AS 1742.4—2008

Australian Standard®

Manual of uniform traffic control devices

Part 4: Speed controls

This Australian Standard® was prepared by Committee MS-012, Road Signs and Traffic Signals. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 27 October 2008. This Standard was published on 27 November 2008.

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- ACT Department of Territory and Municipal Services
- ARRB Transport Research
- Austroads (representative from Department of Transport Energy and Infrastructure, SA)
- Association of Consultants in Access Australia
- Australian Automobile Association
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- Institute of Public Works Engineering Australia
- Main Roads Department, Qld
- Main Roads Western Australia
- Roadmarking Industry Association of Australia
- Roads and Traffic Authority, NSW
- VicRoads

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Part 4: Speed controls

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PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee MS-012, Road Signs and Traffic Signals to supersede AS 1742.4—1999. It is one in a series of fourteen Standards which together form the *Manual of uniform traffic control devices*. The series comprises the following Standards:

AS		
1742	Manual of uniform traffic control devices	
1742.1	Part 1:	General introduction and index of signs
1742.2	Part 2:	Traffic control devices for general use
1742.3	Part 3:	Traffic control devices for works on roads
1742.4	Part 4:	Speed controls (this Standard)
1742.5	Part 5:	Street name and community facility name signs
1742.6	Part 6:	Tourist and services signs
1742.7	Part 7:	Railway crossings
1742.9	Part 9:	Bicycle facilities
1742.10	Part 10:	Pedestrian control and protection
1742.11	Part 11:	Parking controls
1742.12	Part 12:	Bus, transit and truck lanes
1742.13	Part 13:	Local area traffic management
1742.14	Part 14:	Traffic signals
1742.15	Part 15:	Direction signs information signs and route numbering

Principal variations from the 1999 edition are as follows:

(a) The Standard reflects the fact that the default urban speed limit in all states is now 50 km/h.

(b) School zones have been transferred from AS 1742.10.

(c) Shared zones have been transferred from AS 1742.13.

(d) The Speed Limit AHEAD (G9-79) sign has been added and becomes an alternative form of speed limit buffer (formerly termed ‘buffer zone’).

(e) The Derestriction sign has been deleted.

The term ‘normative’ has been used in this Standard to define the application of the appendix to which it applies. A ‘normative’ appendix is an integral part of a Standard.

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FOREWORD

The involvement of speed related factors in road crashes is well established. Public surveys indicate that this relationship is well understood by the community and that there are strong perceptions that speed limits also impact on the amenity of users of abutting property. Experience and research has demonstrated that arbitrarily imposed speed limits that are too low attract poor levels of compliance regardless of the level of enforcement. Ideally, limits should be set such that road users can readily understand the reasons for setting them at a particular level. The limits will then be more likely to be voluntarily observed by the majority of motorists and therefore be effective in regulating traffic flow, reducing crashes, maximizing safety for vulnerable road users and controlling the environmental effects of traffic, such as noise pollution. However, this is not always possible and that is why it is important to have a sound basis for setting the limits.

Due to substantially increased levels of police enforcement, mainly resulting from the introduction of automated methods of infringement detection, it is important to ensure that the setting of speed limits is soundly based. Authorities therefore need to ensure that their methods of setting speed limits can be justified as being appropriate for both the environment and all road users, not just motorists.

The setting of speed limits in this Standard is based on a primary consideration of road function and application. The process then provides for adjustments within prescribed limits to accommodate variations in the speed environment, i.e. roadside development, road and traffic characteristics, and for adjustments related to crash history. Attention is drawn to the Austroads publication *Guide to Road Safety – Part 3: Speed Limits and Speed Management* in which is described the 'Safe Systems' approach to the setting of speed limits. At the time of publication of this Standard the specified relationship between road function, application and corresponding speed limit was deemed to be consistent with the Safe Systems approach. However, it can be expected that from time to time there will be changes at the national level to limits applying to certain traffic situations resulting from further application of this approach. Amendment or revision of the Standard will be made to reflect these changes.

Since publication of the 1999 edition of this Standard, there has been a reduction in the default urban speed limit from 60 km/h to 50 km/h. Urban roads on which a speed limit of 60 km/h is considered desirable and in keeping with the speed zoning assessment requirements of this Standard must now have 60 km/h speed zones signposted. In the absence of any speed zone signposting in a built-up area, 50 km/h is the default speed limit. 100 km/h remains as the default speed limit outside built-up areas in most states.

As well as the default limits of 50 and 100 km/h, speed limits used for speed zoning ranges from 10 km/h in shared zones to 110 km/h on high standard rural highways and expressways. This range of speed zoning options has highlighted the importance of the process used to assess and determine the appropriate speed limit according to the road function, roadside development and road and traffic characteristics.

STANDARDS AUSTRALIA

Australian Standard
Manual of uniform traffic control devices

Part 4: Speed controls

SECTION 1 SCOPE AND GENERAL

1.1 SCOPE

This Standard specifies the traffic control devices to be used for the regulatory control of traffic speed and gives guidance on how speed limits should be determined and applied in various situations. The Standard does not cover temporary speed limits, the use of advisory speed signs, or speed limits applicable to certain classes of vehicle or driver.

NOTE: Speed matters excluded from this Standard are covered in the following references:

(a) Temporary speed limits at road works—AS 1742.3.

(b) Use of advisory speed signs—AS 1742.2.

(c) Limits applied by regulation to classes of vehicle or driver—State regulations and guidelines.

1.2 OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Standard is to provide road authorities throughout Australia with a set of uniform requirements and guidelines for the regulatory management of traffic speeds.

1.3 REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

The following Standards are referred to in this Standard:

AS
1348 Road and traffic engineering—Glossary of terms

1742 Manual of uniform traffic control devices
1742.2 Part 2: Traffic control devices for general use
1742.3 Part 3: Traffic control devices for works on roads
1742.10 Part 10: Pedestrian control and protection
1742.13 Part 13: Local area traffic management

4049 Paints and related materials—Pavement marking materials
4049.5 Part 5: Performance assessment of pavement markings

AS/NZS
1906 Retroreflective materials and devices for road traffic control purposes
1906.1 Part 1: Retroreflective sheeting

Austroads
Guide to Road Safety—Part 3: Speed Limits and Speed Management

1.4 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Standard the definitions below apply.