

Western Australia's *Traffic Management for Works on Roads Code of Practice* (the Code) has recently been revised, with a number of amendments affecting contractors conducting works on or near roads. The major changes are:

Section 5.2.1 Traffic Management Plans – General

The Code has a new requirement that all generic Traffic Management Plans (TMPs) should include a continuous improvement mechanism with reviews required every 12 months at a minimum.

Section 5.2.2 Traffic Management Plans Involving “Complex Traffic Arrangement”

Any planned work that involves the removal or replacement of permanent road safety barriers that are preventing a potentially catastrophic outcome will now be defined as a “Complex Traffic Arrangement” and require Roadworks Traffic Manager (RTM) endorsement. The need to amend this definition was raised due to a couple of incidents at locations that could have resulted in fatalities. Having RTM endorsement will help ensure an appropriate risk assessment is conducted in these situations.

Section 5.2.4 Work zone Road Safety Barrier detail in TMPs (new section)

Many work zone temporary barriers are not being implemented correctly due to a lack of planning in the TMP. It is now a requirement to ensure TMPs using barriers include details on: barrier and end treatment type, deflection zone, containment fence, offset from traffic lane, width/length of worksite and barrier length of need. This is the responsibility of the RTM that endorses the TMP.

Section 6.2.5 Mobile Temporary Speed Zones

Previously the *Road Traffic Code 2000* made no provisions for mobile temporary speed limits as signs had to be “erected near the boundary of a carriageway.” This has recently been updated to “is displayed or erected on or near a carriageway.” This means police can now enforce speed limit signs that are mounted on a work vehicle as part of a mobile work convoy. It is important to ensure that speed limits are reinstated after the works.

Section 6.2.7 Setting out Temporary Speed Zones (Buffer Zones) (new section)

Previously there was an advisory note located on the Main Roads WA website that gave advice on implementing temporary buffer zones. This has been amended and added to the Code. This will help establish a consistent and uniform approach in the placement of temporary speed zones at work sites. A risk management approach shall be taken, and if the spacing's are not appropriate they should be adjusted using AS 1742.3.

Lane Widths (Section 6.14) and Edge Clearances (Section 6.15) to Improve Safety at Worksites

New requirements will help traffic management planners design traffic management schemes that have obvious reasons behind temporary speed limits in line with the self-explaining road principles. Just relying on speed signs to reduce speeds is not enough as worksite speed limits are very rarely complied with, increasing the risk to both workers and road users.

Many studies have shown reduced lane widths can help decrease road user speeds and encourage speed compliance; resulting in reduced risk of KSI crashes. Changing factors such as lane width and clearance to cones and bollards as part of an engineering risk management treatment may help mitigate risks associated with the work zone assuming all other risks are also considered and mitigated. It is important that these measures are supported by a risk assessment conducted by a competent person.

Section 6.16 Temporary Portable Traffic Signals (new section)

This section has been added to ensure a risk management approach is taken when using temporary signals and mitigating factors are in place in case of failure.

Section 6.17 Traffic Controllers (new section)

This section has been included to ensure there is consistency in the Code of Practice and the Traffic Controller Handbook.

Section 8.3 Truck or Trailer Mounted Attenuator (TMA) Operator Training

The increased use of TMAs has led Main Roads WA to develop a national unit of competency in TMA operation: 52680WA – *Course in Truck/Trailer-Mounted Attenuator (TMA) Operation*.

Currently, no RTOs are scoped in this unit so an interim training course is being delivered. This interim training will need Main Roads WA endorsement before being delivered.

Section 8.5 Advanced Worksite Traffic Management Accreditation (amendment)

It is now a requirement for all applicants undertaking AVTM accreditation to hold or have held a Main Roads Western Australia accreditation in Basic Worksite Traffic Management or an Australian Qualification Frameworks compliant Statement of Attainment in 'Implement Traffic Management Plan'.

Summary

All contractors working on the road have a duty of care to take all steps that are reasonable to prevent any person being injured while carrying out those works. Gaining a good knowledge of the Code of Practice and AS 1742.3 will go a long way in ensuring anyone working on or near the road will be provided with a safe place to work and not be exposed to unnecessary hazards.

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