



INTRODUCTION

The development of guidelines, standards, policies and procedures related to traffic engineering functions in the Division has been undertaken in several ways:

- Memos and letters answering inquiries, the answers then becoming guidelines;
- Recorded decisions from discussions at meetings such as traffic conferences, coordinators meetings, traffic standing committee meetings, and special conferences;
- Assignments and activities by BTO staff;
- Formalization of the above by publication in traffic operations manual.

Standing Committees are a means of addressing needs for policy development and revisions. These groups are established so adequate time and attention *may* be given to setting policy and guidelines that meet the needs of practitioners. This attention in turn streamlines operations in the future, thereby increasing efficiency and improving the quality of products and services.

BTO relies on the active involvement of regional staff and other resources with special insights into policy issues. BTO takes the policy lead and coordinates the work of others, as outlined in the Structure and Procedures section below.

PURPOSE

The basic purpose for Traffic Engineering Standing Committees is to provide a means of concentrating additional time, experience, knowledge, and expertise on specific issues in order to offer better guidelines, policies and standards.

This results in:

- Enhancing cooperation and developing consensus,
- Providing leadership, incentive and professional growth opportunity.
- Promoting uniformity in regulations, devices, and field practices,
- Enhancing communication, information service, and technology transfer,
- Gathering advice and best practices from other agencies,
- Enhancing the decision-making process, and
- Improving the professional image of the Traffic Engineering community.

STRUCTURE AND PROCEDURES

There are seven Standing Committees for the following technical areas:

- Lighting
- Electrical Standards
- Signing & Marking
- Traffic Signals
- Work Zones
- Traffic Safety Engineering
- Traffic Incident Management (TIME)

Additional work groups *may* be established for emerging technical and program areas.

Responsibilities of the Standing Committees are to:

- Identify issues and draft a potential policy document for appropriate manual;
- Follow policy development practices of the Bureau including actively involving the Operations Managers through the BTO State Traffic Engineer in these efforts to assure buy in and alignment with Bureau direction;
- Clarify any questions and concerns on issues approved for action;
- Prepare a work plan and make assignments,
- Follow deadlines established by the Standing Committee;
- Bring the study to a conclusion and recommend final action in a policy document;

- Develop implementation plans for proposed actions when appropriate, including documentation, education or training needs, performance measures, and budget impacts.
- Make progress reports at Traffic Conferences.
- Respond to requests for information on the status of issues, especially to complete quarterly and annual reports.
- Give due consideration to traffic safety in all issues.

Each Standing Committee **shall** consist of one BTO Traffic Engineering Section member, at least two and preferably more Region members, and a management sponsor from a Region. Each Standing Committee will appoint its own membership and keep the Traffic Engineering Section informed of activities by keeping meeting minutes and providing updates at Section meetings. Each Standing Committee meeting *should* be scheduled as a Microsoft Outlook appointment including the BTO Unit Supervisor and the State Traffic Engineer as optional attendees.

Each Standing Committee *may* elect its own Chairperson. Alternatively, the State Traffic Engineer *may* at their discretion designate the Chairperson. The BTO representative *may* serve as Chairperson, although it is suggested that he/she be more in the role of facilitator and resource person. The chairperson *should* maintain close contact with the committee management representative to discuss policy proposals.

Each Standing Committee will have one regional management representative assigned to the committee. The roles of the management representative are as follows:

- Provide the regional management viewpoint and guidance to the Standing Committee.
- Serve as communication link between Highway Operations Managers, Operations Supervisors and the Standing Committee.
- Inform other regional managers and supervisors of major policy initiatives being discussed or proposed that *may* have resource impacts.
- Attend Standing Committee meetings when major policy changes are being proposed. If not able to attend meetings regularly, the management representative *should* provide regional management perspective to the Standing Committee Chairperson prior to the Standing Committee meeting.
- Coordinate with Standing Committee Chairperson to brief BTO Director when a policy has other impacts on other bureaus, and as necessary, assist BTO Director in relaying information to other bureaus and DTSD management.

Each Standing Committee *may* establish ad hoc and/or sub-committees for efficiently and effectively conducting certain tasks.

The Director of the Bureau of Traffic Operations has the authority to:

- Establish Standing Committees
- Generally oversee and guide activities as necessary
- Assign issues for action
- Suggest methods of study, alternatives, modifications, resources, etc.
- Assign priorities and deadlines
- Review recommendations from the Standing Committees,
- Give final approval to each recommendation although he *may* elect to defer approval to an administrative level on specific issues.

The Standing Committee Chairperson will provide a briefing on any proposed policy being presented to the Executive Group. The executive group will provide a consensus recommendation to the BTO Director. Any policy action needed between quarterly meetings will be considered interim policy.

POLICY COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL

Any Regional policy inquiries requiring BTO involvement, as well as legislative and sensitive media contacts, **shall** involve the relevant Regional and BTO Traffic Engineering Supervisors. It *should* be noted that legislative and sensitive media contacts also require the completion of a Public Communications Record (PCR).

POLICY AND GUIDELINE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Policy and Guideline Development Process *should* be followed whenever a policy for this manual is being developed.

1. Department staff identifies need for policy
2. BTO develops proposed concepts of the policy or guideline. \
3. Preliminary policy concepts are shared with regional staff via Standing Committee.
4. BTO collects comments and drafts policy for review by Traffic Supervisors.

5. Preliminary review and comment period of 2-4 weeks by Regional Traffic staff via email along with a copy to Operations Chiefs and FHWA.
6. If creating a new policy or making major changes to a policy, it may be necessary for the Standing committee to review the policy for the second time and make necessary changes to document upon receipt of comments.
 - a. If making minor changes to a policy, BTO can make the necessary changes after reviewed by the Regions.
 - b. An overview of the final draft should be reviewed by the Operations Managers, especially when policies have political or resource impacts.
7. Once issues have been resolved BTO makes final changes to the document presented to the Director of the Bureau of Traffic Operations for final review and approval. When policies have political or resource impacts, it *may* be necessary to present the issues to the DTSD management or other Bureaus that *may* be impacted for input.
8. Post and distribute new document in next transmittal unless prompt distribution is necessary. The document is then effective statewide.

INTERIM GUIDANCE PROCESS

In special or urgent circumstances when a policy needs to be implemented quickly, interim guidance *may* be appropriate.

1. Initial drafting of the interim policy or guideline by BTO with assistance from Standing Committee or Traffic Supervisors and possibly OGC.
2. Operations Chiefs review interim guidance and present the issues to their Regional staff. Subject to the urgency of the topic, this task can be completed by email (informational copy to FHWA) or presented at Operations Managers meetings.
3. Operations Chiefs report back to the BTO once the Region has concurred.
4. Bureau Director reviews and approves the interim guidance.
5. BTO posts and/or distributes the interim guidance to the key stakeholders for implementation.
6. Post and distribute new document in next transmittal unless prompt distribution is necessary. The document is then effective statewide.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

BTO **shall** perform support services for the Standing Committees including:

- Suggest, define and transmit candidate issues as needed.
- Set priorities and deadlines if requested.
- Perform background or resource work for the Standing Committees as necessary.
- Prepare and distribute quarterly and annual reports.
- Provide updates at traffic conferences.
- Receive Standing Committee recommendations and provide the initial screening.
- Circulate Standing Committee recommendations to any other Office for review if desirable.
- Submit final recommendation to Bureau director and act on results.
- Follow up on any further business involving issues.
- Monitor implementation of approved/adopted actions, when appropriate.
- Edit, publish and distribute all issues that become part of the TGM.
- Keep full and updated records of all transactions, available upon request.

1-16-2 FHWA Approvals

September 2008

INTRODUCTION

According to [FDM 5-2-1.1](#) Federal-Aid Oversight Agreement ([Appendix A](#)), the Wisconsin Division of FHWA requires certain policies and procedures to be submitted for review and/or approval before publication.

APPROVAL PROCEDURE

For all items listed below, WisDOT will timely submit changes to FHWA for approval, and will not proceed with execution or publication until FHWA has provided formal approval of changes. For those items that are sent for review purposes only, WisDOT *should* submit changes at least two weeks prior to execution; if comments are not

received within two weeks, WisDOT *may* proceed with execution or publication. Requests to FHWA **shall** be directed through the BTO Traffic Supervisor and State Traffic Engineer.

Table 1. FHWA Oversight Agreement List

Item	FHWA Requirement
Traffic Operations Manual	Submit to FHWA for review only
FDM Standard Detail Drawings	Submit to FHWA all changes
Standard/Additional Special Provisions	Submit to FHWA all changes
Standard Specifications	Submit to FHWA all changes
Public Interest Findings	Submit to FHWA all requests
Federal Workplans	Submit to FHWA all requests
Experimental Traffic Controls	Submit to FHWA all requests

FORMAT FOR SUBMITTAL

All requests **shall** be in a professional electronic format (no hand drawings) and submitted via email to FHWA describing the changes or request.

1-16-3 Traffic Engineering Materials & Technology Standards

December 2008

INTRODUCTION

When requests are received from the Regions, vendors and contractors for use of new traffic engineering materials and technologies, it is necessary to follow the steps shown in the flowchart to consider the technology for possible use. If the technology is evaluated and found successful, results of the evaluation *may* lead to development of standards and specifications for use of such products and technologies in Wisconsin.

PROCEDURE

Typically, Regional staff, vendors or contractors suggest the use of a new material or technology for use in the WisDOT projects. Before a product can be used in the field, its expected benefits must be considered and an evaluation plan developed.

The appropriate standing committee or BTO Program lead must first consider the feasibility of the product (i.e., cost, benefits, disadvantages, life expectancy, etc.) in order to make a decision in pursuing the use of this product. If it is a proprietary product or is not in compliance with the MUTCD an experimental work plan must be submitted to FHWA for their review and approval before any further progress is made with the product. Refer to [TEOps 1-16-2](#), FHWA approvals for a list of items that require Federal approval.

The BTO Program lead prioritizes the use of the product depending on scheduling of pilot projects and funding for the use of the product. This product *may* be piloted in an improvement project, ODP project or set up in a special contract. If the BTO Program lead cannot effectively find a project or funding for use of the material or technology, he/she will provide feedback to the vendor for the reason not choosing the product. If the product is approved for a pilot test, the UW TOPS Lab or the Bureau of Technical Services Quality Assurance Unit *may* provide or assist with the testing and evaluation of the product.

If the product is successful in the testing and evaluation process and WisDOT chooses to standardize its use, standards and specifications must be developed in order to implement statewide. BTO staff will work with BPD and/or BTS staff to develop and publish language allowing the use of the material or technology in statewide projects. If the product is not successful or WisDOT chooses not to use the product, the BTO program lead *should* provide feedback to the vendor.

