

Traffic Note 6 – Revision 1

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From Safer Roads
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Agreement of lane-use signs and road markings – requirements

An issue was raised involving an intersection with a 3-lane approach road. The left lane had a left-turn arrow marked on the road. The centre and right-hand lanes each had a straight-ahead arrow marked. The road controlling authority (RCA) wanted buses to be able to turn left from the centre lane at certain times to enable them to pass extensive queues in the left lane. The RCA wished to retain the road markings because of the usage of the centre lane during the rest of the day and erect a sign allowing buses to turn left from the centre lane for the specified period. Buses would be turning contrary to the straight-ahead arrow marked in the lane.

Clause 2.4 of the Land Transport (Road User) Rule 2004 (Road User Rule) states:

If road markings or traffic signs designate specific lanes for specific manoeuvres at the approaches to an intersection, a driver must not use any lane except for the manoeuvre appropriate to its marking or signage.

The *Land Transport Rule: Traffic Control Devices 2004* states:

A lane that may be used only by road users who are travelling straight ahead or turning in a specific direction must be clearly indicated by:

- (a) *at least one lane-usage arrow marked within the lane...., or*
- (b) *at least one sign provided above the lane [clause 7.12(3)]*

These rules effectively require lane use arrows to be installed by RCA either as markings or signs and they may only install both when they contain the same message.

The legal solution to the issue described above is, therefore, to remove the straight-ahead arrow marking in the centre lane and erect a lane-use sign. Buses will be able to turn left during the specified times but other vehicles will be required to proceed straight ahead even without lane markings. Drivers turning left must move as far as practicable to the left before turning unless lane-use arrows indicate otherwise. [*clause 2.5(1)* of the Road User Rule].