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Traffic Switch Guidance

MDOT in collaboration with MITA and industry partners have developed standard verbiage to be included in the Maintenance of Traffic Special Provision (MOT SP). This advisory will serve as an interim until the MOT SP boiler plate is completed, in which all the detailed information within this advisory will be incorporated. The goal of this additional verbiage is to address the safety concerns during traffic switch operations.

*A **traffic switch** is defined as a change in the existing (original or staged) traffic configuration which requires multiple (more than one) lane lines and/or edge lines to be relocated in a new location and the old lines to be removed either between construction stages, or maintenance of traffic stages.*

Therefore, during the process, there are times when conflicting pavement marking and signing information may be unavoidable. These times shall be minimized by accelerated work.

When considering the time frames for switch operations, the following factors should be analyzed for determination of night traffic switch operations:

- Local crash histories both with and without the work zone in the area
- Traffic speeds
- Traffic volumes
- CO3 mobility and delay analysis and/or Synchro analysis
- Type of work and necessary traffic control
- Duration of work
- Residential and commercial concerns stated at outreach meetings during the planning and design phases

Nighttime traffic switches:

From these factors, if it is determined nighttime traffic switch operations are required, the following language must be included in the contract as part of the **Maintenance of Traffic Special Provision:**

- a. *Traffic switch operations on freeways can take place within the allowable times listed above in the “Work Area Restrictions” and/ or as otherwise approved by the Engineer.*
- b. *Additional lane, ramp, and/or roadway closures and shifts may be implemented during maintaining traffic stage and traffic switch operations with prior Engineer approval.*

Lane Rental or Liquidated Damage (LD) assessments during Traffic Switch Operations:

For the traffic switch operations to have the least impact on safety and mobility, time frames should be noted in the contract corresponding with off peak hours, and as such, these time frames will be called out as exempt from lane rental or LD assessments. The following language will be included in the contract as part of the **Progress Clause, or Maintenance of Traffic Special Provision:**

- a. *Traffic switch operations are exempt from rental or liquidated damage assessments for 8 hours for each traffic switch. Traffic switch operations are to take place within the allowable “Work Area Time Restrictions” as shown in the Maintenance of Traffic Special Provision.*

To further the safety of the motoring public and the safety of workers on the roadway MDOT will also be providing additional guidance on traffic switch operations. This topic will be discussed during MDOT Alignment Conferences, MDOT Work Zone Safety Training, and will be included in the updated [Work Zone Safety & Mobility Manual](#).