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**National Committee on  
Uniform Traffic Control Devices**

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Agenda item IV.F June 2012 RWSTC  
Agenda item III.5 January 2013, RWSTC

**National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices  
RWSTC RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWING SPONSOR COMMENTS**

**TECHNICAL COMMITTEE: NCUTCD Regulatory/Warning Signs Technical  
Committee**

**DATE OF ACTION: (Task Force) 5-6-12, revised 5-20-12, revised 5-22-12, revised  
5-23-12, revised 12-13-12, revised 12-19-12, revised 12-21-12**

**TASK FORCE: Tom Heydel (chair), Scott Kuznicki**

**RWSTC APPROVAL DATE: 1-9-13**

**TRANSMITTAL TO SPONSORS DATE: Fall 2012**

**COUNCIL APPROVAL DATE: 1-11-13**

**TOPIC: Preferential lanes - Overhead signs at preferential lanes and 24 hour  
period signs**

**AFFECTED PORTIONS OF MUTCD: Section 2G.05**

**DISCUSSION/QUESTIONS:**

1. Delaware DOT requested clarification regarding the requirement for overhead preferential lane signs on conventional type roadways. FHWA responded that Section 2G.03 paragraph (08) provides for engineering study to determine the need for overhead based on various parameters. Delaware responded back that the MUTCD should be clearer since it can be easily misunderstood. FHWA indicated that this could be clarified in future editions of the MUTCD.

The following is what DeIDOT questioned and FHWA response:

**DeIDOT Issue #14**

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- **2G.05:** Standard: “For buffer-separated or contiguous preferential lanes where continuous access with the adjacent general-purpose lanes is provided, including those where a preferential lane is added to the roadway (see Figure 2G-2 for HOV lanes) and those where a general-purpose lane transitions into a preferential lane (see Figure 2G-3 for HOV lanes), an overhead Periods of Operation (R3-14 series) sign shall be used at the beginning or initial entry point of the preferential lane.” “Option: On conventional roads, the overhead Periods of Operation (R3-14 series) signs may be installed at the beginning or entry points and/or at intermediate points along preferential lanes in any geometric configuration.”

56 The option simply restates the standard that “**an overhead Periods of Operation (R3-14) sign shall be used at the beginning or initial entry point of the preferential lane**” for buffer-separated or contiguous preferential lanes where continuous access with the adjacent general-purpose lanes is provided.  
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60 Furthermore, the requirement to provide overhead signs for some conventional roadway, for example a bus-only lane, seems unnecessary.  
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63 **FHWA Response:** The distinction made by the Option is that overhead Periods of Operation signs are not required on conventional roads (i.e., post-mounted signs alone may be used). Section 2G.03, paragraph 08, discusses the “decision regarding whether to use a post-mounted or overhead version of a particular type of [regulatory] sign” for preferential lanes on conventional roads. By inclusion of this provision, the preferential lane regulatory signs on conventional roads are not required to be mounted overhead. The preceding provisions that require overhead mounting of certain preferential lane regulatory signs are intended to apply to expressway and freeway applications. Rewording or clarification to this effect can be added in a future revision.

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73 **DelDOT Request to NCUTCD**

74 This section can be easily misunderstood, and is overly confusing. We do not see how the guidance statement referred to by FHWA can override the standard statement.  
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76 DelDOT requests that the NCUTCD reword this section to clarify the intent.  
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80 2. Delaware DOT also said that the MUTCD should not require the 24 hour legend on the R3-11c sign.  
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83 The following is what DelDOT questioned and FHWA response:

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85 **DelDOT Issue #13**

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- **2G.05:** Preferential Lane Periods of Operation Regulatory Signs (R3-11 Series and R3-14 Series) -- Standard: “For preferential lanes that are in effect on a full-time basis, either the full-time Periods of Operation (R3-11b and R3-14b) signs

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90 shall be used, or the legends of the part-time Periods of Operations (R3-11, R3-  
91 11a, R3-14, R3-14a) signs shall be modified to display the legend 24 HOURS.”  
92

93 Providing a “24 HOURS” legend on preferential lane signs seems unnecessary. It is  
94 generally implied that posted regulations are applicable at all times unless  
95 otherwise stated – e.g., speed limit signs, turn prohibitions, etc.  
96

97 **FHWA Response:** The legend 24 HOURS is not a requirement, it is merely one  
98 of the alternatives allowed in the Standard. Instead of modifying the part-time  
99 Periods of Operation signs to include this legend, the full-time Periods of  
100 Operation sign, which does not include this legend, can be used instead.  
101 Ordinarily, traffic regulations are assumed to be on a full-time basis. However,  
102 the typical HOV lane is more often operated on a part-time basis. The provision  
103 allowing modification of the part-time signs is included to accommodate cases  
104 where it is determined that the 24 HOURS legend is necessary as a part of a  
105 change in the operation (converting from part-time to full-time), or where several  
106 facilities in the same area have different hours of operation—some part-time,  
107 others full-time, or where the same lane changes from part-time to full-time  
108 operation somewhere along its length.  
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110 **DelDOT Request to NCUTCD**

111 DelDOT requests that this standard be deleted or downgraded to a guidance statement.  
112 There are many different kinds of preferential lanes other than HOV lanes that are  
113 commonly in affect full time, and no apparent reason why a “24 hour” or “hours of  
114 operation” sign should be required.  
115

116 **RECOMMENDATION:**

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118 Add language to 2G.05 that does not require an overhead preferential lane sign for  
119 conventional roadways. Add language to 2G.05 that does not require the 24 hour words  
120 on the R3-11c sign. Add additional post mounted signs that do not have time periods on  
121 them.  
122

123 **RECOMMENDED WORDING:**

124 **Note:** Proposed changes to the MUTCD are shown in underline red and removed  
125 text are shown in ~~strikethrough red~~.

126 **Section 2G.05 Preferential Lane Periods of Operation Regulatory Signs (R3-**  
127 **11 Series and R3-14 Series)**

128 *Guidance:*  
129 01 *The sizes of post-mounted Periods of Operation (R3-11 series) signs should remain*  
130 *consistent to accommodate any manual addition or removal of a single line of text for*  
131 *each sign.*

132 *Support:*  
133 02 *Consistent sign sizes are beneficial for agencies when ordering sign materials, as well*  
134 *as when making text changes to existing signs if changes occur to operating times or*

135 occupancy restrictions in the future. For example, the R3-11c sign has space for one line  
136 located below "24 HOURS" if an agency determines that it is appropriate to display  
137 additional information (such as "MON – FRI"), yet the R3-11c sign has the same  
138 dimensions as the other R3-11 series signs.

139 **Standard:**

140 **03 When used, the post-mounted Periods of Operation (R3-11 series) signs shall**  
141 **be located adjacent to the preferential lane, and the overhead Periods of**  
142 **Operation (R3-14 series) signs shall be mounted directly over the lane.**

143 **04 The legend format of the post-mounted Periods of Operation (R3-11 series)**  
144 **signs shall have the following sequence:**

- 145 **A. Top Lines: Lanes applicable, such as "RIGHT LANE" or "2 RIGHT LANES"**  
146 **or "THIS LANE"**
- 147 **B. Middle Lines: Eligible uses, such as "HOV 2+ ONLY" (or 3+ or 4+ if**  
148 **appropriate) or "BUSES ONLY" or other applicable uses or eligible turning**  
149 **movements**
- 150 **C. Bottom Lines: Applicable times and days, such as "7 AM – 9 AM" or "6:30**  
151 **AM – 9:30 AM, MON-FRI"**

152 **05 The legend format of the overhead Periods of Operation (R3-14 series) signs**  
153 **shall have the following sequence:**

- 154 **A. Top Line: Eligible uses, such as "HOV 2+ ONLY" (or 3+ or 4+ if**  
155 **appropriate) or "BUSES ONLY" or other applicable uses or eligible turning**  
156 **movements**
- 157 **B. Bottom Lines: Applicable times and days, with the time and day placed**  
158 **above the down arrow, such as "7 AM – 9 AM" or "6:30 AM – 9:30 AM,**  
159 **MON-FRI" (When the operating periods exceed the available line width,**  
160 **the hours and days of the week shall be stacked as shown for the R3-14a**  
161 **sign in Figure 2G-1.)**

162 **06 For preferential lanes that are in effect on a full-time basis, either the full-**  
163 **time Periods of Operation (~~R3-11b and R3-14b~~, ~~R3-XX~~ and ~~R3-XY~~ and ~~R3-11c~~)**  
164 **signs shall be used, or the legends of the part-time Periods of Operations (R3-**  
165 **11, R3-11a, R3-14, R3-14a) signs shall be modified to display the legend 24**  
166 **HOURS or to display no legend relative to period of operation.**

167 **ADD the following signs to table 2G-1 – post mounted signs**



168

169 R3-XX

R3-XY

170 **Add R3-XX and R3-XY to Table 2G-1. FHWA to determine size. 30 x 36**  
171 **recommended.**

172 07 Support:

173 The 24-hour legend used on the R3-11c sign reinforces the restriction where several  
174 facilities in the same area have different hours of operation—some part-time, others full-  
175 time, or where the same lane changes from part-time to full-time operation somewhere  
176 along its length.

177 ~~078~~ **The full-time Periods of Operation (R3-14b) sign shall not be used where the**  
178 **preferential lane is in effect only on a part-time basis.**

179 Option:

180 ~~089~~ Where additional movements are permitted from a preferential lane on an approach  
181 to an intersection, the format and words used in the legend in the middle lines on the  
182 post-mounted Periods of Operation (R3-11 series) signs and on the top line of the  
183 overhead Periods of Operation (R3-14 series) signs may be modified to accommodate the  
184 permitted movements (such as "HOV 2+ AND RIGHT TURNS ONLY").

185 ~~0910~~ A MOTORCYCLES ALLOWED (R3-11P) plaque may be used where motorcycles,  
186 regardless of the number of occupants, are allowed to use an HOV lane.

187 **Standard:**

188 ~~1011~~ **If used, the MOTORCYCLES ALLOWED plaque shall be mounted below a**  
189 **post-mounted Preferential Lane Periods of Operation (R3-11, R3-11a, or R3-**  
190 **11c) sign.**

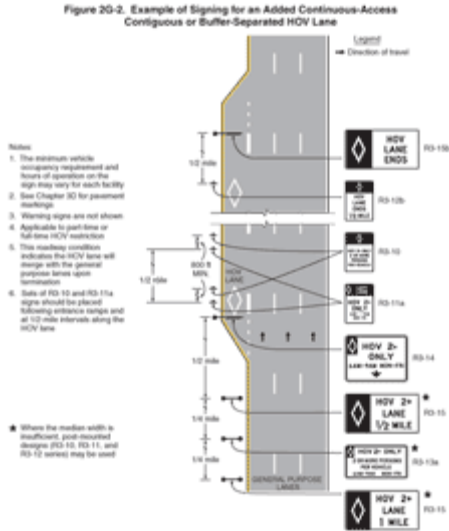
191 ~~1112~~ **For all barrier- or buffer-separated or contiguous preferential lanes where**  
192 **access is restricted to designated locations, an overhead Periods of Operation**  
193 **(R3-14 series) sign shall be used at the beginning or initial entry point on**  
194 **freeways, expressways, and at locations on conventional roadways where the**  
195 **preferential lane is not the outermost (far right or far left) lane of the roadway,** and  
196 **at any intermediate entry points or gaps in the barrier where vehicles are**  
197 **allowed to legally access the access-restricted preferential lanes. For all barrier-**  
198 **separated and buffer-separated preferential lanes, post-mounted Periods of**  
199 **Operation (R3-11 series) signs shall be used only as a supplement to the**  
200 **overhead signs on freeways, expressways, and at locations on conventional**  
201 **roadways where the preferential lane is not the outermost (far right or far left) lane**  
202 **of the roadway at the beginning or initial entry point, or at any intermediate**  
203 **entry points or gaps in the barrier or buffer.**

204 ~~1213~~ **For buffer-separated or contiguous preferential lanes where continuous**  
205 **access with the adjacent general-purpose lanes is provided, including those**  
206 **where a preferential lane is added to the roadway (see Figure 2G-2 for HOV**  
207 **lanes) and those where a general-purpose lane transitions into a preferential**  
208 **lane (see Figure 2G-3 for HOV lanes), an overhead Periods of Operation (R3-14**  
209 **series) sign shall be used at the beginning or initial entry point of the**  
210 **preferential lane on freeways and expressways.**

211 Option:

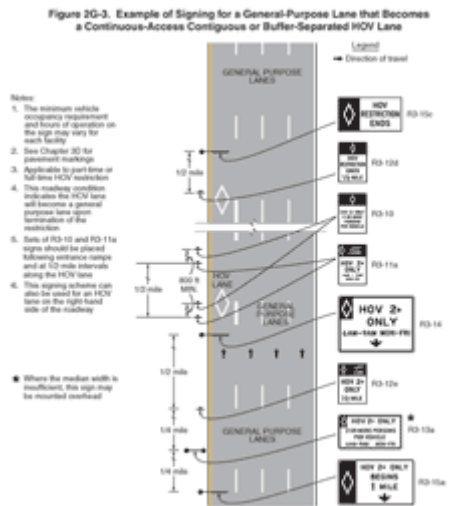
212 14 On conventional roads where preferential lane operations exist, R3-11 series post  
213 mounted signs may be used in lieu of or in addition to overhead R3-14 series signs.

214 **Figure 2G-2 Example of Signing for an Added Continuous-Access Contiguous or**  
215 **Buffer-Separated HOV Lane**



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217 **Figure 2G-3 Example of Signing for a General-Purpose Lane that Becomes a**  
 218 **Continuous-Access Contiguous or Buffer-Separated HOV Lane**



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220 *Guidance:*  
 221 ~~1315-Overhead (R3-14 series) or post-mounted (R3-11 series) Periods of Operation signs~~  
 222 ~~should be installed at periodic intervals along the length of a contiguous or buffer-~~  
 223 ~~separated preferential lane where continuous access with the adjacent general-purpose~~  
 224 ~~lanes is provided.~~

225 Option:  
 226 ~~1416-15~~ Additional overhead (R3-14 series) or post-mounted (R3-11 series) Periods of  
 227 Operation signs may be provided along the length of any type of preferential lane.

228 ~~1517-16~~ On conventional roads, the overhead Periods of Operation (R3-14 series) signs  
 229 may be installed at the beginning or entry points and/or at intermediate points along  
 230 preferential lanes ~~in any geometric configuration.~~

231 **Standard:**  
232 ~~1618~~ **17 For all types of direct access ramps that provide access to or lead to**  
233 **preferential lanes, a post-mounted Periods of Operation (R3-11 series) sign**  
234 **shall be used at the beginning or initial entry point of the direct access ramp.**

235 Option:  
236 ~~1719~~ **18** For direct access ramps to preferential lanes, an overhead Periods of Operation  
237 (R3-14 series) sign may be used at the beginning or initial entry point to supplement the  
238 required post-mounted signs.

239 ~~1820~~ **19** Lane-use control signals (see Chapter 4M) may be used at access points to  
240 preferential lanes to indicate that a ramp or access roadway leading to the preferential  
241 lane or facility, or one or more specific lanes of the facility, are open or closed (see Figure  
242 2G-14).

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245 RWSTC Vote: For: Unanimous  
246 6-20-12 Against:  
247 Abstentions:  
248 RWSTC Vote following sponsor comments 1-9-13  
249 For: Unanimous

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251 COUNCIL VOTE: 1-11-13 For: Unanimous

252  
253 c: NCUTCD/June 2012/Heydel/preferential lanes 2G.05 5-6-12, revised 5-20-12,  
254 revised 5-22-12, revised 5-23-12, approved RWSTC 6-20-12 READY FOR SPONSORS,  
255 revised 12-13-12 following sponsor comments, revised 12-19-12 following sponsor  
256 comments, revised 12-21-12 following sponsor comments, approved by RWSTC 1-9-13,  
257 council approved 1-11-13

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