

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION FORM

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Overview of Presentation

The majority of literature and guidelines on variable message signs (VMS) cover applications in either a rural highway or motorway context. The urban driving environments are quite different from a motorway where in the latter case, the guidance and regulating information is presented to the driver in a measured and sequential fashion within a low distraction environment. In contrast, an urban environment has a multitude of guidance, warning and regulatory information that is often presented in very short succession, or even in parallel. Shockwaves from queues require a high degree of driver alertness attending to car-following distances and scanning for conflicting lane-changing manoeuvres, all increasing driver workload and thus reducing their ability to process additional information.

The nature of the design and operation of a VMS makes it a highly visible device, and poorly designed messages consume a disproportionate amount of the driver's attention decreasing safety, and it confuses the driver if the message is too long.

This research project is based on a review of existing VMS guidelines, peer reviewed research on various topics relating to VMS, signing, and human factors, to develop guidance on evaluating the suitability of the VMS message content based on a particular location's information presentation and workload profile.