

Comments by David Kuemmel, PE, to the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control,

Washington, DC, January 8, 2015

I came to a Washington Meeting for the 1<sup>st</sup> Time 40 years ago this month to begin as a member of the Signals Technical Committee (STC). I have been involved with STC on the National Adv. Committee or this committee all these years.

I decided for personal reasons I can no longer do this, because my wife and I, married 60 years, need each other just for the challenges of daily living. I am, therefore, asking the Executive Committee to change my status to Emeritus Honorary Member after this meeting. I could have just sent an email some day saying I have to resign for health reasons, but then I would not get to say thank you in person, and say my goodbyes, in person, to many of you I've had the pleasure of serving with for 20, 30 and a few, for all 40 years. The thank you is for accepting me, listening to me, and for those many times we made time to socialize after a hard day's work.

I came in person, because I believe you are the most dedicated and competent people I have met professionally, in my 60 year career in transportation. I asked Chairman Lee Billingsley for this brief time to make sure, sometime in the next 2 days, that you know this is goodbye. Were it just myself I was concerned with, you would have had me here as long as I was mentally and physically able (just as Professor Harold Michael did, who died in his hotel room while attending our meeting). I deem this very significant work - being here and participating. And I'll do that for the next two days, so we'll have time to reflect and say goodbye.

As I reflect on all the things I had a role in shaping, I want to tell you of two things I am most proud of. The first was my role as advocate, and then chair of the Edit Committee, as we struggled with reviewing each Technical committee's work in reformatting the 1988 MUTCD, assigning categories of language we believed should be Standards, Guidance, Option and Support, with different text style to distinguish each. The Edit Committee became famous for being the word police, looking for those "Weasel Words" we tried to get out of the MUTCD. Carlton Robinson, a Emeritus Honorary Member was a part of that committee that labored for a few years before each technical committee moved on to rewriting the manual to say what we really wanted it to mean. That work for almost 10 years, led to the 2000 MUTCD under this new format.

But more important to me personally, was the long journey the STC took to reverse its longstanding opposition to audible pedestrian signals. It began at a meeting of the pedestrian Task Force of STC, in San Diego, in 2000, where we had as many guide dogs as task force members at our meeting. For the first time in 15 years we moved from listening, and recognizing the need to do something, working with the blind and those that serve them, to arrive at our first attempt for Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) in the 2000 MUTCD. I was and still am an advocate for APS. There were numerous years of research to find out what would help and research to test all the devices available, then specifying what devices needed to do. This lengthy process gave us the justification for the Standards we then recommended in two subsequent editions of the MUTCD. I see a future where all traffic signals serving pedestrians will have APS features.

These next two days, please look for me. I want to thank you in person. This is not easy for me, and thank you Lee, for letting me take some time for this. I thank you all, and keep up the good work. It's the most important professional thing I ever did.