

WZSTF Meeting Minutes
May 9th & 10th, 2006
SCR PD conference room

Attendees; Frank Newboles (HQ), Marty Weed (HQ), David Hamacher (HQ), Steve Haapala (OR), Bonnie Nau (NWR), Tony Hernandez (NWR), Kevin Waligorski (NCR), Kirby Wallace (ER), Les Miller (SCR)

Absent; Michael Novak (SWR)

Next Meeting; The next Technical Standing Committee meeting will be in Wenatchee on September 19th & 20th.

Frank welcomed the group and introduced David Hamacher from the HQ Safety Office as a new member of the group. An open discussion followed on news and issues from HQ and the regions and an update from the last Task Force meeting (2/23) was presented. Discussions followed on the agenda items:

List of Issues & Discussion Topics

Clear Zone vs. Safety Zone; Frank discussed the results from a meeting between HQ Traffic, HQ Design and HQ Construction and the need to revise the current Safety Zone GSP and come up with a better definition of what the Safety Zone is and how it is to be applied. After some discussion of information contained in various national publications it was decided that there is currently no consistent, defined method to determine work zone clear zone distances.

The distances currently shown in the Safety Zone GSP do not have a firm engineering basis to support the figures so HQ Design office has agreed to determine some acceptable values that can be justified based on a standard of some type and propose them to HQ Traffic and HQ Construction for discussion and approval. The group felt that whatever was ultimately decided it should have fewer variables than used in determining the Design Clear Zone.

Traffic Manual WSP guidance; The update of the Traffic Manual is an attempt to get a better handle on issues that come up with WSP use statewide, the current guidance is outdated and incomplete so this new guidance is much more in depth. It leaves flexibility for regions to determine the appropriate level of WSP involvement in their projects. Use of WSP is considered a legitimate traffic control strategy. The update will be distributed as a supplement to chapter 5 of the manual. The rest of the chapter will be overhauled in the near future.

New Federal rule and WSDOT policy statement; A pamphlet was handed out on the FHWA update to 23 CFR 630 Subpart J pertaining to work zone safety and mobility along with a draft outline for the revision of Design Manual chapter 810. Frank described to the group how with the pending implementation of the federal rule in Oct.

2007, the Design manual also had to be updated to be in compliance with the rule and to update the material. The new chapter is greatly expanded to include much more thorough guidance to designers on work zone issues and procedures. The group will be receiving copies of the complete chapter 810 re-write in the next few days from HQ Design for review and comment.

TMA trailer traffic control plans; New on the market is a modification to the NCPRP 350 approved Safestop-180 TMA that is based on a trailer frame attachment and can be used on multiple vehicles instead of the standard truck only attachment. Frank received a request from the SW region who recently purchased a few of the new trailers and asked HQ Traffic to develop a draft TCP detailing how to pick up work zone devices with the flow of traffic instead of requiring the trailer to backup in the work zone. Frank handed out a draft copy of the TCP and asked the group to distribute as appropriate with region maintenance and forward comment on the plans to Frank & Marty.

Flagger operations – SWR issues; Frank discussed an L&I citation received by SWR during a flagging operation in a short duration work zone. SWR claimed it was due in part to lack of distribution of the M54-44. Frank asked if any of the other regions were having problems with distribution of the updated manual or if there have been any recent citations with flagging operations. No one in the group was aware of any flagging or distribution issues in the regions.

Adopt-A-Highway & Litter Crew TC guidance; Difficult issue as maintenance does not want to lose the Adopt-A-Highway program by placing too many TC requirements on the groups. A stalemate with maintenance has been reached on this issue trying to balance minimum traffic control standards without overburdening the program. Frank said Ted Trepanier has agreed to bring this forward as a discussion item at a future statewide maintenance supervisor meeting.

Statewide TCP Library update by Marty; The library is available online and is maintained by Larry Hinsons group in HQ Design at the following web link:
<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/eesc/design/designstandards/psl/wz-1-17/wz-1-17.htm>

The intention of the plan library is for designer to use these plans as a starting point to develop contract site specific or project specific TCP's. Discussion followed on the possible inclusion of mobile TCP's and BMP's from the regions. Some discussion as to the possibility of having contractors submit plans for operations like rumble strip installation rather than developing plans that may not fit their work method. Marty will look at including mobile plans in the library.

WZ webpage; The external webpage has been updated and should be considered as the "one-stop shop" spot for anyone looking for work zone information. Marty encouraged the group to use the page and refer others when answering questions to the site. Steve suggested adding a link to current approved impact attenuator criteria. Marty may look at possibly adding photo and/or video links to site.

High visibility apparel; Dave proposed to change our standards to include the wording “garments”. The group felt there was some validity to having flaggers look consistent (requiring vests for them). We proposed that workers exposed to traffic be required to wear ANSI class 2 garments and to forward that recommendation to the task force. Dave was asked to summarize the recommendation and forward to the group for review prior to the next task force meeting.

M54-44 comments received; Marty stated that he has not received many comments from the rewrite of the manual, mainly some text changes for clarity and encouraged the group to forward any comments they may receive.

Other issues (to do list)

Roundabout TC; Frank and Marty will look at developing TCP’s to show signing; lane closures etc. and provide guidance on short duration work within roundabouts.

Update 1997 guidance on annual work zone reviews; Feds agree that we generally meet compliance requirements. The guidance was written so the regions have the flexibility to conduct their own program. We will leave this on our “to do” list, may be addressed with an update of the Construction Manual. Team members are asked to gather information from the regions on their current process and bring to next meeting.

Design training opportunities; Feds have requirements in the new Federal Rule for designers to be trained in traffic control but don’t specify what that training should consist of. WSDOT currently has a work Zone TCP design course available that may be adequate to meet the initial requirements of the rule but the course is in need of updating. Frank, Marty and Marlin will continue to work with Transpeed at updating the course and possibly have WSDOT take over the training from Transpeed.

Inspector training; Still kicking around the idea of having some sort of annual refresher training for inspectors prior to construction season. It may be possible to add a module to an existing class. Les will work with Marlin Zimmerman on training issues.