

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 26 August 2014

Response to the Consultation on the Draft Traffic Signs Regulations and General Direction 2015

Item number	8.5
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All

Executive summary

This report sets out a response, to the UK Department for Transport covering proposed changes, set out in a Consultation on the draft Traffic Signs Regulations and General Direction 2015.

The changes are broadly welcome. They increase the freedom of the Council, to tailor consultation on yellow lines and several other matters, currently covered by detailed statutory guidance, to suit specific projects. They have potential to reduce sign clutter and at the same time allow more freedom in several aspects of sign design. This will help the Council in a number of areas, for example in producing clear parking signs and in progressing cycling projects.

Links

Coalition pledges	P19
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Response to the Consultation on the Draft Traffic Signs Regulations and General Direction 2015

Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the response, to the consultation on the draft Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2015, which was submitted on the 12 June 2014.

Background

- 2.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) has carried out a comprehensive review, of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD). Following the review, the DfT has consulted on proposed changes to the TSRGD and a revised document, the 'New TSRGD'.

Main report

- 3.1 The New TSRGD is completely restructured, to provide more flexibility and a much greater range of sign designs. This will substantially cut the need for the DfT to authorise signs on a case by case basis. It will offer significant savings in time and costs. A summary of these changes can be found in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The consultation, which closed on 12 June 2014, posed a number of questions to stakeholders on the proposed changes to the TSRGD. In summary, the response submitted (Appendix 2) was very supportive of the changes.
- 3.3 The New TSRGD allows more discretion in placing signs, in many cases removing the requirement for upright signs and markings to be placed together. For example, if parking bays are clearly marked on the road, along with any relevant times and restrictions, no signs will be needed. Taking account of improvements in reflective materials, it significantly relaxes requirements for lighting signs, with resulting potential for savings in installation and energy costs. The main changes in the TSRGD are summarised in Appendix 2.
- 3.4 It is worth noting that, on the whole, the appearance of signs themselves will not change. The consultation was about creating a more flexible legislative framework for signing, rather than new signs.

- 3.5 The deadline for responses was 12 June 2014. With this in mind a draft response has already been submitted. Should Committee wish to amend the response, a revised version can be sent.

Measures of success

- 4.1 The reduction in signage requirements and required size of signs should improve the streetscape of the city.
- 4.2 The removal of requirements for lighting of signage will, in the future, reduce the energy costs associated with lighting.
- 4.3 The greater flexibility in signage requirements will help significantly in introducing cycling measures, such as contraflows in one-way streets.

Financial impact

- 5.1 The reduction in overall requirement for signing, in required sign sizes and the need for lighting, will all reduce both capital and revenue costs for the Council.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 There are not expected to be any negative health and safety, governance, compliance or regulatory implications, arising from the proposals set out in the report.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 The proposed changes to the TSRGD will, in general, increase the ability of the Council, to sign appropriately to local circumstances and needs. Any equalities impacts will not be a direct consequence of the New TSRGD. The impact of new ways of signing, which are enabled by this new document will need to be assessed, as part of the projects concerned.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 The reduction in overall requirement for signing, in required sign sizes, and the need for lighting will all reduce environmental impacts.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 The Council has been consulted as part of a nationwide consultation, undertaken by the Department for Transport. No further consultation has been carried out by the Council.

Background reading/external references

None.

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Links

Coalition pledges	P44 – Prioritise keeping our streets clean and attractive.
Council outcomes	CO18 – Green – We reduce the local environmental impact of our consumption and production. CO19 – Attractive Places and Well Maintained – Edinburgh remains an attractive city through the development of high quality buildings and places and delivery of high standards and maintenance of infrastructure and public realm.
Single Outcome Agreement	S04 – Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric.
Appendices	1 Consultation Response. 2 Main changes to TSRGD summarised.

Appendix 1 – Proposed changes to the TSRGD 2015.

Main aims of the consultation

- Consolidate all amendments introduced since 2002.
- The document is more flexible in the range of signs available, by using a building block system with each section (eg Regulatory, Directional) having its own set of tables.
- Signing the Way fully incorporated and available to Scotland and Wales without any authorisation required
 - 20mph Zones and limits
 - Signing/Marking Bays
 - Ped Countdowns
 - Bus Lane signs – add authorised vehicles
 - Trixi mirrors

Main changes to sign illumination requirements

Remove lighting requirements for

- Warning Signs
- Regulatory Cycle Signs
- Bus Gate/tramway
- Self righting Bollards
- 20mph (Regulatory Signs)

Illumination is still required lights for Give Way/No Entry/Height Restriction Signs and banned manoeuvre (outwith 20mph zones/limits).

Main changes to reducing sign clutter

Remove the need for having signs and markings (eg Parking Bays or 20mph signs and roundels).

Reducing the size of directional signs by the removal of Guildford Rules.

- These were introduced in 1994 and use colour-coding 'panels' to show the route hierarchy system, on advanced direction signs.
- The proposal is to revert to colour coding only the route number for higher status routes and not the destination.
- An example of signs designed with and without the Guildford rules is shown below



- Remove inset boxes from signs, unless high category route
- Remove change in width of lanes shown on sign.

Onus on council to determine the appropriate level of signing provision by using Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 3.

- Reduce number of existing terminal signs.
- Reduce number of speed limit signs.
- Option to use diag 1065 (Roundels) instead of repeater signs.
- Roundels can be placed without additional signage.

Remove the requirement to install traffic calming features at specified intervals.

- Minimum 1 feature within 100m.

Signs do not need to be lit in 20mph zones but must be reflectorised.

Main changes to parking & waiting restrictions

Consider removing Traffic Orders requirements from

- Single/Double Yellow lines
- Keep Clear Zigzags

These would work in the same way as Bus Stop Clearway and Yellow boxes are currently run. Expect LA to consult effectively.

Increase flexibility and understanding of parking signs.

Allow a building block theme to be used to allow LA to install signage relevant to the area, reducing the need for authorisation.

Flexible size/appearance of parking bays. No requirement to use dashed lines (can be by use of alternative materials, solid lines).

Measures to improve cycling facilities

Measures currently authorised that will be prescribed;

- Cycle safety mirrors, known as 'Trixi' mirrors
- No Entry Except Cycles' signing
- Cycle filter signals
- Use of a red cycle aspect on cycle-only traffic lights
- Cycle route branding - for example, wider national use of Transport for London's Cycle Superhighways branding and the new 'Quietways' signing
- 7.5m deep Advanced Stop Lines (ASLs), to provide more capacity for cyclists
- New road markings to help indicate cycle routes through junctions
- Wider cycle lane markings
- The use of the square white 'elephant's footprints' markings to indicate the route for cyclists through a traffic signal controlled junction
- Greater flexibility in designing 20mph zones and limits
- Advanced Stop Lines covering only part of the width of the road - for example, across one lane only

New measures that will be prescribed;

- The removal of the requirement for a lead-in lane or gate at ASLs. This will permit cyclists to cross the first stop line at any point, allowing them to position themselves where they feel it is most appropriate. This applies to ASLs at crossings, as well as at junctions
- Removing the requirement for signs indicating off-road cycle routes to be lit
- Allowing smaller signs for off-road cycle routes (these proposals are not included within the draft Schedules but will be in the final version)
- Allowing zig-zag markings at pedestrian crossings to be offset from the kerb, by up to 2m, to allow cycle lanes to continue through the controlled area
- Where pedestrian zone signs include the "no motor vehicles" sign, the zone will now be referred to as a "pedestrian and cycle zone". This will help the public's understanding of the difference between the "no vehicles" and "no motor vehicles" signs

No Traffic Order required for cycle facilities;

- Contraflow cycle lanes
- Mandatory Cycle Lanes

These would still be expected to be consulted with public prior to installation.

New Shared ped/cycle crossing. (Zebra Crossing with cycle crossing alongside.)

Low level signals. (Linked with existing Traffic signal)

- They are trialling a form of head start signals with Manchester which have been positive.

Planning to trial Cycle streets which would include a ban on overtaking on lightly trafficked streets where cycle flows are high, potentially with an advisory 15mph speed limit.

Main changes to Traffic Signals and Pedestrian crossings

Incorporate the Zebra, Pelican and Puffin Crossings Regulations and General Directions 1997 (the ZPP Regulations) to provide consistency and allow the DfT to update the requirements of the ZPP regulations, where needed. The layouts and operation of crossings will not change and zig-zag controlled areas will remain a requirement.

However, the requirements for zig-zag layouts at crossings will be simplified where possible. Much of the requirements of Schedules 1 and 4 of the ZPP regulations will be moved to guidance, to provide more flexibility in designing crossing layouts.

Removal of option to install Pelican crossings, this will not effect any currently installed until the equipment reaches the end of its life.

Authorities that want to retain the farside signals but provide the benefits of puffin crossings, can also use what is known in London as a 'pedex' crossing.

- These crossings use the familiar farside signals of a pelican but do not have the flashing green man or flashing amber.
- They can be used with similar detectors to puffins and the new countdown signals (included in the new TSRGD) developed to show how much time is left to cross the road, during the blackout period.

Other main changes to signage

New Boundary Signs with Photographic Images.

Changing current blue positive Bus Only signs with no entry signs with sub sign stating what is allowed.

Yellow boxes – Less prescribed, no authorisation required for unusual shapes.

Traffic enforcement signs – Bus Lane Camera signs.

Appendix 2: TSRGD Consultation Response as sent

- 1 *If you are responding as a traffic signs practitioner, from the draft you have seen in this consultation, do you believe the new structure and provisions of TSRGD will give you the flexibility to design and use the signs you need to help manage traffic?*

Strongly Agree	
Agree	✓
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	

From the draft we have seen we believe that the new structure and provisions will assist the City of Edinburgh Council in reducing clutter as well as the size and number of signs we place on the street network.

The layout of the schedules has made it clearer and much easier to understand the TSRGD.

- 2 a) *We would like your views on extending deregulation of sign lighting. The proposal is that any signs within 20 mph limits and zones would no longer need to be lit. This is on the basis that at slower speeds there is more time available to drivers to read the signs.*

Do you agree that all signs within a 20 mph limit/zone, particularly safety critical signing such as "no entry" signing, should be subject to local authority judgment only?

Strongly Agree	✓
Agree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	

We agree that all signs within 20 mph limits and zones should be subject to local authority judgement. There may be very specific local circumstances to justify lighting, this type of decision is best taken locally.

- b) *Do you agree that the requirement to light 'two-way traffic ahead' signs is safety-critical, and should remain, or should be removed in line with other warning signs?*

Strongly Agree	
Agree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	✓
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	

The wording of the question makes responding difficult. We consider that it would make sense to remove the requirement for lighting for these along with other signs. We do not feel that they are any more safety critical than such signs as no entry and height limits.

- c) *To help inform our final Impact Assessment please can you provide us with estimates within your local authority on,*

- 1.1 i. *The number of illuminated traffic signs you have placed in 20 mph zones?*

0-50	51-100	101-200	201-500	501+
✓				

- ii *The number of traffic signs you have placed on retroreflective self righting bollards?*

0-50	51-100	101-200	201-500	501+
	✓			

- iii *On average what is your estimated yearly energy cost of lighting a single traffic sign?*

The average estimated yearly energy cost is approximately £15 for a single traffic sign.

- 3 a) *Is there anything more we can do within TSRGD to reduce sign clutter?*

Yes	No
✓	

- b) *If you are responding as a traffic signs practitioner, will you take advantage of the greater flexibility within the new TSRGD to reduce sign clutter?*

Yes	No
✓	

We see this as a positive for Edinburgh, especially in relation to the World Heritage Site. It will give us the opportunity to reduce the sign clutter throughout the area and help achieve our urban design objectives while not compromising safety.

- 4 a) *Do you support the proposals to allow changes to yellow line restrictions to be made without an associated Traffic Order (TO) process?*

Yes	No
✓	

This would streamline the requirements on the TO process, and can help undertake minor changes without the long drawn out process to make the changes.

- b) *As a local authority, would you ensure that effective consultation would be undertaken if the requirement for a TO is removed?*

Yes	No
✓	

The opportunity to tailor consultation on waiting and loading restrictions according to local circumstances is welcome. It promises to save time and money and enable us to deliver a better service to the public. Consultation is very important to this Council. However the current requirements are overly rigid and the proposals would enable us to carry out an appropriate level of consultation depending on the extent and nature of proposals.

5 To inform our final Impact Assessment please can you provide us with estimates within your local authority on the number of cycle schemes you have introduced over the last 10 years using the following signs?

a. Except cycles' plate when it is placed directly beneath the following signs that already have an associated Traffic Order.



0-200	201-500	501-1000	1001-2000	2001+
✓				

The number of this style of sign has been limited due to the current requirements to seek authorisation.

b. Width-flow cycle lane and one way traffic with contra-flow cycle lane sign, along with the white lane marking:



0-200	201-500	501-1000	1001-2000	2001+
✓				



0-200	201-500	501-1000	1001-2000	2001+
✓				

The number of this style of sign has been limited due to the current requirements to seek authorisation and the staff time required involved in processing the Traffic Orders.

- 6 a. Do you agree that pelican crossings should not be included in TSRGD?

Yes	No
✓	

Edinburgh current policy is to replace any existing Pelican crossing when they reach the shelf life with the puffin style crossing. This will continue as per the new regulations as standard unless it would be appropriate to install the Pedex style dependent on local needs/requirements.

- a. If No, should they be allowed for:

- Multi-lane approaches?

Yes	No

- For any site?

Yes	No

- 7 If you are responding on behalf of a local authority, are you likely to make use of the flexibility within the new TSRGD to put up:

- a. Signs indicating the present county boundaries?

Yes	No
✓	

These are currently already in use and we are likely to continue to use them.

- b. Signs indicating historic county boundaries?

Yes	No
	N/A

c. *Signs indicating designated geographical areas?*

Yes	No
✓	

These are currently already in use and we are likely to continue to use them.

d. *Photographic boundary signs?*

Yes	No
✓	

While there are no plans at current to use this style of sign it may be something that could be used in the future.

8 *Do you support the proposal to include new definition of tourist destination for England within TSRGD?*

Yes	No
NA	

9 *Do you support the proposal to remove the Guildford rules from sign design?*

Yes	No
✓	

We welcome the changes to allow the signs to be simplified and reduce the size and impact of signs within the urban environment.

10 *Do you support the proposal to expand the use of exceptions to 'no entry' signs?*

Yes	No
✓	

We very much welcome this proposal and have been advocating it for some time, especially in relation to cycles. There are a number of residential streets in the city where one way use for motor vehicles makes sense but there is no need for such a restriction on cyclists. In these cases the 'no entry except cycles' sign combination is by far the clearest available.

- 11 *In your view, would a sub-plate on these signs be helpful in understanding these prohibitions?*

Yes	No
✓	

On balance we feel it may be useful to allow use of the sub plates. If they are to be used in relation the cycling, they should state 'No Cycling' rather than 'No Cyclists'.

- 12 *In your view, are revised signs indicating the presence of enforcement cameras necessary, or is the proposal to deal with this through the existing planning regime sufficient?*

Yes	No
	✓

We do not support these revised signs as they would increase sign clutter and in our view serve no useful purpose.

- 13 *Do you have any other comments on the draft Schedules?*

Yes	No
✓	

Subject to detailed comments made above, in general we strongly welcome the proposed changes. They offer the potential for a significant streamlining of processes, for a reduction in street clutter, and for easier implementation in policies relating to cycling. As a consequence they should enable an improved level of service to the public.

Edinburgh along with a number of other local authorities is moving towards a street network where potentially up to 80% of streets would be 20mph. Where there is an adequate system of lighting and the default speed limit is to be changed to 20mph it would be helpful if there was a similar rule in place such as Direction 11 of TSRGD paragraph (4) regarding '30mph speed limits in built-up areas' where a system of carriageway lighting is provided repeater signs shall not be placed (repeater signs are prohibited) until a point where the speed limit ends.

We urge that consideration be given to introducing this rule to allow 20mph speed limits by installing 'gateways' at the start of the change in speed limit and removing the requirement to install repeater signs to reduce the number of signs required. This would result in a considerable reduction in costs and street clutter to the local authority.