



RIDOT POLICY

DATE: December 18, 2009

REFERENCE: Guidelines for the Use of Trafficpersons and Flagpersons in Work Zones

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General Policy Guidelines:

- The primary function of Trafficpersons (uniformed law enforcement officers, with or without marked cruisers) and Flagpersons is to supplement (not replace) the traffic control devices utilized to move road users safely and expeditiously through and/or around work areas while protecting on-site workers and equipment.
- A Flagger symbol sign and all other appropriate temporary traffic control devices should be installed in advance of any point where a Trafficperson or Flagperson is actively controlling road users, all as described in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, latest Edition.
- Where not explicitly stated in this policy, the number of Trafficpersons or Flagpersons used at any location shall be no greater than the number necessary to adequately alert, slow, and/or control road users through or around the work zone.
- Requirements and necessary qualifications of Trafficpersons and Flagpersons utilized on Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) projects are presented in the latest editions of the following:
 - RIDOT Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction
 - RIDOT Training Guidelines for Personnel Responsible for Work Zone Safety & Mobility

- The use of Trafficpersons (with or without marked cruisers) under the following conditions should be considered in conjunction with the specific guidelines described in the remainder of this policy:
 - Frequent worker presence adjacent to high-speed traffic without positive protection devices
 - Traffic control setup or removal that presents significant risks to workers and road users
 - Complex or very short term changes in traffic patterns with significant potential for road user confusion or worker risk from traffic exposure
 - Night work operations that create substantial traffic safety risks for workers and road users
 - Existing traffic conditions and/or crash histories that indicate a potential for substantial safety and congestion impacts related to the work zone activity, and that may be mitigated by improved driver alertness and/or behavior through the work zone
 - Work zone operations that require brief stoppage of all traffic in one or both directions
 - High-speed highways where unexpected or sudden traffic queuing is anticipated, especially if the queue forms a considerable distance in advance of the work zone or immediately adjacent to the work space
- Multiple work zones in close proximity to each other may be treated as a single work zone and may not require the use of multiple Trafficpersons or Flagpersons as otherwise described in this policy.
- In all cases where the language contained in this policy does not allow a Resident Engineer (hereafter referred to as “the Engineer”) to readily determine whether the use of a Trafficperson or a Flagperson would be considered appropriate, the Engineer’s direct supervisor (acting as the Director’s designee) shall evaluate the necessity for and the number of either, solely as the requirements of roadway safety may dictate.
- The term “speed limit” as used in this policy refers to the posted or statutory speed limit on one or more approaches to the facility type, unless otherwise noted.

Guidelines for the Use of TRAFFICPERSONS:

Use on Ramps and Highway Mainlines with Speed Limits of **Greater Than 35 MPH**

- **YES:** At active work zones including one or more lane closures, **unless** a driver feedback radar speed display “speed trailer” is placed near the beginning of the work area and is clearly visible to approaching traffic, one Trafficperson with marked cruiser (with emergency lights activated) **should** be stationed in presence mode and/or engaged in active enforcement in an appropriate visible location near the end of the work zone advance warning area (e.g., between the second and third advance warning signs, in shoulder or median).
- **YES:** At locations with at least two lanes of travel in each direction, an appropriate number of Trafficpersons with marked cruisers (with emergency lights activated) **should** be used to temporarily control road users **if** the Engineer deems that temporary control of traffic is necessary to enable work equipment and personnel to enter and/or exit a work site safely.
- **NO:** Trafficpersons **should not** be used at any location other than those described above **unless** either [1] the Engineer deems their use necessary to (a) direct and control road users through and/or around the work zone or (b) improve road user awareness as they pass through the work zone or [2] they are used as part of an active enforcement program.

Use on Highway Mainlines with Speed Limits of **35 MPH or Less**

- **NO:** Trafficpersons **should not** be used at any work zone **unless** either [1] the Engineer deems that both (a) their use is necessary to direct and control road users through and/or around the work zone and (b) Flagpersons are unavailable to perform such duties or [2] they are used as part of an active enforcement program. If Trafficpersons are utilized under condition [1], marked cruisers **should not** be used.

Use at Highway Intersections

- **YES:** When work impacts traffic operations at a signalized highway intersection, an appropriate number of Trafficpersons **shall** be used to direct and control road users through the intersection, and:
 - **If** the speed limit is greater than 35 MPH, an appropriate number of marked cruisers (with emergency lights activated) **should** be used.
 - **If** the speed limit on all of the highway approaches to the intersection is 35 MPH or less, a marked cruiser **should not** be used.
- **NO:** Trafficpersons **should not** be used at any type of highway intersection other than those described above **unless** [1] the Engineer deems that both (a) their use is necessary to properly direct and control road users through the intersection and (b) Flagpersons are unavailable to perform such duties and/or [2] they are used either (a) to enforce one or more traffic movements at the intersection that are temporarily restricted as part of the work or (b) as part of an active enforcement program. If Trafficpersons are utilized under condition [1], a marked cruiser(s) with emergency lights activated **should** be used **only if** the speed limit is greater than 35 MPH.

Guidelines for the Use of FLAGPERSONS:

Use on Ramps and Highway Mainlines with Speed Limits of **Greater Than 35 MPH**

- **YES:** At non-freeway/expressway locations with no more than one lane of travel in each direction, Flagpersons **should** be used to temporarily control road users where called for on approved Temporary Traffic Control Plans or **if** the Engineer deems that both [1] temporary control of traffic is necessary to enable work equipment and personnel to enter and/or exit a work site safely and [2] a Trafficperson with marked cruiser is not necessary to improve road user awareness.
- **NO:** Flagpersons **should not** be used at any location other than those described above **unless** both [1] the Engineer deems that it is necessary to temporarily direct and/or control road users through and/or around the work zone and [2] Trafficpersons are unavailable to perform such duties.

Use on Highway Mainlines with Speed Limits of **35 MPH or Less**

- **YES:** Flagpersons **should** be used at locations where called for on approved Temporary Traffic Control Plans or **if** the Engineer deems that either [1] there is a need to direct and control road users through and/or around the work zone or [2] temporary control of traffic is necessary to enable work equipment and personnel to enter and/or exit a work site safely. The number of Flagpersons used at each location **should** be in accordance with approved Temporary Traffic Control Plans if available.

Use at Highway Intersections

- **NO:** At signalized highway intersections where work impacts traffic operations, Flagpersons **shall not** be used to direct and/or control road users **unless** Trafficpersons are unavailable to perform such duties.
- **YES:** Flagpersons **should** be used at any type of highway intersection other than those described above where called for on approved Temporary Traffic Control Plans or **if** the Engineer deems that there is a need to properly direct and control traffic through the intersection. The number of Flagpersons used at each location **should** be in accordance with approved Temporary Traffic Control Plans if available.

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDELINES¹

Use of Traffic Control Personnel in Work Zones (if needed²)

Facility Type	Speed Limit ³ (MPH)	No. of Travel Lanes Per Direction	Traffic Restriction in Work Zone	Typically Most Appropriate Traffic Control Personnel	Marked Cruiser ⁴ ?	Example Uses	
						Personnel Location	Personnel Function
Highway Ramps	Any	2 or more	Lane Closure / Shoulder Closure / Lane Shift	Trafficpersons	Yes	In Advance of Work Area	Presence and/or Speed Enforcement
							Work Vehicle Access/Egress Point
Highway Mainline Segments	Greater than 35	1	Lane Closure / Shoulder Closure / Lane Shift	Flagpersons	No	Work Vehicle Access/Egress Point	Control Traffic to Allow Access/Egress
							Any
		2 or more	Lane Shift / Shoulder Closure	Trafficpersons	Yes	Work Vehicle Access/Egress Point	Control Traffic to Allow Access/Egress
							Lane Shift / Shoulder Closure
Signalized Intersections	Greater than 35	Any	Lane Closure / Shoulder Closure / Lane Shift	Trafficpersons	Yes	Intersection	Direct and/or Control Traffic
							35 or Less ⁵
Unsignalized Intersections	Any	Any	Lane Closure / Shoulder Closure / Lane Shift	Flagpersons	No	Intersection	Direct and/or Control Traffic
							Any

¹ See Policy language for detailed guidelines.

² In most cases, Trafficpersons/Flagpersons should be used only if the Engineer deems that they are needed to direct, control, and/or alert road users.

³ Posted or statutory speed limit on one or more approaches to the facility type.

⁴ With emergency lights activated.

⁵ On all approaches to the facility type.