



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

APR - 8 2011

1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

In Reply Refer To:
HOTO-1

Ms. Susan J. Kirkland
Manager, Safety Programs
Ohio Rail Development Commission
1980 West Broad Street, 2nd Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43223

Dear Ms. Kirkland:

Thank you for your e-mail message February 22 requesting an official interpretation regarding the minimum sizes in Table 8B-1 of YIELD (R1-2) and STOP (R1-1) signs for multi-lane conventional road approaches to grade crossings. The sizes shown in the 2009 MUTCD are 48" x 48" x 48" for YIELD signs and 36" x 36" for STOP signs.

Your e-mail message requests that the same minimum sizes that are used for single lane conventional road approaches to grade crossings (36" x 36" x 36" for YIELD signs and 30" x 30" for STOP signs) also be used at multi-lane conventional road approaches to grade crossings.

It is the FHWA's official interpretation that the minimum size shown for the YIELD (R1-2) sign in the Multi-Lane Conventional Road column in Table 8B-1 should be 36" x 36" x 36" instead of 48" x 48" x 48". The minimum size of the STOP sign in this column should remain as 36" x 36". Our reasons for this interpretation are described in this letter.

In the case of a YIELD sign, which will be the sign used for the vast majority of Crossbuck Assemblies, the YIELD sign is meant to reinforce the existing meaning of the Crossbuck sign, which is that road users must yield to trains that are approaching or occupying the grade crossing. As such, it is not necessary that it be as large as a stand-alone YIELD sign on a multi-lane approach. In a Crossbuck Assembly, the Crossbuck sign is meant to be the primary sign and the YIELD sign is meant to be the secondary sign. A 48" x 48" x 48" YIELD sign could distract from the target value of the Crossbuck sign, which would be undesirable. Also, the minimum sign height requirements would be more difficult to meet when the YIELD sign is placed on the existing Crossbuck sign support if a 48" x 48" x 48" YIELD sign, which is nearly 42 inches in height, is required. Therefore, a smaller 36" x 36" x 36" YIELD sign would be more appropriate and would be adequate to accomplish its purpose as a secondary sign in a Crossbuck Assembly, even on multi-lane conventional road approaches.

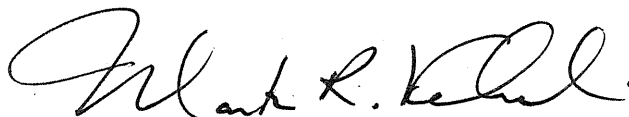


We do not agree that a smaller STOP sign should be used in a Crossbuck Assembly on a multi-lane conventional road approach. Unlike a YIELD sign, a STOP sign, which will infrequently be used in a Crossbuck Assembly, changes the existing meaning of the Crossbuck sign. As such, the STOP sign is a primary sign and should have the same minimum size requirements as a stand-alone STOP sign on a multi-lane approach. The road user will have a chance to notice the Crossbuck sign while stopped for the STOP sign.

For recordkeeping purposes, we have assigned the following official interpretation number and title: "8(09)-7 (I) – Sizes of YIELD and STOP Signs at Grade Crossings." Please refer to this number in any future correspondence regarding this topic.

Thank you for your interest in improving the clarity of the provisions contained in the MUTCD.

Sincerely yours,



Mark R. Kehrl
Director, Office of Transportation
Operations