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Subject: 2009 MUTCD Question
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The addition of reflective tape under the interim approval has posed a question I would like addressed and I see no relevant guidance yet in the 2009 MUTCD .

The question is how to treat (and interpret) a signal in the dark condition intended to not be in service. Previously covering the displays only satisfied the criteria for the signal being disabled or non functional under the law for treatment of a 'dark' signal. I have recently seen new signals so covered but with the reflective tape uncovered and believe such a display causes confusion . With the new reflective tape added to the signal back plate the night time visual is of a signal without power, not one of a new but of a disabled signal. I am thinking specific guidance during 2009 adoption should address the complete covering of backplate reflective material if the intent is to have a 'dark/disabled' signal.

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