

Latest Draft of Revised Part VI Now Available

Work Zone Traffic Control

Part VI of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, which covers standards for work zone traffic control, has been under revision for nearly four years. FHWA has now published a third draft of a revised Part VI in the form of an "Advance Notice of Proposed Amendments: and has solicited comments from interested organizations and individuals. The complete notice as well as the third draft of Part VI is available from ATSSA headquarters.

In 1988, FHWA enlisted the services of an engineering consultant to propose revisions to Part VI. The first draft was released in June of 1989 and the second in April 1990. ATSSA, NCUTCD and other organizations have submitted numerous recommendations, most of which have been incorporated into the latest draft.

Coincident with the update of Part VI, the FHWA has been considering a recommendation by NCUTCD that the entire manual be reformatted and structured to be a succinct book of standards. FHWA's latest proposal is to delay the publication of a separate Part VI until the entire manual is republished, which would be 1995 at the earliest.

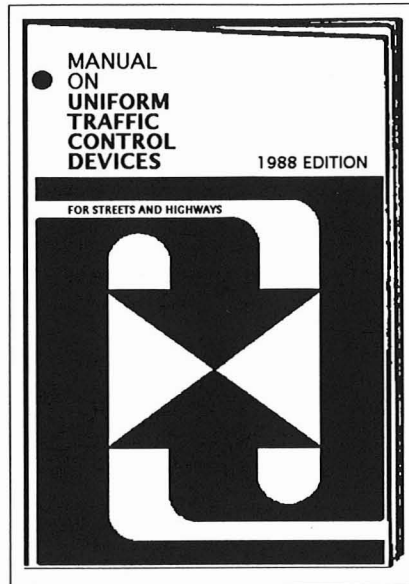
Many organizations, including ATSSA, feel that the latest version of Part VI is a much improved document that needs to be published so it can be used in the field. The National Committee and ATSSA have both approved resolutions encouraging FHWA to publish Part VI as a separate document as soon as possible, regardless of when the entire manual is published. "It is anticipated that other organizations will also encourage FHWA to take this action," according to Robert Garrett, ATSSA Executive Director.

Significant Changes: Part VI

Some of the significant changes in the latest draft of Part VI include:

* The title is changed to "Traffic Controls for Street and Highway Construction, Maintenance, Utility and Emergency Operations" with more information included on urban, utility and emergency operations.

- Expanded information on pedestrian and worker safety.
- New standards for portable changeable message signs.



- Some clarification on drum dimensions, including an 18-inch width requirement and the top stripe required to be orange.
- Some expanded information on "short-term" work zones.
- Some additional guidance concerning the use of tubular markers, drums, temporary raised islands, impact attenuators, rumble strips and glare screens.
- A substantially larger number of new and improved typical application figures. The current Part VI has eight typical applications; the proposed draft contains 44.

ATSSA committees are reviewing this draft and will be submitting comments by the July 31 deadline. Anyone else wishing to submit written comments should reply to:

FHWA Docket #89-1, Notice #5
Federal Highway Administration
Room 4232, HCC-10
400 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

For further information, contact James Weaver, FHWA, at (202)366-2189.

The above article was reprinted from *ATSSA Signal*, March 1992. ■

What Makes A Good Gravel Road

by Harvey Melstad

What makes a good gravel road? While we do not normally think of gravel as paving, I would like you to consider gravel as a surfacing material.

A good gravel surface requires the same basic materials needed to make a good concrete road or a good asphalt road. The basic materials are rock, or coarse material; sand, or fine material; and a binder. In Portland cement concrete, the binder is Portland cement; in asphaltic concrete roads, the binder is asphalt; and in gravel roads, the binder is clay.

Portland cement combines with water to form a paste which hardens to bind the particles of rock and sand together. This becomes a very rigid type of surface, capable of resisting significant loads.

With an asphalt mix, the same principle applies; however, the binder is the asphalt or oil. This binder acts to tie the small particles (sand), together with the larger aggregate particles (rock), forming a matrix called asphaltic concrete.

A good gravel surfacing material needs a similar composition to hold it together. In this case the binder is clay. The correct amount of clay will stabilize a gravel; however, too much clay will make the surface slippery after a rain.

Many people believe clay is merely fine material. Silts are fine enough to pass a #200 sieve or 200 openings per square inch. Silts, however, have no cohesive strength, and are still coarser in size than clay. Clay is so fine that it hangs in suspension in water, and thus, is called colloidal material. Clay has cohesive strength and forms the matrix that binds the fine sand and coarse material together.

The clay must have moisture in it to be cohesive. This accounts for the poor condition of some gravel roads during dry conditions. When the moisture is gone, the clay is easily blown away as dusts. This makes it extremely difficult to hold a road in proper condition, no matter how much maintenance it receives.

I think most blade operators have had the experience of being blamed for poor performance when a road has loose gravel. Adding clean gravel does no good and may worsen the situation. The only solution is to add some binder or clay, mix it with the existing material, and relay it.

The above article was reprinted from *The Centerline*, Vol.8, No.3, Spring, 1992, North Dakota State University, Transportation T² Center. ■