the RORC should consist of the representative of each TC, and the PTF, and the EDIT Committee, as appointed by their respective chairpersons, and a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson appointed by the NC Chairperson, and up to three urban and three rural representatives each of the police and of the courts, selected to provide nationwide coverage.

The NCUTCD members are key to interfacing with law enforcement and judges as each profession has a prospective that can lead to misunderstanding of other's intended result.

As to police and judges, it is felt that once it becomes known that the NCUTCD is publishing and maintaining the UVC Rules of the Road, and that electronic participation requires is only a few hours a month, that can be scheduled outside the normal work day, recruitment of interested persons already in public service in these areas should be easy.

In addition to managing the work of the RORC, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson need to interface with the law enforcement people and the judges to ensure that each profession's prospective is considered and its needs and interests are addressed, and need to advise Chapter review teams, and be available to all TCs to address any questions that arise during the regular NUCTCD meetings.

Respectively submitted,

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Jeff Blue, Member
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