

Traffic Note 2 – Revision 1

Date December 2004
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Platforms as crossing points

Road controlling authorities (RCA) have been installing platforms on the roadway with the intent of slowing vehicles and indicating to pedestrians where they should cross the road without incorporating full pedestrian crossing features. This note reaffirms previous policy (contained in the earlier issue of this note) and draws attention to provisions of the *Land Transport Rule: Traffic Control Devices 2004* (the rule).

Platforms and the Land Transport Rule: Traffic Control Devices 2004

The rule provides for platforms as a means of channelling traffic, restricting the speed of traffic, discouraging the use of road by through vehicles and providing the continuation of a pedestrian route. It also imposes obligations on RCAs to ensure the platform:

- has the appropriate signs, markings, delineation and illumination provided
- has no permanent growth, traffic control device or other object placed on it impairing visibility.
- is safe and appropriate for the road, its environment or the use of the road;
- conveys a clear message to road users; and
- is placed so as to be visible to road users and allow adequate time for their intended response.

Footpath/roadway demarcation

Land Transport New Zealand (Land Transport NZ) is concerned with the practice of paving the platform crossing point in the same material as the footpath. This is particularly so where the platform and footpaths merge with no clear demarcation between them.

Without appropriate cues, pedestrians can falsely perceive the platform as a continuation of the footpath rather than as part of the roadway. Consequently, pedestrians may mistakenly believe they have more priority at these points than in reality they have.

Pedestrians will get more accurate perceptions of their priorities at platform crossing points where they have the following features:

- material used on top of the platform significantly different in colour and/or texture from the paved footpath
- kerb lines and some other form of demarcation, such as bollards, maintained where the footpath and platform join.

Platform markings

Land Transport NZ is also concerned with the practice where parallel stripes have been installed on platforms with contrasting coloured paving. These have been used to indicate pedestrian crossings or merely as a decorative surface.

Where the latter occurs and might be easily confused with pedestrian crossing markings it is particularly risky worsening false pedestrian perception of priority. Additionally it would be illegal.

Pedestrian crossings must now be marked in white (and from 30 June 2007 by reflectorised white) and not by use of contrasting coloured paving. All other pedestrian crossing signs and markings must also be installed (as detailed in *Traffic Note 1*).

Platform signs

There is an approved warning sign available for motorists approaching a road hump or platform. This may be supplemented with an advisory speed.

Currently there is no similar sign available for pedestrians who are crossing on a platform. Various authorities have marked words such as PAUSE on the platform or word signs such as PEDESTRIANS WATCH FOR VEHICLES. Clear demarcation of the footpath and the platform should reduce the need for any sign.

Conclusion

Good urban design indicates platform crossing points should not be used to treat isolated locations but should form part of a comprehensive traffic calming scheme. Any concept of shared road space for pedestrians and vehicles at platform sites first requires the creation of a low speed, calmed traffic environment.

As with all traffic control devices, the planning, design, installation and operation of platform crossing points need to be undertaken under the supervision of a person with expertise in the area of traffic engineering.