

The background of the cover features a collage of green geometric shapes and a photograph of a yellow roadworks sign that reads 'ROADWORKS'. In the background of the photo, a yellow excavator is visible on a construction site.

Additional Network Standards & Guidelines

Part 2.9 – Sign rationalisation guidelines

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1 Introduction

The objective of signing on roads is to ensure safe and efficient travel to destinations while maintaining an attractive road or streetscape. The aim is to use the minimum number of signs as a small number of signs leads to a more attractive streetscape and makes it easier for road users to identify and react to key messages.

There are three aspects to road signs and road safety. They are:

- Signs provided to highlight the presence of non-obvious safety issues for drivers or other road users (e.g. likely presence of vulnerable road users);
- Signs assisting road users to make appropriate, smooth movements and manoeuvres to reach their destination or to assist traffic flow;
- Drivers being distracted by signs that do not assist them in completing their journey (eye tracking off the road for more than 2 seconds increases the likelihood of rear end crashes by between 3 and 4 times).

2 Principles of Signage

The following principles for design and installation of signs (see AS1742.2 Clause 1.5 and AS1742.15 Clause 1.5) apply:

- Each sign is to have a demonstrated need;
- The needs satisfied by the sign or signs are to be satisfied using the following hierarchy:
 - Safety ,
 - Directional,
 - Discretionary message or location;
- Signs are positioned to allow both easy visibility and adequate time for the required response;
- The sign message should be simple and clear with content limited to that which can be read, understood and acted upon safely by drivers under the prevailing traffic conditions;
- The sign shape and colours should be consistent with standards, the design and placement coordinated with the road geometric design and the sign and letter size selected so that it is both conspicuous and legible at the required reading distances for the location;
- The navigational content and names should be displayed consistently and with continuity along a route;
- Directional and warning signs should not be shown on the same sign and there should be no advertising or commercial content except as permitted in AS1742.6;

In addition care should be taken that distraction from roadside advertising signs does not lead to road safety issues.

3 Sign Audits

In auditing signs along a route or in an area the following process can be used:

- Identify the purpose of each sign;
- Ensure that the signs overall and at a particular location are prioritised in terms of provision, prominence and position on the basis of the hierarchy of needs set out in the principles above;
- Remove unauthorised, duplicate (minimise number), outdated or redundant signs;
- Replace or remove non-standard signs or signs with non-standard features and replace them with signs meeting design standards in terms of number of words and size of text, the set out of individual sign content and the use of symbols;
- Combine multiple signs at a location and/or provide a generic sign rather than a number of individual signs at a location;
- Replace or remove signs in poor condition.

4 Rationalisation by Sign Type

Regulatory- Signs should be consistent with legislation and the standard design. Remove signs that are not necessary (e.g. signs indicating U-turners must give way or 50 km/h signs on urban streets). Some regulatory signs (e.g. Fairway) are no longer relevant. There is a need to ensure that they are not hidden/cluttered by other signs of lesser importance.



Speed sign cluttered by other signs of lesser importance Redundant U turn information

Warning- These signs need to be consistent with the standard design. They are required when there is a non-obvious identifiable hazard. They are not required if the sign is duplicating information provided by other means (e.g. a keep left sign at the end of a median island where the median island is adequately delineated by other means). Sometimes these are left in place at times when the hazard is not present (e.g. warning signs for construction projects).



The same information is duplicated by the words and arrows

Direction- These signs need to be simple, clear and consistent. There is a need to ensure that the signs are still relevant and that the conditions/roads to which they relate have not changed. Straight ahead direction signs may not be needed. Other issues can include that words may duplicate arrows or that the sign may need to be simplified.



The same information is duplicated by the car park symbol and the words on the sign

Freeway Signs- These signs generally have standard sign formats and content. Signs for freeway services often include non-standard information (e.g. include commercial logos) and are sometimes poorly designed when including the commercial information.

Fingerboard/Street blade signs- There should be a maximum of 3 street blade signs on a pole at an intersection. To simplify signs at an intersection a number of street blade signs can be combined into a single sign or a generic sign provided for a number of facilities of a similar type. In some cases lettering may be substandard (too small to read from a vehicle travelling at the speed limit). In these cases it may be relevant to use pedestrian related signs instead.

Tourist Signs- These signs should be simple and used only when required for safety reasons. Issues can relate to whether the tourist facility is still operating or whether the signs are located too far from the facility. Generic signs may be used if there are a number of facilities of the same type in the same area (see national "Tourist Signing Rationalisation – A practical guide for road signing practitioners").



The World Trade Centre is now a commercial development known as WTC Wharf and Southgate and riverside Quay are developments/retail locations not tourist attractions.

Services Signs- Signage should be the minimum to assist safe travel. Signs may not be required if the facility is obvious without signs. Some services signs can be simplified if they include non-standard commercial symbols.

Electronic Signs- These signs require consistent maintenance to ensure that they are working.

Community Facilities Signs- Signage to these facilities should be the minimal signage required to assist safe travel. Signs in local areas may not be required if facilities are only used by locals. In rationalisation of these signs consideration can be given to whether consent has been obtained for the sign and whether it is designed to the appropriate standard.

Community Message Signs- These signs also need to be simple and consistent with good design standards. They should only be used in locations where they will not impact on the effectiveness of other signs. Issues relating to these signs can include that the signs may be left in place when they

are no longer relevant, they may be located at inappropriate locations or they may have non standard designs and include irrelevant logos or other information.



Direction signs obscured by a public information sign.

Advertising Signs- Things to consider when rationalising advertising signs is that they may have been erected without authorisation, they may distract drivers at critical locations on the road system (10 point safety checklist -VPP Clause 52.05). Some electronic advertising signs may also have features which make them particularly distracting and again may have been erected without authorisation.

SIGN RATIONALISATION-QUICK REFERENCE

Sign Type	Good Design	Rationalisation Examples	Guideline
Regulatory	Consistent with legislation and standard design	Remove signs that are not necessary e.g. signs indicating U-turners must give way or 50 km/h signs on urban streets. Some regulatory signs (e.g. Fairway) are no longer relevant. Are sometimes hidden/cluttered by other signs of lesser importance.	AS1742.2
Warning signs	Consistent with standard design. Only required when there is an identifiable hazard and it is not obvious.	Not required if the sign is duplicating information provided by other means e.g. remove keep left signs at the end of median islands if the end of the island is adequately delineated by other means. Are sometimes left in place at times when they are not required.	AS1742.2
Direction Signs	Simple, clear and consistent.	Are signs still relevant or have conditions/roads changed? Straight ahead direction signs may not be needed. Words sometimes duplicate arrows. Signs may need to be simplified.	AS1742.15
Freeway Signs	Standard sign formats and content	Sometimes include non-standard information (e.g. signs to service centres showing commercial logos)	AS1742.15, AS1742.6
Fingerboard/Street blade signs	A maximum of 3 street blade signs on a pole at an intersection	Can combine a number of street blade signs into a single sign or provide a generic sign for a number of facilities of a similar type. Lettering may be too small to read from a vehicle travelling at the speed limit (use pedestrian related signs instead).	AS1742.5 Sec 2 AS1742.5 Sec 3.2
Tourist Signs	Simple and used only when required (generally for safety reasons)	Are signs still relevant? Signage may only be required close to the facility. May use generic signs for a number of facilities of the same type (see national "Tourist Signing Rationalisation – A practical guide for road signing practitioners").	AS1742.6
Services Signs	Minimal signage to assist safe travel.	May not be required as facility may be obvious without signs. Sometimes include non-standard commercial symbols.	AS1742.6
Electronic Signs	Signs require consistent maintenance.	May not be working properly.	
Community Facilities Signs	Minimal signage to assist safe travel.	Many local signs may not be required if facilities are only used by locals. Has consent been obtained? Is the sign to standard?	AS1742.6 AS1742.5 Sec 3.2
Community Message Signs	Simple and consistent with good design standards. Only used when doesn't impact on effectiveness of other signs	Signs sometimes left in place when no longer relevant. Sometimes are located at inappropriate locations or have non standard design and include irrelevant logos or other information.	Traffic Management Note No. 26
Advertising Signs	Planning approvals may be required. Signs meet the 10 point road safety checklist in VPP Clause 52.05.	Signs may be unauthorised. Sometimes are distracting at a critical locations or electronic versions may be distracting.	Victorian Planning Provisions

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