

Written Policy Documentation

While in the process of making decisions regarding the MUTCD minimum sign retroreflectivity requirements, some have been asking about requirements for written policies and documentation for that MUTCD requirement.

Although the actual MUTCD language does not require an agency to have a written policy, it does require agencies to “use a method”. Here is the exact language:

Standard:

Public agencies or officials having jurisdiction shall use an assessment or management method that is designed to maintain sign retroreflectivity at or above the minimum levels in Table 2A-3.

Two support statements are also in the MUTCD, as follows:

Support:

Compliance with the above Standard is achieved by having a method in place and using the method to maintain the minimum levels established in Table 2A-3.

Support:

Additional information about these methods is contained in the 2007 Edition of FHWA’s “Maintaining Traffic Sign Retroreflectivity” (see Section 1A.11).

The 2nd support statement seems to be overlooked many times. That document, attached, provides some valuable information briefly describing inspection procedures that are acceptable for an agency to be considered to be in compliance with the visual nighttime inspection method (specifically providing the required tie of the visual inspection to the minimum values in the table).

It is probably a good idea for an agency to document what method they are using and also document how they are adhering to their written policy. My suggestion would be that agencies put in writing which method they select to use, and if they are using the visual nighttime inspection method they should consider documenting which of the three inspection procedures they are using.

For additional assistance in understanding the allowed methods and inspection procedures, please see the new table developed for that purpose. If you have further questions please visit the FHWA web site at www.fhwa.dot.gov/retro and remember that your local FHWA Division Office and your LTAP center can be of substantial assistance for your questions.

Greg Schertz, P.E.
Federal Lands Safety Team Leader & FHWA Retroreflectivity Team Leader
FHWA - CFL
12300 West Dakota Ave., Ste.210
Lakewood, CO 80228
720-963-3764
greg.schertz@dot.gov