Australian Standard™

Manual of uniform traffic control devices

Part 4: Speed controls

This Australian Standard was prepared by Committee MS/12, Road Signs and Traffic Signals. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 30 October 1998 and published on 5 February 1999.

The following interests are represented on Committee MS/12:

ARRB Transport Research

Australasian Railway Association

Australian Automobile Association

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

AUSTROADS

Department of Transport and Works, N.T.

Department of Transport, S.A.

Department of Transport, Tas.

Department of Urban Services, A.C.T.

Institute of Municipal Engineering

Main Roads, Qld

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Roadmarking Industry Association of Australia

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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee MS/12, Road Signs and Traffic Signals to supersede AS 1742.4—1986. It is one in a series of fourteen Standards which together form the *Manual of uniform traffic control devices*. The series comprises the following Standards:

AS		
1742	Manual of uniform traffic control devices	
1742.1	Part 1:	General introduction and index of signs
1742.2	Part 2:	Traffic control devices for general use
1742.3	Part 3:	Traffic control devices for works on roads
1742.4	Part 4:	Speed controls (this Standard)
1742.5	Part 5:	Street name and community facility name signs
1742.6	Part 6:	Service and tourist signs for motorists
1742.7	Part 7:	Railway crossings
1742.8	Part 8:	Freeways
1742.9	Part 9:	Bicycle facilities
1742.10	Part 10:	Pedestrian control and protection
1742.11	Part 11:	Parking controls
1742.12	Part 12:	Bus, transit and truck lanes
1742.13	Part 13:	Local area traffic management
1742.14	Part 14:	Traffic signals

Principal variations from the 1986 edition are as follows:

(a) Introduction of area speed zones as a major regulatory speed control measure.

(b) Provision of recommended procedures for establishing speed limits in speed zones.

(c) Introduction of offset speed zones.

(d) Addition of new signs for—

  (i) 'END 60 Speed Limit' and

  (ii) area speed zones.

(e) Provision for variable speed limits.

(f) Detailed guidance on the measurement of 85th percentile speed.

The terms 'normative' and 'informative' have been used in this Standard to define the application of the appendix to which they apply. A 'normative' appendix is an integral part of a Standard, whereas an 'informative' appendix is only for information and guidance.

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FOREWORD

The involvement of speed related factors in road crashes is well established. Public surveys indicate that this relationship is well understood by the community and that there are strong perceptions that speed limits also impact on the amenity of abutting property owners. Experience and research has demonstrated that arbitrarily imposed speed limits which are too low attract poor levels of compliance regardless of the level of enforcement. On the other hand, realistic and credible speed limits will be voluntarily observed by the majority of motorists and can be effective in regulating traffic flow, reducing crashes, maximizing safety for vulnerable road users and controlling the environmental effects of traffic such as noise pollution.

The importance of having consistent, credible and largely self-enforcing speed limits is exemplified by the substantially increased levels of police enforcement mainly brought about by the introduction of automated methods of infringement detection. Authorities therefore need to ensure that their methods of setting speed limits can be justified as being appropriate for the both the environment and the road users.

There has been a move to a wider range of speed options from the traditional two tier system of 60 km/h in built-up areas and 100 km/h outside built-up areas. Recent speed limit review work has seen a move towards lower speeds on roads used primarily to access residential dwellings and an increase in speeds on high quality rural highways. As well as the traditional 60 and 100 km/h, the range of speed limits now available includes 10 km/h in shared zones, 40 km/h in traffic calmed local residential areas, 50 km/h in local residential streets, 70 and 80 km/h on higher standard urban roads, and 110 km/h on higher quality rural highways. This range of speed zoning options has highlighted the importance of the process used to assess and determine the appropriate speed limit according to the road function, prevailing traffic speed, roadside development and road and traffic characteristics.

It is important that each posted speed limit achieves a balance between safety, amenity and transport efficiency. The methods described in this Standard aim to achieve such a balance through the setting of speed limits which are realistic and credible and consequently encourage voluntary compliance.

STANDARDS AUSTRALIA

Australian Standard

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SECTION 1 SCOPE AND GENERAL

1.1 SCOPE This Standard specifies the traffic control devices to be used for the regulatory control of traffic speed and gives guidance on how speed limits should be determined and applied in various situations. The Standard does not cover temporary speed limits, speed limits on freeway ramps, the use of advisory speed signs, or speed limits applicable to certain classes of vehicle or driver.

NOTE: Speed matters excluded from this Standard are covered in the following references:

(a) Temporary speed limits at road works—AS 1742.3.

(b) Speed limits on freeway ramps—AS 1742.8.

(c) Use of advisory speed signs—AS 1742.2.

(d) Limits applicable to classes of vehicle or driver—State regulations.

1.2 OBJECTIVE The objective of this Standard is to provide road authorities throughout Australia with a set of uniform requirements and guidelines for the regulatory management of traffic speeds.

1.3 REFERENCED DOCUMENTS The following Standards are referred to in this Standard:

AS
1742 Manual of uniform traffic control devices
1742.2 Part 2: Traffic control devices for general use
1742.3 Part 3: Traffic control devices for works on roads
1742.8 Part 8: Freeways
1742.10 Part 10: Pedestrian control and protection
1742.13 Part 13: Local area traffic management

AS/NZS
1906 Retroreflective materials and devices for road traffic control purposes
1906.1 Part 1: Retroreflective materials

AUSTROADS
Guide to traffic engineering practice
Part 3: Traffic studies

1.4 DEFINITIONS For the purpose of this Standard the definitions below apply.

1.4.1 Local area—an urban area containing only local and collector roads which is bounded by arterial and sub-arterial roads or features such as rivers, railway lines or the limit of urban development.

1.4.2 Local street—a road or street that serves primarily to provide access within a locality.