



California Traffic Control Devices Committee (CTCDC)



State of California

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION CALIFORNIA TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting
February 2, 2023

ATTENDEES

Panel:

- Jason Welday, League of California Cities (LOCC), City of Rancho Cucamonga (Chair)
- Pratyush Bhatia, LOCC, City of Dublin (Vice-Chair)
- David Fleisch, County Engineers Association of California (CEAC) Ventura County Public Works Agency (Immediate Past Chair)
- Lt. Noah Hawkins, California Highway Patrol (CHP)
- Bryan Jones, Caltrans Active Transportation (CAT), Greenlaw Partners
- Marianne Kim, American Automobile Association of Southern California (AAA-S)
- Tony Powers, CAT, Dokken Engineering
- Yue Wang, Caltrans Traffic Safety Engineering Manager

Voting Members (Present):

- Jason Welday, LOCC, City of Rancho Cucamonga (Chair)
- Pratyush Bhatia, LOCC, City of Dublin (Vice-Chair)
- David Fleisch, CEAC Ventura County Public Works Agency (Immediate Past Chair)
- Lt. Noah Hawkins, CHP
- Bryan Jones, CAT, Greenlaw Partners
- Marianne Kim, AAA-S
- Yue Wang, Caltrans Traffic Safety Engineering Manager

Voting Members (Absent):

- Robert Bronkall, CEAC, Humboldt County (Immediate Past Vice-Chair)
- Mike Sallaberry, CAT, San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency
- VACANT, American Automobile Association of Northern CA, NV, & UT (AAA-N)

Alternate Members (Present):

- Denise Dobson, CHP
- Tony Powers, CAT, Dokken Engineering
- Robert Scharf, CEAC, Los Angeles County Public Works

Alternate Members (Absent):

- Richard Moorehead, CEAC, Placer County
- Andrew Maximous, LOCC, City of Culver City
- Virendra Patel, LOCC, City of Concord



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- Steve Finnegan, AAA-S
- Johnny Bhullar, Caltrans
- Rock Miller, CAT, Rock E. Miller Associates
- VACANT, AAA-N

Committee Staff:

- Janelle Halog, Caltrans Transportation Engineer, Acting CTCDC Secretary
- Robert McNew, Caltrans Transportation Engineer

Presenters:

- John Bamfield, Caltrans
- Pauline Wong, Caltrans
- Jessica Downing, Caltrans
- Robert McNew, Caltrans

Public Speakers:

- Steve Pyburn, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

ORGANIZATION ITEMS

1. Introduction

Chair David Fleisch opened the meeting at 9:04 a.m.

The CTCDC members, alternate members, Caltrans staff, presenters, and public speaker introduced themselves. Janelle Halog stated that she would be filling the Secretary role during the meeting due to Johnny Bhullar’s absence.

2. Membership

Chair Fleisch stated that Lt. Noah Hawkins would be transferring to another position in CHP and will no longer be able to represent CHP as a CTCDC Voting Member. Lt. Brad Hopkins will be replacing Lt. Noah Hawkins as the CHP representative on the CTCDC. In addition, the AAA Northern California representatives for Voting Member and for Alternate Member are both currently vacant.

3. Approval of Minutes of the November 3, 2022 Meeting

MOTION: Jason Welday moved to approve the November 2, 2022 CTCDC Meeting Minutes as presented. Yue Wang seconded. The Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

4. Public Comments

There was no public comment.

5. Updates on Items under Experimentation



Chair Fleisch referred to the Active CTCDC Experiments table that Secretary Johnny Bhullar had compiled, and the experiment statuses included as an attachment in the agenda. He stated that there is a sponsor, generally a CTCDC board member, for each of the agenda items. In the past, the sponsor was sometimes a consultant, which cannot be done. Moving forward, there needs to be a contact with a CTCDC member for that person to be a sponsor for that item.

AGENDA ITEMS

6. Public Hearing

Election of New Chair and Vice-Chair

MOTION: Chair Fleisch nominated Jason Weldon as Chair. Mr. Wang seconded. The Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

MOTION: Chair Weldon nominated Pratyush Bhatia as Vice-Chair. Mr. Wang seconded. The Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

6a. Consent Items (minor discussion with vote expected)

None

6b. Action Items (Continuing discussion from prior meetings with vote expected)

21-06: 6-in Longitudinal Traffic Lines on SHS

John Bamfield, Caltrans, stated that since 2017, Caltrans has been adopting the 6-inch traffic stripe for greater visibility in low-light and wet conditions. This is acceptable in the current revision of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) under Chapter 3A, which is stated as 4- to 6-inch stripes. There has been some concern with locals using the discrepancy between the Caltrans Standard Plans, which calls for a 6-inch, and the CA MUTCD, which in most verbiage calls for a 4-inch.

The proposal is to modify the verbiage, to state clearly in the CA MUTCD that the 4-inch stripe is for locals only, while the 6-inch can be for locals or the State Highway System.

Questions and Discussion

Mr. Fleisch asked for clarification on what was changed. Mr. Bamfield replied that the previous recommendation to modify the text had included a line from the 2017 Caltrans memo, which stated that the 4-inch line was still allowable under recessed conditions and for double lines. This was to allow for maintenance, not for new stripes. That line has been removed from the recommended text. Figures which state that the line size should be 4 inches have also been updated, to specify 4 inches local and 6 inches for local or state highways.

Mr. Bhatia asked if locals can then choose either 4-inch or 6-inch. Mr. Bamfield confirmed.

MOTION: Mr. Fleisch made a motion to approve. Mr. Bhatia seconded. The Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

21-16: Assembly Bills AB-43 and AB-1938 Implementation – Speed Limit Policy Revisions

Pauline Wong and Jessica Downing, Caltrans, presented the item. Ms. Wong stated that the item was to finalize the language in Section 2B.13 of CA MUTCD.

Ms. Downing explained that Caltrans had received the follow comment from CHP

“Understanding that any fatality is unacceptable, it seems excessive to conclude that one pedestrian or bicyclist related fatality or serious injury within the last three to five years could constitute a land facility that generates high concentrations of bicyclists or pedestrians. This threshold is neither stipulated in Section 22358.7 CVC, nor defined in the Federal MUTCD or FHWA guidelines and could result in speed limits being set arbitrarily low in areas without a high concentration of pedestrians or bicyclists. As such, recommend this language be removed from the CA MUTCD.”

Caltrans had worked with CHP to achieve a compromise to revise the language. Ms. Downing read the changed language. She indicated that the definition of “highway segment” matches up with what they have designated in Table 2B-106, where they are using a distance of 1320 feet. They have also extended an option that the segment can be longer than 1320 feet, as long as there is one location within the top 20% of fatal and serious injury pedestrian and/or bicyclist crashes within a three-to-five-year period for every 1320 feet.

Ms. Wong stated that Caltrans has discussed this with CHP, and they have come to a consensus.

Questions and Discussion

Lt. Hawkins noted that this item had been a topic of discussion during the last CTCDC meeting. A committee member had inquired about it, saying that any loss of life is unacceptable. This specific section addresses high concentrations of bicyclists and pedestrians, and the statement of one fatality or serious injury in the span of one to five years does not qualify as a high concentration. Internal conversations have taken place since then with CHP, and other considerations have come to their attention. There is a proposal in the works to apply this to the State Highway System. In the opinion of CHP, one incident does not fit the definition of a high concentration. After discussions with Caltrans, they had come up with this recommendation.

Mr. Fleisch noted that Caltrans had referred to the top 20%; was this by agency? Ms. Downing responded that the proposed language specified that it was the jurisdiction where the engineering and traffic survey is being performed.

Mr. Fleisch asked if the three-to-five-year period was intended to give an agency flexibility to maximize what it can do. Ms. Downing confirmed. It is consistent with the safety corridors definition.

Mr. Bhatia asked if the rest of this section had already been passed. Ms. Downing confirmed.

MOTION: Mr. Bhatia made a motion to approve. Mr. Fleisch seconded. The Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.



22-10: Leading Pedestrian Interval Legislation AB-2264

Ms. Halog stated that the item will be postponed to the next meeting in May.

6c. Information Items (New items that may be voted on or brought back as an Action Item in a future meeting)

22-08: SHSP Action SM.3 California Manual for Setting Speed Limits Revision

Ms. Wong stated that Caltrans is in the process updating the California Manual for Setting Speed Limits (CMSSL) per Strategic Highway Safety Plan’s (SHSP) Speed Management/Aggressive Driving (SM/AD) Challenge Areas Action Item 3. Previously, the manual had been used by Caltrans only. They want to expand it to be applicable to the local agencies also.

Caltrans would like to ask six to eight local members who have been working with Speed Management to join them and provide input on best practices. Ms. Wong expected that there would be six meetings lasting about two hours, plus revision review time. Committee members can nominate themselves or others in their agency. This is a great opportunity to provide input to this important document which affects 40 million Californians. Ms. Wong requested the CTCDC to contact her with the nominations by Friday, February 17.

Mr. Fleisch suggested that Mr. Bhullar and Ms. Halog send the information to their contacts at CEAC and LOCC. Robert McNew responded that Caltrans is already doing that through the Local Assistance Program.

Mr. Fleisch noted that if this is going to be a subcommittee under the CTCDC, the CTCDC must hold a vote to establish it. Ms. Wong replied that the group does not need to be under the CTCDC and will not necessarily be a committee. Mr. McNew added that to make the manual available for use by the local agencies, Caltrans needs to know the processes local agencies use to pull data.

Mr. Fleisch felt that by doing this informally for a manual that most of the local agencies are not using, Caltrans is probably not going to get much response. He suggested formalizing their request, stating what they are trying to do through not just the Local Assistance Program, but also through CEAC and LOCC. With the changes that the law put in place, we need more consistency among the local agencies.

22-12: 2009 National MUTCD Revision 3 Final Pavement Ruling

Mr. Bamfield stated that this topic had been brought up at the previous meeting as well. It is a reminder to the CTCDC that the National MUTCD is adopting a minimum standard for retro-reflectivity. California has two years to comply from the effective date September 6, 2022 to adopt this final rule by incorporation into the CA MUTCD.

After that point, all roads with speed limits of 35 MPH or greater have a minimum retroreflectivity requirement of 50 millicandelas per square meter per lux (mcd/m²/lx). For 70 MPH or greater, the retroreflectivity recommendation is at or above 100 mcd/m²/lx. This is required at the low angle retroreflectivity per ASTM E1710.



Questions and Discussion

Marianne Kim asked if there were any issues with locals not complying with the standard. Mr. Bamfield was not aware of any locals that were not following the standards and making those changes. The revision to the MUTCD will be federal at this point and all roads in the U.S. will be required to maintain the standard for 35 MPH or greater. Caltrans currently has policies that the State maintains longitudinal stripes at greater than 150 millicandela for retroreflectivity; if you are following Caltrans' recommendations you will already be meeting those standards.

Chair Welday commented that the compliance is putting a program in place to inventory and have a process to update if needed. Mr. Bamfield agreed. He said that Caltrans has been implementing a contract out to measure retroreflectivity of all Caltrans State Highway System roads. There is a contract out to measure the retroreflectivity of lane stripes once every year.

Mr. Fleisch asked about the enforcement mechanism. Mr. Bamfield answered that Caltrans' enforcement mechanism is that if they do not meet their own standards, they are under tort liability; he could not speak to the local enforcement mechanisms.

Chair Welday asked when the committee will start seeing items to review for changes to the manual. Mr. Bamfield responded that the changes will be to the federal MUTCD rather than the Caltrans-specific manual.

Public Comment

Steve Pyburn, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), stated that if an item is put in the interim approval or an official ruling, then Caltrans can implement it immediately in the CA MUTCD. FHWA encourages them to do that. Caltrans has two years to implement the changes into the state manual after the effective date of the federal revision.

Mr. Pyburn spoke about enforceability. FHWA does reviews of compliance with the MUTCD. A couple of years ago, they did a sign retroreflectivity and maintenance review; they looked at the inspection records of every inspection on the State Highway System. Caltrans achieved about 95-96%. Most of the signs were replaced within six months, with some taking two years. FHWA had some findings for Caltrans which Maintenance agreed to. Maintenance has implemented processes and changes to their requirements in response to the findings. Mr. Pyburn expected that in several years, FHWA will have a similar review for marking compliance.

Mr. Pyburn said that on a side note, FHWA has a disagreement with Caltrans on their role of enforcing local agencies to comply with the national manual – FHWA attorneys believe they are required to while Caltrans attorneys believe they are not. However, liability always enforces itself.

Mr. Pyburn stated that he would ask Caltrans for a reporting process. The national manual has a number of revisions of, for example, left plaques on left exit signs and warning signs. FHWA could do a better job by requesting status on the programs.

6d. Request for Word Message Signs Approval

None

6e. Request for Experimentation

16-09: Request for Closure of Experiment with Messages and Graphics on Dynamic Message Signs on Freeway

Mr. McNew stated that in 2016, District 4 asked for a graphical interface for road information. It is an LED panel that can contain a lot of detail; it can graphically represent what the roadway looks like, and it can hold up to six lines of data. District 4 requested an experiment on this to see how it worked for giving additional information to the traveling public.

The CTCDC and FHWA both approved, with FHWA having some restrictions based on the graphics they wanted used, and they felt that six lines were too many for people to read. The District has moved forward, installing the panels and doing some analysis. They want to be able to try some new panels that they will negotiate with FHWA, but they have been unable to come to agreement. There are concerns about driver confusion related to some of the signs.

District 4 wants to close out the experiment, and when they come to agreement with FHWA, they will request a new experiment.

Questions and Discussion

Chair Welday asked if the signs were ever turned on. Mr. McNew replied that they were not, but that the proposed signs looked promising.

Mr. Fleisch commented that the whole idea was to provide additional information. He felt that continuing to look at a way to do that, particularly in highly congested areas, was quite important. However, recognition of the concern about driver distraction with screens is valuable. Technology has become more prevalent on the inside of vehicles, with phones and screens. Maybe hearing information through the systems we all use to navigate is more valuable than reading more screens. Mr. McNew added that they are working on some other programs with vendors that provide navigation systems in cars.

MOTION: Mr. Fleisch made a motion to approve. Mr. Bhatia seconded. The Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

7. Next Meeting

Chair Welday stated that the next meeting is scheduled for May 4, 2023 virtually through Webex.

8. Adjourn

Chair Welday adjourned the meeting at 9:58 a.m.