



## Integrated Directional Signing Program

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### MINUTES OF VIRGINIA STATEWIDE DIRECTIONAL SIGNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

**Date:** April 6, 2004

**Time:** 9:30 a.m.

**Place:** Virginia Tourism Corporation  
901 East Byrd Street, West Tower 19th Floor  
Richmond Virginia 23219

#### OPENING REMARKS/INTRODUCTIONS/ATTENDANCE

Ray Khoury opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Mr. James Carr, Secretary of Transportation's Office, was introduced. The following were in attendance:

- Ray Khoury, P.E., VDOT Mobility Management – Chair
- Ralph Earnhardt, Virginia Tourism Corporation
- John Shenal, American Association of Retired Persons
- Samuel E. Hamilton, Virginia Agribusiness Council
- Martha C. Kapitanov, FHWA
- Martha Mitchell, American Automobile Association
- Michael O'Connor, Virginia Petroleum, Convenience and Grocers Association
- Richard McDonnell, Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association

#### Support Staff

- Phil Hopkins, P.E., VDOT Mobility Management
- Mauris Mackenzie, P.E., VDOT Mobility Management
- Joy Shepherd, VDOT Mobility Management
- Jeff Hores, VDOT Fredericksburg District
- Ed Jansky, VDOT Mobility Management
- Donna Purcell Mayes, VDOT Public Affairs

#### Virginia Logos Inc. Staff

- Floyd Williams, Interstate Logos, Inc.
- John Spacek, Virginia Logos, Inc.
- Jason Newcomb, Virginia Logos, Inc.
- Chip Dicks, Virginia Logos, Inc.

#### Other Attendees

- James Carr, Office of the Secretary of Transportation
- Dennis Prescott, Outback Steakhouse
- Chris Jankowski, Outback Steakhouse
- Steve Runkel, National Sign Plazas, Inc.
- Christopher Sinclair, National Sign Plazas, Inc.

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Chris Ferris, Mattaponi Springs Golf Club  
Paige Holloway, Advantus Strategies  
Marantha Edwards, Town of Leesburg

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The following members were unable to attend:

Dale Bennett, Virginia Truck Association  
Mike Edwards, Virginia Municipal League  
J. P. Eck, National Association of Truck Stop Operators  
Dick Ives, North Carolina DOT  
Lawrence J. Land, Virginia Association of Counties

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Phil Hopkins distributed a schedule listing monthly meeting dates through September and noted that some meeting dates had been changed from the first Tuesday of each month due to Holidays.

He reported that after numerous contacts, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia chose not to represent the state educational institutions. The Committee will move forward without their participation.

## **PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

The March minutes were accepted. All previous and future minutes will be posted on the VDOT IDSP website.

## **STATUS OF IDSP SCHEDULE**

Phil distributed the current Integrated Directional Signing Program Schedule and reminded members that it would be updated monthly as needed. For the benefit of new attendees and members, Phil discussed the Committee's goals and objectives. He presented an overview of the May, June and July meetings, which will be to develop and finalize fee structures and criteria for VDOT's presentation to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) at its July 14 meeting. It is anticipated that the Board will vote no later than September 2004.

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS FOR IDSP**

Donna Mayes asked for suggestions to improve the IDSP website. No comments were offered and she added that further definitions, such as Excess Space, Category I Food Businesses, should be placed on the site. Each attendee received the IDSP brochure. It was suggested that brochures should be mailed to all logo participants and each CTB member. Chip Dicks offered that members of the House and Senate Transportation Committee should also receive a copy. This publication will be available at the April Governor's Conference on Tourism along with a comment sheet for public input. Four public meetings will be held in May in Richmond, Salem, Northern Virginia and Chesapeake. The meeting dates and locations will be posted on the website at [www.VirginiaDOT.org/guidesigns](http://www.VirginiaDOT.org/guidesigns) and several newspapers.

Sam Hamilton expressed an interest in reviewing the emails received by VDOT concerning the IDSP. VDOT will look into how questions and answers can be conveyed to the committee.

## **PRESENTATIONS WITH DISCUSSIONS**

### **a. CTB Workshop Report (3/17/04)**

Phil highlighted Ray Khoury's March presentation to the Commonwealth Transportation Board. Members requested that VDOT:

- Provide details of food criteria issues occurring over the years.
- Provide Fee Structures for all states with logo programs
- Presently VDOT receives \$255 of the \$750 annual fee collected. How the revenue is allocated.

Richard McDonnell questioned the operating costs of the program citing industry concerns over fee increases. Mauris Mackenzie replied that VDOT will work with VLI through the IDSP to capture the costs.

Mike O'Connor requested a definition of 'recommendation'. Phil responded that the Committee and VLI will provide recommendations to VDOT staff. Final recommendations to the Commonwealth Transportation Board will be VDOT's. The CTB will be advised of any committee member's opinions that may differ from VDOT's recommendations.

Chris Jankowski asked if the Committee could review the food criteria issues before being presented to the CTB. The food criteria issues report will be available to members at the June Committee meeting.

### **b. Supplemental Guide Signs**

Floyd Williams gave a Power Point presentation on Supplemental Guide Signs explaining their purpose and current accepted categories and associated costs. He further explained that VLI is continuing their inventory of all existing supplemental guide signs.

Ralph Earnhardt told the committee that national guidelines consider an establishment a tourist attraction if it attracts motorists from 50+ miles away. He said that several shopping centers with 500,000+ out of state visitors annually consider themselves a major attraction. Typically, shopping centers have been considered commercial establishments and not recommended for signing. Mauris agreed this issue should be addressed within the committee.

The subject of transitioning from a large supplemental sign to a smaller Attractions sign panel was brought up. Some members voiced concern there could be conflicts with participants that could be affected by this process.

Signs generated by the General Assembly and signs that are part of Transportation Enhancement projects may be included in this subprogram.

### **c. General Motorist Services Signs & Truck Service Signs**

Floyd gave a Power Point presentation on General Motorist Services Signs. He described the symbols and text messages currently used. He also outlined MUTCD's requirements and Virginia's current guidelines for eligibility. He indicated VLI is still conducting a field inventory of all these signs.

Truck Services Signs were then presented. Mike O'Connor asked if a Truck Services Signing program exists in Virginia. Floyd answered there is no current program but it will be a part of the IDSP. This presentation was based upon Maryland's Truck Services Signing Program

### **d. Excess Sign Capacity**

A PowerPoint presentation about utilizing excess space on logo signs was next. Floyd defined excess space as space that is considered unused or non-contracted within the restrictions outlined in the MUTCD on an existing mainline logo sign structure designed and constructed to accommodate six specific business logo signs with less than six businesses meeting all of the qualifications for participation and contracted for participation. Floyd showed various examples of logo sign

combinations where excess space existed as opposed to where it did not exist. Since the Department wishes to utilize excess space on logo signs, he proposed that marginal classification requirements be developed for participation for businesses not meeting the existing participation criteria.

#### **e. Bumping Procedures**

Bumping was the final PowerPoint presentation. Bumping is the removal of a business which meets all requirements for participation due to the desire for participation from another business of the same service located closer to the main route of travel. Only a Category 1 food business may bump another Category 1 food business. There have been approximately 203 bumps since 1995.

Phil questioned why bumping is necessary unless it provides a significant service to motorists. He saw no advantage in one business bumping another business within very close proximity to each other. Martha Mitchell would prefer VDOT maintain a form of bumping because the logo program is a motorist service program. She would also like to see VDOT continue measuring business distances by road miles as opposed to some other form.

Richard stated that businesses he represents might not support the removal of bumping. Members discussed the pros and cons of bumping. Some ideas presented were: going from 3 to 5 year contracts for additional bumping protection, auctioning of logo spaces, rotating logos annually and bumping protection for 24 hour businesses. Phil suggested there be no bumping within a one-mile radius of the exit gore. For a bump to take place a distance of a mile must be gained. There was general consensus that gaining a minimum distance held merit.

#### **f. LOGO Food Subcommittee Meeting (3/10/04) Report**

Phil reported three ideas presented by the food subcommittee:

- Reserve two spaces on the food background sign for Full Serve businesses
- Do not reserve any spaces for full serve businesses or maintain status quo.
- Utilize excess space

There are 7 interstate exits, which in addition to displaying the full complement of 6 logos on the food sign, also display up to 2 Full Serve food businesses either on a Camping or a stand-alone sign (where a camping sign does not exist). VDOT did not apply for FHWA approval to conduct a Full Serve Food Pilot program.

Martha Kapitanov stated the full serve program does not comply with the MUTCD and VDOT has until September 2004 to bring the program into compliance.

Richard McDonnell indicated industry strongly supports additional spaces and/or signs to allow more food businesses participation.

Ray Khoury reiterated that although the MUTCD allows 5 service types, VDOT is limited to only 4 background signs. The question is what to do with the full serve businesses currently sharing space on the Camping signs.

James Carr stated that VDOT should write a letter to FHWA requesting permission to experiment with a Full Serve Pilot Program.

It was agreed that VDOT and VHTA would collaborate on the request. The letter will be shared with committee members.

It was requested during the March TODS presentation that in April, VLI furnish information concerning the use of Gas and Food on the 8 TODS programs Interstate Logos operates. Floyd reported that all 8 programs include gas and food. He indicated gas and food account for approximately half of the 'prime' businesses surveyed for inclusion in Virginia's TODS program.

## **OPEN DISCUSSION**

Chris Jankowski referred to the issue of 'double dipping'. It is assumed he was referring mainly to those gas and food businesses housed in the same building, which participate independently on the logo program. Mike O'Connor asked that the minutes reflect that such businesses are allowed participation because they fully comply with the criteria for their service type. Virginia Logos, Inc., will provide more detailed information on this matter at the May meeting.

## **NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS**

- Double Dipping/Dual Branding
- Governor's Conference on Tourism
- Full Service Food Pilot – MUTCD Experiment Request Letter
- Full Service Food – FHWA Compliance Correspondence

The committee members were given the following publications for review:

- "Virginia's Integrated Directional Signing Program" brochure, Virginia Department of Transportation
- "Integrated Directional Signing Program – Supplemental Guide Signs", Interstate Logos, Inc.
- "Integrated Directional Signing Program – General Motorist Service Signs/Truck Service Signs", Interstate Logos, Inc.
- "Integrated Directional Signing program – Utilization of Excess Space", Interstate Logos, Inc.
- "Integrated Directional Signing program – Bumping Policy", Interstate Logos, Inc.
- "TODS Participation Criteria – Inclusion of Gas and Food Businesses", Interstate Logos, Inc.

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next IDSP meeting will be Tuesday, May 4, 2004, 9:30 a.m. at the Virginia Tourism Corporation.

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