

Additional Network Standards and Guidelines

Community Information Signs

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Table of Contents

Approvals	3
VicRoads Application Process	3
Assessment Criteria	3
Message	4
Colours	4
Letter Height and Logo Size	4
Fonts	5
Extent of Signing	5
Installation	5
Sign Materials	5
Permit Conditions	6
VicRoads Contacts	6

Approvals

A person or agency must not erect a sign on a road reserve without the written consent of the relevant coordinating road authority, in accordance with section 66 of the Road Management Act. To erect a sign without written consent is an offence. VicRoads is the coordinating road authority for all freeways and declared arterial roads. Municipal Councils are the road authorities for other public roads. There are a small number of other roads (in national parks, for instance) for which another state agency (eg DEPI) is the road authority.

The roads for which VicRoads is the coordinating road authority are listed on the VicRoads website under "Register of Public Roads" and are also indicated in the VicRoads Country Street Directory and in the Melways (as green, black and red roads), edition 33 or later.

VicRoads Application Process

The applicant first has to obtain approval in principle for the erection of community message signs. To erect community message signs on freeways or arterial roads, the application should be lodged with VicRoads for the approval of the Director, Operation Services. Letters can be addressed to: Manager, Operational Improvements, Operation Services, VicRoads, 60 Denmark St, KEW VIC 3101.

Applications should address the following issues:

- Proposed signface design, including dimensions;
- Number of signs to be deployed as part of this application;
- Number of signs to be deployed around the state;
- Likely locations for signs;
- Length of time the signs are required;
- How this community message fits into an overall communications strategy;
- Why roadside signing is a necessary part of the communications strategy;
- The reasons why this message is a benefit to the community, and the value to road users in particular;
- Endorsements from relevant state government agencies; and
- How state-wide consistency is to be achieved (where applicable).

Applicants are encouraged to contact Manager, Network Standards, VicRoads Policy and Programs (Tel: 9854 2417) before submitting a formal application, so that the message and sign face can be designed to meet the special requirements for roadside signs.

Once approval in principle to an application is given via a permit, the applicant must seek a Works Consent from the relevant regional signing officer for the installation of each sign at an agreed location.

Assessment Criteria

VicRoads approval for community message signs on arterial roads and freeways will be based on the following criteria: □□

- Relevance to road safety or the driving task;
- Relevance to the driver's geographical location;
- Extent to which the message is part of a government-approved campaign; and
- Overall importance of the message to the community.

Message

To avoid driver distraction, the message on any sign facing traffic must be simple and concise. A driver has only one or two seconds to read a sign as they drive past.

The wording must be limited to the key message of no more than 6 words. The sign must not include additional slogans or tag lines.

The logo of the agency responsible for the sign may be included to indicate what organisation should be contacted in relation to the sign message. More than one logo will only be approved in exceptional circumstances.

A telephone number (preferably of 6 digits) may also be included to allow members of the community to seek further information. However, when determining the sign message, it is important to recognise that there is very little chance that a driver, or even a passenger, would remember a telephone number displayed on a roadside sign. A telephone number, if used, should be prefixed by a telephone handset symbol, rather than words.

Website addresses must not be used, as members of the community should be able to readily find the website of the relevant agency and motorists are unlikely to remember any website address.

Colours

The legend and background should avoid confusion with the colour schemes for standard road signs. They must not:

- Be white legend on a green background;
- Be black legend on a yellow background;
- Contain red legend or background, except as permitted below.

The preferred colour schemes are black or blue legend on a white background.

A red background for the most severe stage of water restrictions or total fire bans may be acceptable, provided this is a consistent standard across the state.

Logos are exempt from these guidelines about colour.

Letter Height and Logo Size

To ensure legibility, the following letter heights for the principal legend are recommended:

Speed Limit	Principal Legend Letter Height
60 km/h	100 mm
60 km/h	100 mm
100 km/h	140 mm
100 or 110 km/h on freeways	180 mm

Logos of a horizontal rectangular shape should be no higher than half the principal legend letter height. Logos of a square or circular shape should be no higher than the principal legend height.

Fonts

Scripted fonts are much more difficult to read than simple sans-serif fonts. The recommended fonts are those set down in Australian Standard AS 1744. Series E and D are preferred. In mocking up sign designs, Arial Bold is reasonably close to the Australian Standard fonts.

Road sign manufacturers are able to design signs with the Australian Standard fonts.

Text within a logo is part of the graphic for the logo and does not have to conform to standard fonts.

Extent of Signing

The number of signs must be limited to those locations necessary to most effectively promote the community message. VicRoads will limit the duration of the approval, and the number of signs permitted, giving consideration to roadside clutter, driver distraction and competition for attention with other signs.

Installation

Signs must be installed on posts that will not be a hazard if hit by an errant vehicle. VicRoads Supplement to Australian Standard AS 1742.2 Appendix D2 provides advice on the selection of frangible timber posts, steel posts or slip-based strutted aluminium posts. VicRoads Supplement to Australian Standard AS 1742.2 Appendix D2 provides advice on mounting heights and placement.

For signs mounted on breakaway posts of larger than 50 mm nominal bore pipe, the lower edge of the sign should be 2.2 metres above ground level at the base of the post. For signs mounted on standard 50 mm nominal bore pipe, the lower edge of the sign should be 1.5 metres above the adjacent roadway on rural roads and 2.0 metres on urban roads.

The edge of the sign closest to the road should be a minimum of 2.0 metres from the marked edge of the nearest traffic lane and a minimum of 600 mm from the edge of the road shoulder.

The signface should be angled 5 degrees away from approaching traffic to avoid reflection of headlights from the signface.

The sign must not be mounted on the same posts as other signs.

In rural areas, the sign should be more than 60 metres away from any other sign facing the same direction.

Sign Materials

Signs should be manufactured from durable materials. To ensure they can be read at night, Class 2 retro-reflective sheeting should be used. The sheeting should be mounted on aluminium substrate; however, plastic material (such as Corflute) is acceptable if the sign is to be erected for less than 6 months.

Permit Conditions

If granted, a permit giving approval in principle will be subject to the following conditions: □□

- The applicant must arrange and fund the design, manufacture, supply, installation and ongoing maintenance of the sign.
- The applicant must arrange for the sign to be removed at their expense at the end of the permit period.
- The approval will limit the number of signs and the duration for which they can be displayed. If the applicant wishes to exceed the approved number of signs or the approved duration, separate approval will be required.
- After receiving approval in principle for the signing in concept, the applicant must reach agreement with the relevant VicRoads regional signing officer to the precise location of each sign. Once agreed, the signing officer will issue a Works Consent in accordance with Section 63 of the Road Management Act. This is necessary before installation commences and may be accompanied by further conditions.
- All signs must have the permit number and date of the approval printed or embossed on the back of the sign plate. Letters and numerals used for labelling on the rear of signs shall be 7 mm to 20 mm high and shall be capable of being readily discerned after painting with a coat of paint up to 0.15 mm thick.

VicRoads Contacts

VicRoads regional signing officers can be contacted as follows: □□

- | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------|
| • Metropolitan North West | (Sunshine) | 9313 1144 |
| • Metropolitan South East | (Burwood East) | 9881 8779 |
| • South Western Region | (Geelong) | 5225 2567 |
| • Western Region | (Ballarat) | 5333 8723 |
| • Northern Region | (Bendigo) | 5434 5088 |
| • North East Region | (Benalla) | 5761 1882 |
| • Eastern Region | (Traralgon) | 5172 2661 |

VicRoads regional boundary information may be found on location maps in VicRoads Country Street Directory.