

**SUMMARY OF TRAFFIC CONTROL GUIDELINES
FOR SPECIAL EVENTS
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FROM

**Guidelines for Utilization of Police Officers
In Traffic Control and Enforcement on Urban Freeways**

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**SUMMARY OF TRAFFIC CONTROL GUIDELINES
FOR SPECIAL EVENTS**

by

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Special events, such as sporting events and parades, exhibit many of the traits of incidents in that they frequently result in traffic congestion and other operational problems. They differ from incidents in that they are characterized by higher-than-usual traffic demands and their occurrence is generally known in advance. Consequently, police and transportation agencies can prepare in advance for the operational and safety problems associated with special events.

Special events may be broadly classified as short- or long-term. The traffic impacts of short-term events (parades, funeral processions, motorcades) are typically of short duration and "localized" in nature. The effects of long term special events (fairs, conventions, special sports events) are typically of longer duration and may extend several miles from the actual site of the event. Thus, long-term events may require the development of an area-wide traffic control plan (advance signing, optional diversion routes). Short-term events, on the other hand, can typically be handled "on-site" and do not require extensive area-wide traffic control.

Police agency personnel are generally well-trained in traffic control techniques for short-term special events. Consequently, the guidelines presented here pertain primarily to long-term special events which require special planning and may involve representatives from several agencies.

Many of the basic techniques used in freeway incident management are also applicable to special events. However, since the occurrence of special

events is generally known in advance, police officer manpower requirements may be reduced by using transportation agency personnel to implement much of the traffic control plan.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of utilizing police officers in traffic control for special events are to help alleviate the safety and operational problems which frequently accompany the high traffic demands associated with long-term special events. Police agency personnel provide real-time, demand-responsive control which facilitates traffic flow in situations where the threat of citation is needed to insure driver compliance with safety regulations. The patrolman, by his authority, reinforces the existing or specially placed traffic control devices to serve increased traffic demands associated with the event.

Transportation agency personnel are responsible for the overall traffic control plan in response to the special event. This includes placement of all necessary traffic control devices and supervision of flagmen used for manual control of traffic in those situations where threat of citation is not required for effective traffic control.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Requirements for traffic control for long-term special events are comparable to those for off-freeway diversion procedures used for major freeway incidents, except such diversion routes are typically of an optional nature. Manpower needs include transportation agency personnel to place signs to identify alternate routes to reduce delay in the vicinity of the special event, and police officers or flagmen for manual traffic control at intersections along the diversion route(s). Generally, five to ten individuals will be required, depending on the length and complexity of the diversion routes.

The personnel requirements for special events differ from those of incidents in that uniformed patrolmen are typically not needed for on-freeway

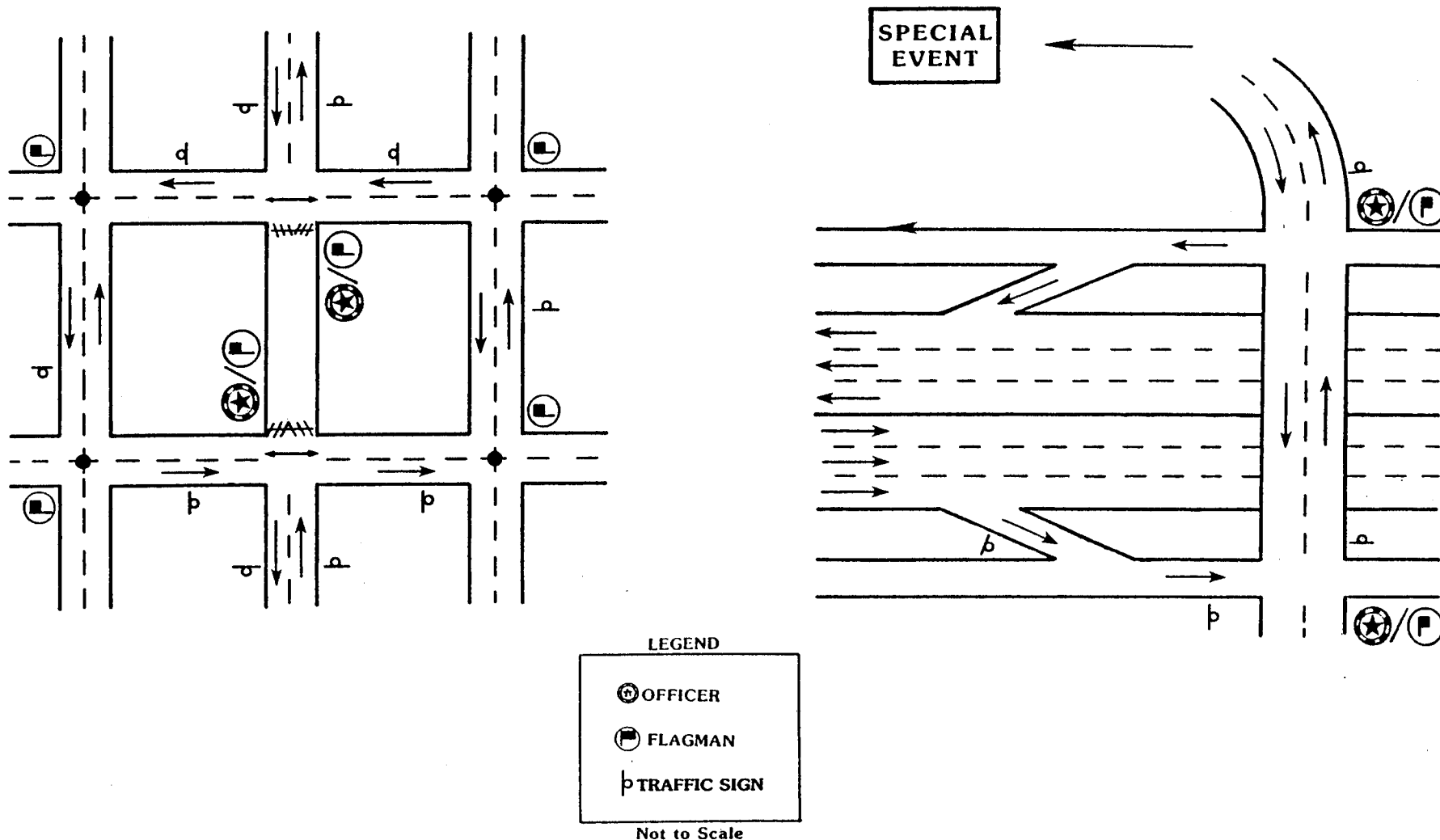
traffic control. However, uniformed police officers should be used for manual traffic control at high volume intersections in the immediate vicinity of the special event and along diversion routes.

The effectiveness of utilizing police officers in traffic control for special events should be measured in terms of how quickly operations in the vicinity of the event can be restored to normal. The delay experienced by event-generated traffic, as well as the delay experienced by other motorists as a result of the special event, can be used to assess the overall effectiveness of various traffic control techniques with police agency support.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL SET-UPS

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate typical set-ups for optional diversion routes used to facilitate traffic flow in the vicinity of a long-term special event. Officers are needed at all locations along the diversion route where real-time, demand responsive, manual traffic control is needed in place of stationary fixed time control (signs, signals, etc.). The traffic control plan for diversion routing associated with a special event would be very similar to the traffic control implemented for a major incident. However, more opportunity exists for advance planning, rather than emergency reaction, such that the utilization of patrolmen can be minimized with sufficient support by other personnel (flagmen) and appropriate traffic control devices.

Each special event is unique. Therefore, traffic control should be jointly planned by all responsible agencies, including individuals representing the event sponsor, the area transportation agency, and the police agency with local jurisdiction. Considerations in this planning process should include route capacities, modifications to traffic control devices, locations requiring real-time, manual control of traffic, and manpower requirements for police and other support.



Note:

1. Traffic control plan depicted is for illustration purposes only. It is not a standard or specification. In all cases, the MUTCD should be adhered to for location and placement of traffic control devices.
2. The officer/flagman symbol indicates the possible location of either a flagman or a police officer (or both) depending upon specific event conditions and the judgement of the responsible agency.

Figure 2. Example of Set-Up for Optional Diversion Route Set-Ups