



State of California

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
CALIFORNIA TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting
August 4, 2022

ATTENDEES

Voting Members (Present):

- Robert Bronkall, County Engineers Association of California (CEAC) (Vice-Chair)
- Pratyush Bhatia, League of California Cities (LOCC)
- Lt. Noah Hawkins, California Highway Patrol (CHP)
- Bryan Jones, Caltrans – Active Transportation (CAT)
- Xavier Maltese, AAA of Northern CA, NV & UT (AAA-N)
- Mike Sallaberry, CAT
- Yue Wang, Caltrans Traffic Safety Engineering Manager
- Jason Welday, LOCC

Voting Members (Absent):

- David Fleisch, CEAC
- Marianne Kim, AAA of Southern CA (AAA-S)

Alternate Members (Present):

- Gurinderpal (Johnny) Bhullar, Caltrans
- Andrew Maximous, LOCC

Alternate Members (Absent):

- Denise Dobson, CHP
- Steve Finnegan, AAA-S
- Rock Miller, CAT
- Richard Moorehead, CEAC
- Zoubir Ouadah, CEAC
- Virendra Patel, LOCC
- Tony Powers, CAT
- Lena Whittaker, AAA-N

Committee Staff:

- Johnny Bhullar, CTCDC Secretary, Caltrans
- Tariq Baha, Caltrans Transportation Engineer
- Janelle Halog, Caltrans Transportation Engineer



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- Ejaz Shaikh, Caltrans Transportation Engineer

Presenters:

- Johnny Bhullar, CTCDC Secretary, Caltrans

Public Speakers:

- Richard Moeur, Executive Secretary, National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (NCUTCD)
- David Royer, Los Angeles Department of Transportation (DOT) retiree
- Laura Wells, City of San Jose

ORGANIZATION ITEMS

1. Introduction

Vice-Chair Bronkall opened the meeting, held via Webex, at 9:10 a.m. and stated that the presence of a quorum had been confirmed. The Committee Members introduced themselves.

2. Membership

Secretary Bhullar announced that Yue Wang now represents the Caltrans Voting Member on the Committee, replacing Lee Haber.

Mr. Wang stated that it was a great honor to join the Committee. He looked forward to working with everyone.

Secretary Bhullar announced that Andrew Maximous has joined the CTCDC as an Alternate LOCC Member representing Southern California Cities.

Mr. Maximous stated that he had served on the Committee a few years ago and was glad to be back as an Alternate.

3. Approval of Minutes of the May 5, 2022 Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Welday moved to approve the May 5, 2022 California Traffic Control Devices Committee Meeting Minutes as reported. Mr. Jones seconded. The Motion passed with Mr. Bhatia abstaining.

4. Public Comments

Richard Moeur, NCUTD, reported that they had learned yesterday from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) team that the final rule on pavement marking minimum retro-reflectivity will be published in the August 5 Federal Register. The 1993 DOT Appropriations Act called for FHWA to take action on this. The Notice of Proposed Amendments (NPA) was in 2010; the Supplemental NPA was in 2017. The final rule comes out tomorrow.

David Royer, retiree from the Los Angeles DOT, commented that Caltrans Standards Spec 7-1.04 in the Public Safety Section reduces the normal clear zone in Caltrans construction activities down to 15 feet. This specification conflicts with both the federal and the California MUTCDs; the latter mandates compliance with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) clear zone guidelines. Conflicts with

the Caltrans Safety Systems Manual, Topic 2 also exist. Caltrans Vision Zero goals cannot be met with this low clear zone on state highways. The CA MUTCD needs to be revised to specifically exempt Caltrans from this national standard for clear zones.

(Secretary Bhullar pointed out that the CTCDC does not provide a response within the meeting to public comments.)

5. Updates on Items under Experimentation

Secretary Bhullar stated that Caltrans staff has started looking into the CTCDC experimentation process. They are engaged in its entirety and are trying to revise and update it so that they can better manage and monitor these ongoing experiments. They will be making small changes with the end goal of streamlining and clarifying the experimentation process in the manual and website to help the agencies when they make their requests.

Staff will maintain an active experiment spreadsheet that will be part of the meeting agendas. It will show the experiments being managed within their time constraints and other requirements.

A total of 15 experiments beginning in 2015 are currently active. Secretary Bhullar showed the first iteration of the spreadsheet. Conceptual approvals will be included in the process. Five of the 15 are in the follow-up stage and are not active. Four of the 15 have exceeded the two-year timeframe; the two-year experimentation actually begins once the field implementation has occurred.

There are seven official experiments where local agencies that have public roadways in California have approached FHWA directly but not CTCDC. Staff will be meeting with FHWA to determine how to coordinate when agencies are going only to CTCDC or only to FHWA.

New permanent Transportation Engineers have joined the Caltrans office and will be assisting Secretary Bhullar, which will enable progress in tracking the experiments and reviewing the experimentation process.

Secretary Bhullar had included two pages in the Agenda denoting the current formal experimentation process. He said that if anyone attending this meeting has any suggestions or comments, they can send them to staff for consideration.

Another two pages were included that explain the assistance that Caltrans may provide the experiment sponsors. Staff does attempt to do as much work as possible on these experiment requests so as not to burden the CTCDC members.

Secretary Bhullar provided two reminders:

- When a request comes in, the first determination a sponsor makes is to determine whether it is a traffic control device or not. If so, is this a new traffic control device? That involves a separate process from experimentation. Sponsors have the responsibility to determine that true experimentation is needed in terms of the current manual and the policy.
- The applicant for any experimentation to the CTCDC has to be an employee of the agency having jurisdiction over the roadway. Consultants assisting the agency can handle the presentation, but not make the initial request.

There are also monitoring and reporting requirements.

As part of the Agenda, Secretary Bhullar had provided basic information on each of the 15 experiments, along with status updates and notes from follow-ups. Staff will be providing ongoing details in future meetings.



AGENDA ITEMS

6. Public Hearing

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

None

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

21-16: Assembly Bill (AB 43) on Traffic Safety Signed by Governor 10-08-2021 relating to speed limits

Secretary Bhullar stated that AB 43 makes provisions to the Vehicle Code and revises Vehicle Code sections in terms of allowing agencies greater flexibility in setting and lowering posted speed limits from the current process. After the bill’s passage last October and approval by Governor with Vehicle code revisions effective January 1, 2022, Caltrans prepared proposal to revise speed limit policy to comply with AB 43 provisions. Caltrans proposal was discussed in the November 2021 CTCDC meeting and the CTCDC requested a subcommittee to be formed to review these AB 43 provisions.

AB 43 addresses the policy recommendations and findings of the Zero Traffic Fatalities Task Force in the report titled “CalSTA Report of Findings; AB 2363 Zero Traffic Fatalities Task Force”, issued in January 2020. Many of these 27 policy recommendations concerned posted speed limits and California’s process for establishing them, which are being handled through the Strategic Highway Safety Plan’s Aggressive Driving/Speed Management Challenge Area Action Items. However, pursuing actions to implement seven of these 27 policy recommendations had been deferred because they required the law to be changed before they could be implemented, and AB 43 is that law. Secretary Bhullar listed those policy recommendations in the summary.

The 16-member subcommittee with diverse affiliations representing local agencies, regional organizations, auto clubs, enforcement and private consultants was formed last November in response to CTCDC request to review Caltrans speed limit policy revision proposal and completed the review in a series of 3 meetings last December. There were issues with the wording of AB 43 that needed clarification. Also, AB 43 was silent on current provisions in the CA MUTCD regarding the speed reductions that are allowed. That had created some confusion as to whether this was an addition to those provisions. Members of the subcommittee worked with the authors of the bill to gain some clarity. The outcome of the subcommittee meeting discussions on key issues and concerns were shared with Caltrans management earlier this year in January.

Caltrans is holding off on finalizing AB 43 provisions combined proposal pending Caltrans management and California State Transportation Agency (CalSTA) review and weigh in due to interpretation concerns on AB 43 intent and clarification on specific AB 43 text. In the meantime, Caltrans staff has been providing answers to questions from Caltrans and CalSTA management and the bill’s authors, consultants, and legislative staff.

AB 43 provisions included new Vehicle code section 22358.7, requiring Caltrans to develop a statewide definition for “safety corridor” and develop criteria to determine what

constitutes land or facilities that generate high concentrations of bicyclists and pedestrians. The draft proposal was prepared by Caltrans and then reviewed by subcommittee members in three meetings in June and July this year. It is being finalized as proposal for CTCDC meeting and discussion.

Secretary Bhullar had broken up all of the AB 43 revisions of the CVC sections into 16 specific changes, which he displayed. There are still four – the sections of the CVC added by AB 43 – that lack clarity. They remain under review. AB 1938, a new bill for the current legislative cycle, was initiated by the authors of AB 43. It offers interpretation and codifies some of the clarity that was needed – the pre-existing authority on setting speed limits. AB 43 was meant to supplement, not supplant, that existing authority.

Secretary Bhullar had highlighted some key comments on AB 1938. He explained that as referenced in the bill's analysis and comments in the Senate Committee on Transportation document, administration requested a change in law to implement AB 43, as intended. CalSTA had provided direction to Caltrans on AB 43 provisions pending review and clarification and not using interpretation. That is where AB 1938 comes in and provides clarification of AB 43 text and intent.

One issue of AB 43 was the four sections – 58.6, 58.7, 58.8, and 58.9 – (Vehicle Code Sections 22358.X) that were added. There was no clarity between them in terms of allowing the 5 MPH reduction.

Secretary Bhullar sought to address any concerns of the public or any agencies, that Caltrans and the CTCDC subcommittee were taking too long to implement AB 43. On Caltrans' end they have been judicious, and quick to do the engineering and come up with decisions on moving forward on the proposals. Most of the work has been held up with management, CalSTA review, or the authors themselves revising the bill. AB 1938 is in the current legislative cycle and is pending legislative action. Secretary Bhullar provided links through which the reader can look at the current version of the bill.

Five of the 16 provisions are tied to AB 1938 because they required those clarifications of AB 43 text and intent. Rather than waiting until everything gets sorted out and then coming to the CTCDC for the recommendation for all the policy changes, Caltrans has chosen not to include these five provisions as part of this request.

Nine of the 16 provisions are straightforward and not open to any interpretation or concern. It is very clear what the lawmakers wanted us to do. Caltrans has requested to move forward with those so that they will be ready; the rest will probably be ready for the November meeting. Secretary Bhullar was looking for a motion today to move forward with a recommendation for Caltrans to incorporate the nine provisions into the next revision of the CA MUTCD. At the same time, Caltrans will not be issuing the next revision until the other four provisions and AB 1938 are finalized.

Secretary Bhullar had recognized that two of the 16 provisions were part of AB 43 but were not included in the CA MUTCD. One deals with the terminology change from *flagman* to *flagperson*. The other deals with 40802 – the speed trap – and the reference on how to determine a local agency roadway; is it a state highway or not? There is a reference in the CVC that if it is not on the California Road System Maps, it becomes local.

Secretary Bhullar displayed a modified Section 2B.13 of the CA MUTCD. He walked the Committee through the modifications and showed the changes to the tables.

Committee Questions and Discussion



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Mr. Bhatia commended Secretary Bhullar for all the work that went into this. It had made Mr. Bhatia’s work as the Subcommittee Chair that much easier – having all the details thoroughly vetted out and then going through each and every section of AB 43 to address all the input from the CTCDC members.

Public Comment

Laura Wells, City of San Jose, stated that two areas were incorrect. On page 25, Row 22357 of the table was not changed via AB 43. The section that was changed was 22358 and it needs to be an added row; it is the one where if a local agency believes the 65 MPH prima facie is too high, the authority was changed from going from 25 MPH to as low as 15 MPH. Secretary Bhullar thanked Ms. Wells and noted that there are a number of CVC sections relating to speed limits. As a separate effort unrelated to AB 43, we need to revise sections where we embrace a more comprehensive approach to speed limits.

Ms. Wells also referenced a misleading statement on page 19. The intent of the standard, that “...the option to extend an E&TS to 14 years shall not be used on a local street, road, school zone, etc....” was intended to mean that those categories of streets do not require a survey; they are prima facie 25. As written, it implies that an E&TS is being conducted but you just cannot extend it to 14 years. Additionally, in other sections of the Vehicle Code with AB 43, if a city has a 25 MPH local street and they use the survey to go down to 20 or 15, Ms. Wells believed the survey would need to be refreshed every five, seven, or 14 years. In that case, the 14 years would be applicable. Secretary Bhullar responded that what may have happened is that looking at the language of AB 43 and just bringing it over to this place in the text, does have the unintended consequences of implying what Ms. Wells had explained. He valued hearing the local agency’s perspective from Ms. Wells and agreed that the implication has changed.

Secretary Bhullar stated that some work needs to be done on those two elements at a minimum. Probably this agenda item is not ready – the recommendation needs revision. He stated that he would like to hold off on the item.

Vice-Chair Bronkall felt that the two items that Ms. Wells had brought to the Committee’s attention were somewhat minor in the way that they would need to be clarified. Possibly a motion could go ahead and allow Caltrans to make revisions to those two sections in order to move the item forward. Secretary Bhullar agreed to this suggestion.

MOTION: Mr. Bhatia made a motion to move this forward with the minor changes. Mr. Wang seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

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

None

6d. Request for Word Message Signs Approval

None

6e. Request for Experimentation



Vice-Chair Bronkall noted that these three items were closures of experiments. With the Committee’s agreement, he recommended combining the closure of all three items into one Action Item to deal with them officially.

16-08: Request for Closure of Experiment with the Diagonal Down Yellow Arrow Lane Use Control Signal Indications on Freeway

Secretary Bhullar explained that this item came from Caltrans District 4. They had also engaged FHWA and received feedback for further clarifications on the experiment. When they were ready to move forward with the experiment, they saw that there was an adjacent corridor in the Bay Area on I-80 that was using another feature on their roadway which was also a Caltrans project. The overhead signals used there were very similar to what was requested under this experiment, so at that time the local CHP office advised Caltrans not to move forward with the new experiment until the one on the adjacent corridor was completed, to avoid creating confusion for the motorist.

District 4 then deferred moving forward with the new experiment. By the time the other project was completed, Covid occurred and there were also issues with wire theft. They could not initiate the experiment. When District 4 is ready to begin the experiment, they may come back to the Committee. For now, that office is focused elsewhere. They are seeking to close the experiment request.

16-23: Request for Closure of Experiment with Green Backed Sharrow

Secretary Bhullar explained that the experiment was not implemented because of the cost of painting the sharrows over the new surface of a pavement rehab project at the same location. There were multiple delays from 2016-2018. The City chose not to continue with the experiment because of the delays and is seeking to close the experiment request.

17-16: Request for Closure of Experiment on Internally Illuminated Raised Pavement Markers

Secretary Bhullar stated that this experiment from LA Metro involved evaluating the effectiveness of Internally Illuminated Raised Pavement Markers (IIRPMs) at light rail crossings. The experiment was to have, in addition to traffic controls, the inroad raised pavement marker flashing lights installed to evaluate their effectiveness. The results have been mixed. The markers do help, and violations were reduced; however, they are not a deterrent for someone who wants to violate the signal. The conclusion of the report was that the IIRPMs are helpful but not totally effective in preventing the right and left turns on red.

Caltrans will not move forward with any recommendation as a result from this experiment that would require a change to the MUTCD. LA Metro themselves decided not to move forward with the IIRPMs but to replace them with actual traffic gates. The experiment is closed and the devices removed, and to Caltrans that constitutes closure of the experiment.

MOTION: Mr. Jones made a motion to approve closure of all three Requests for Experimentation. Mr. Wang seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

7. Next Meeting

Vice-Chair Bronkall stated that the next meeting was scheduled for November 3.



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Secretary Bhullar stated that Caltrans has been given direction for resuming in-person meetings. He opened discussion among the Committee members on how to move forward with future meetings.

Mr. Jones stated that the CTCDC has addressed greenhouse gas emissions of flight and travel by doing virtual meetings. It also gives more accessibility to people throughout the entire state. However, he missed connecting with Committee members before and after the meetings.

Mr. Sallaberry agreed and stated that he would like to explore the possibility of meeting together once a year and having the rest virtual meetings. Virtual meetings keep costs down for the sponsoring agencies and make accessibility much greater for people all over the state. However, he did miss seeing people in person.

Vice-Chair Bronkall said that he preferred in-person meetings and was open to having occasional meetings virtually. He is located in the very northern part of the state; to make travel easier, meetings could be held in meeting rooms at the airport. With Sacramento being the state capital, there are many early morning flights arriving and late afternoon flights leaving so that people could fly in and leave the same day.

Mr. Bhatia suggested a hybrid approach: if the meeting is in Northern California, it is less costly and time-intensive to travel for those who live in Northern California. If someone from Southern California is not able to make it, they can attend over Zoom, and vice versa for the locations. Virtual meetings are easier and save a lot of time, but at the same time Mr. Bhatia misses the in-person interactions.

Mr. Welday said that he joined the CTCDC while meetings have been virtual, and he has not attended an in-person meeting. He saw a lot of benefit from being in-person with the improved interaction. He expressed concern about hybrid meetings: those online may not be able to participate as well as those present. Having the hybrid option for non-Committee members may be another option to afford easier access for cities and counties across the state. Vice-Chair Bronkall agreed.

Secretary Bhullar stated that he had started attending meetings in 2000 and felt that there is a lot of value in in-person meetings in terms of building relationships. For CTCDC members, being able to reach out directly to local agency members to learn about their experience with traffic control device matters in general – not related to specific agenda items – is very helpful. For meeting locations, the populated areas of the state are preferable. At the same time, Caltrans as a default can always come up with a facility. Staff will always handle most of the administrative work: equipment, signage, room reservations, and so on.

Secretary Bhullar continued that the Canada Traffic Control Devices Committee holds only two meetings: one virtual and one in-person. The National MUTCD holds in-person meetings such that there is no option for a mixed approach. In terms of location, Secretary Bhullar preferred having meetings alternate between the north and the south so that we are allowing the public opportunities to engage.

Public Comment

Richard Moeur commented that he has been attending CTCDC meetings for about 20 years and has found the in-person meetings to be very valuable. The Chair of the National Committee has said that he would like Mr. Moeur to continue attending CTCDC meetings, but there is currently no funding. He will have to take it out of his overhead. Mr. Moeur said that the national MUTCD has evaluated hybrid meetings and found that the in-person attendees interact well, and the virtual people interact well, but there is very little effective



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interaction between the two groups. They have pivoted back to two meetings – summer and winter. Technical committees, joint task forces, and working groups are meeting virtually throughout the year.

Secretary Bhullar asked the Committee for direction on how they would like to proceed for the next meeting.

Vice-Chair Bronkall stated that Committee feedback showed a preference to return to in-person meetings.

Mr. Sallaberry felt that the preference had been to mix up in-person and virtual; the hybrid approach may not work well. He suggested having one meeting per year in the North and one in the South with the remainder virtual. Mr. Bhatia agreed.

MOTION: Mr. Sallaberry made a motion that the CTCDC move to two in-person meetings a year, one in Northern California and one in Southern California, with the remainder virtual; with the ability for the public to attend every meeting virtually; all Committee members are expected to attend the in-person meetings. Mr. Bhatia seconded.

Mr. Welday suggested a minor amendment that the CTCDC evaluate the effectiveness of virtual meetings versus in-person meetings after one of each.

AMENDMENT: Mr. Sallaberry added the amendment that this would be in place for one year, and that we would have a conversation in 12 months to determine if this is working or if it needs to be further modified. Mr. Bhatia concurred. The Motion passed unanimously.

8. Adjourn

MOTION: Mr. Welday moved to adjourn. Vice-Chair Bronkall seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 11:14 a.m.