

US Department
Of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Memorandum

Subject: INFORMATION: Use of Pictographs on Interstate
From: Regina S. McElroy
Director, Office of Transportation
Operations

Date: July 27, 2005

Refer to: HOTO-1

To: Ms. Sandra L. Otto
Division Administrator (HDA-AR) Little Rock, Arkansas

Thank you for your telephone call to Mr. Fred Ranck of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) team regarding the use of graphics to identify a university on an Interstate guide sign. In responding to your inquiry; reference is made to MUTCD Section 2D.38. This section of the Manual allows a symbol or letter designation to be used on a Street Name sign to identify the governmental jurisdiction, area of jurisdiction, or other government-approved institution such as governmental agencies and colleges. These types of graphics are more appropriately termed "pictographs" because it is a pictorial representation of the government entity.

This provision in Section 2D.38 is intended to apply to all guide signs. State and local highway agencies have the option of using pictographs on guide signs. If used, the height and width of the pictograph shall not exceed the size of the route shield for the guide sign. The pictograph should be located to the left of the applicable destination message. The following definitions are provided to clarify the distinction between the terms symbols, logos, and pictographs when used in the MUTCD:

- Symbols are the approved designs for standard highway signs shown in the MUTCD.
- Logos are the designs used by commercial enterprises and businesses for specific service signs, tourist oriented directional signs, and for acknowledgement signs.
- Pictographs are pictorial representations used to identify governmental jurisdictions, area of jurisdiction, governmental agencies, or governmental approved universities or colleges.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this interpretation. We have assigned the following official ruling number and title to the request: "2-565(I).Use of Pictographs on Interstate Guide Signs." Please refer to this number in future correspondence. If you need further assistance, please contact Mr. Ranck at 708-283-3545.