

Existing ATMS language is shown in black with a change bar in the margin to indicate revision of MUTCD language. Additional MUTCD paragraphs may have been included for context. Additions or deletions by this August 2015 interim addendum are shown in red with a change bar. Figures are modified with red strikeout.

## **Section 1A.10 Interpretations, Experimentations, Changes, and Interim Approvals**

### **Standard:**

Design, application, and placement of traffic control devices other than those adopted in this Manual shall be prohibited unless the provisions of this Section are followed.

To promote the use of uniform, understandable, and effective traffic control devices; to avoid varying official interpretations, and to facilitate the orderly development of traffic control policy, the State Traffic and Safety Engineer shall be the focal point for policy in all matters concerning the ATM.

- A. Official interpretations for purposes of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' practice of these standards shall be made by the State Traffic and Safety Engineer.
- B. Those who desire interpretation of a clause in the ATM, a revision to the ATM, or permission to experiment with or use a traffic control device not in the ATM, ASDS, or the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' Standard Drawings shall submit a written request to the State Traffic and Safety Engineer. The request shall clearly identify the existing standard (if any), and the proposed standard including a complete statement as to how and when it is to be applied, the date, and the name and address of the person making the request.

The State Traffic and Safety Engineer shall circulate requests for new traffic control devices and significant changes in policy that can be approved at the state level, such as revisions to text-only signs, to the Regional Traffic and Safety Engineers, the FHWA Alaska Division Safety/Operations Engineer, and the Anchorage and Fairbanks traffic engineers for their input. Responses to the requestor shall be sent within 60 days of receipt of the request.

If the request is one that requires interim or experimental approval from the FHWA, the requestor shall send a letter to the State Traffic and Safety Engineer that addresses the requirements listed in section 1A.10 of the MUTCD. Upon concurrence, the State Traffic and Safety Engineer shall send the request to the FHWA and distribute the response when received.

- C. Revisions to the MUTCD shall not become part of the ATM until they have been reviewed by the State Traffic and Safety Engineer, any necessary changes have been made to the ATMS, the FHWA has approved those changes, and the ~~State Traffic and Safety Engineer informs users of Chief Engineer issues a Transmittal the adoption of adopting~~ the revised MUTCD.



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### **Section 1A.13 Definitions of Headings, Words, and Phrases in this Manual**

#### **Standard:**

When used in this Manual, the text headings of Standard, Guidance, Option, and Support shall be defined as follows:

- A. **Standard**—a statement of required, mandatory, or specifically prohibitive practice regarding a traffic control device. All Standard statements are labeled, and the text appears in bold type. The verb “shall” is typically used. The verbs “should” and “may” are not used in Standard statements. Standard statements are sometimes modified by Options. ~~Standard statements shall not be modified or compromised based on engineering judgment or engineering study.~~
- B. **Guidance**—a statement of recommended, but not mandatory, practice in typical situations, with deviations allowed if engineering judgment or engineering study indicates the deviation to be appropriate. All Guidance statements are labeled, and the text appears in unbold type. The verb “should” is typically used. The verbs “shall” and “may” are not used in Guidance statements. Guidance statements are sometimes modified by Options.
- C. **Option**—a statement of practice that is a permissive condition and carries no requirement or recommendation. Option statements sometime contain allowable modifications to a Standard or Guidance statement. All Option statements are labeled, and the text appears in unbold type. The verb “may” is typically used. The verbs “shall” and “should” are not used in Option statements.
- D. **Support**—an informational statement that does not convey any degree of mandate, recommendation, authorization, prohibition, or enforceable condition. Support statements are labeled, and the text appears in unbold type. The verbs “shall,” “should,” and “may” are not used in Support statements.

Unless otherwise defined in this Section, or in other Parts of this Manual, words or phrases shall have the meaning(s) as defined in the most recent editions of the “Uniform Vehicle Code,” “AASHTO Transportation Glossary (Highway Definitions),” and other publications mentioned in Section 1A.11.

The following words and phrases, when used in this Manual, shall have the following meanings:

[Note: Definitions 1 through 93 are unmodified by this ATMS.]

94. **Intersection**—intersection is defined as follows:

- (a) The area embraced within the prolongation or connection of the lateral curb lines, or if none, the lateral boundary lines of the roadways of two highways that join one another at, or approximately at, right angles, or the area within which vehicles traveling on different highways that join at any other angle might come into conflict.
- (b) The junction of an ~~alley or driveway~~ with a roadway or highway shall not constitute an intersection, unless the roadway or highway at said junction is controlled by a traffic control device.

The junction of an alley with a street or highway is not an intersection (13 AAC 40.010).

- (c) If a highway includes two roadways that are 30 feet or more apart (see definition of Median), then every crossing of each roadway of such divided highway by an intersecting highway shall be a separate intersection.
- (d) If both intersecting highways include two roadways that are 30 feet or more apart, then every crossing of any two roadways of such highways shall be a separate intersection.
- ~~(e) At a location controlled by a traffic control signal, regardless of the distance between the separate intersections as defined in (c) and (d) above:
  - (1) ~~If a stop line, yield line, or crosswalk has not been designated on the roadway (within the median) between the separate intersections, the two intersections and the roadway (median) between them shall be considered as one intersection;~~
  - (2) ~~Where a stop line, yield line, or crosswalk is designated on the roadway on the intersection approach, the area within the crosswalk and/or beyond the designated stop line or yield line shall be part of the intersection; and~~
  - (3) ~~Where a crosswalk is designated on a roadway on the departure from the intersection, the intersection shall include the area extending to the far side of such crosswalk.~~~~

[Note: Definitions 95 through ~~184~~ 183 are unmodified by this ATMS.]

184. **School**—a public or private educational institution ~~recognized by the State education authority~~ for one or more grades K through 12 or as otherwise defined by the State. ~~For consideration of traffic control devices in Alaska, “school” includes public, charter, private and religious schools. Schools are further defined as physical structures where professional and/or certificated teachers provide regular courses and classwork to students. Day care facilities, pre-schools, home schools, learning centers and other similar facilities and commercial entities are not considered schools for the purpose of traffic control devices. Schools located in commercial buildings such as malls or office structures are not considered standalone schools for the purpose of traffic control devices.~~

185. **School Zone**—a designated roadway segment approaching, adjacent to, and beyond school buildings or grounds, or along which school related activities occur. School zones, when designated, may have a reduced speed limit, increased fines for speeding or other traffic violations within the zone, and/or a designated school crossing.

[Note: Definitions 186 through 241 are unmodified by this ATMS.]

242. **Traveled Way**—the portion of the roadway for the movement of vehicles, exclusive of the shoulders, berms, sidewalks, and parking lanes. On two-lane gravel roads or paved roads without striping, the traveled way is considered the 24-foot area centered between hinge points. If the distance between hinge points is 24 feet or less, the traveled way shall be considered 20 feet wide in placement of traffic control devices.

[Note: Definitions 243 through 259 are unmodified by this ATMS.]

[Note: Definitions 260 through 299 are reserved for future MUTCD definitions.]

- 300. Alaska Sign Design Specifications**—The “Alaska Sign Design Specifications (ASDS)” contains drawings showing dimensions, shapes, colors, and other information necessary for laying out the signs that are used in Alaska. The ASDS consists of the "Standard Highway Signs and Markings" book (FHWA) and the "Alaska Sign Design Specifications Supplement".
- 301. Alaska Traffic Manual**—The Alaska Traffic Manual (ATM) consists of the 2009 Edition of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) dated December 2009, and this Alaska Traffic Manual Supplement (ATMS).
- 302. City Traffic Engineer**—An employee of a local government agency with road jurisdiction who is responsible for traffic control devices.
- 303. Commissioner**—All references to the commissioner herein, not otherwise identified, shall refer to the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities; the commissioner’s duly authorized agents, representatives, and assigns; and those who by nature of their regular duties or emergency situations are required to act in matters of policy concerning traffic control devices. "Duly authorized" in times of emergency does not relieve anyone of the responsibility of obtaining approvals and authority from the regular authority when the emergency has passed.
- 304. Chief Engineer** – The Chief Engineer is the Director of Design and Engineering Services Division of DOT&PF in Juneau. The Chief Engineer is authorized to set policy and act as an authorized representative of the Commissioner regarding engineering and traffic and safety related issues.
- 305. Hinge Point**—The angle point where the top surface of a road intersects a foreslope, typically at the outside edge of the shoulder.
- 306. Regional Traffic and Safety Engineer (RTSE)** —One of three DOT&PF employees with this title. There is one RTSE in the Northern Region (based in Fairbanks), one in the Central Region (based in Anchorage), and one in the Southeast Region (based in Juneau).
- 307. School Area**—The neighborhood and spaces surrounding and including a school and its grounds, including the road and non-road portions of the space. A school area may or may not include a designated school zone.
- 308. School District** – For public and charter schools, school district refers to the elected advisory school board and responsible organization and persons that administer school functions in the community including student transportation and safety. For private and religious schools, school district refers to the authorized and responsible organization and persons that administer school functions including student transportation and safety.
- 309. Shoulder**—That portion of the roadway outside of the traveled way. Left shoulders on divided roadways are considered part of the median. Shoulders should normally be considered refuge or emergency lanes rather than parking areas.
- 310. State Highways**—All public vehicular ways designated as state highways in accordance with Title 19 of the Alaska Statutes.
- 311. State-Maintained Roads**—The roads maintained by state forces or maintained by others at state expense.
- 312. State Traffic and Safety Engineer (STSE)**—The individual with this title is employed by the Design and Construction Standards Section of the Design and Engineering Services Division of DOT&PF in Juneau.

