



Florida Department of Transportation

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SECRETARY

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 6, 2011

To: District Traffic Operations Engineers

From: Mark C. Wilson, State Traffic Operations Engineer 

Copies: Brian Blanchard, John Minnick, Tim Lattner, David O'Hagan

Subject: Traffic Engineering Manual – Section 3.6 Standardization of Yellow and All-Red Intervals

This memorandum is to clarify certain portions of the subject section pertaining to the establishment of yellow change interval times for left turn lanes. Please be advised that modifications to Section 3.6 have been made to address the issue.

The yellow change interval methodology in the Traffic Engineering Manual is used to compute the yellow change interval times appropriate to the respective approach lanes. Recently, it has been brought to our attention that there may be some confusion or misinterpretation of the requirements under Section 3.6.2(4).

It was never the Department's intention that the 85th percentile speed or the posted speed of the through lanes be used to calculate the yellow change interval time for an adjacent turn lane. Typically, the speeds in turn lanes are generally less than those of the through lanes. Regarding left turn yellow change interval calculation, the Federal Highway Administration's Traffic Signal Timing Manual states¹.....*"When applying Equation 5-2 to left-turn movement phases, the speed used should reflect that of the drivers that intend to turn. This speed can equal that of the adjacent through movement but it can also be slower as left-turn drivers inherently slow to a comfortable turning speed."*.....

Equation 5.2 in the FHWA referenced documentation is the same as equations 3.6-1 + 3.6-2 (yellow change plus red clearance intervals) in the Department's Traffic Engineering Manual.

Continue computing yellow change interval timing as has always been done in engineering practice and that is respective of the speed in the lanes the yellow times are being computed for.

1. FHWA -TRAFFIC SIGNAL TIMING MANUAL Publication Number: FHWA-HOP-08-024