

Traffic Note 1 – Revision 2

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From	Networks
Authorisation	Lyndon Hammond, Manager Networks
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Pedestrian crossings – requirements

The incorrect installation or operation of pedestrian crossings is an issue of concern for Land Transport New Zealand (Land Transport NZ). This note has been developed in response to this situation and to highlight requirements for pedestrian crossings in the *Land Transport Rule: Traffic Control Devices 2004* (the rule) including its amendments.

The rule requires pedestrian crossings to have the following components:

- a speed limit no more than 50 km/h (unless Land Transport NZ approval is obtained)
- zebra markings in white (from 30 June 2007 reflectorised white) marked on, and contrasting with, the roadway and conforming to specifications in Schedule 2 of the rule
- must not (from 30 June 2005) exceed 15 metres from one side of the roadway to the other side unless interrupted by a traffic island
- be at right angles to the road centreline or to provide the most convenient route
- must have no permanent obstruction to visibility of all the crossing for an approaching driver from a safe stopping distance
- black and white posts at each end of the crossing and on a traffic island which separates two pedestrian crossings
- on each black and white pole a Belisha beacon or fluorescent Belisha beacon disc
- a pedestrian crossing warning sign on each approach to the pedestrian crossing

The road controlling authority (RCA) has some discretion in relation to three requirements:

- a pedestrian crossing must, from 30 June 2006, have a limit line not less than 300 mm wide and five metres from the pedestrian crossing unless such a marking is impracticable
- a white diamond pavement marking at least 50 metres in advance of the crossing; and
- illumination of the crossing may be dispensed with if the RCA considers the crossing will not generally be used at night.

Provisions or changes introduced with the rule included the:

- marking of zebra stripes in white rather than just 'a contrasting colour'
- use of reflectorised markings from 30 June 2007 (providing a 30 month transition period from the time the rule was signed)
- restriction of the width of a pedestrian crossing to 15 metres (although good engineering practice suggests the width be no more than 10 metres but this could not be made mandatory under rule making procedures)
- requirement for all the crossing to be 'visible'¹ rather than the previous 'at least 30 metres'
- need to install a black and white post on any island dividing a pedestrian crossing into two (implicit in previous legislation but more explicit in the rule because of the changed road user rule regarding giving way to pedestrians)
- need to erect pedestrian crossing warning signs in advance of a crossing (almost universal practice that was considered a more appropriate requirement than mandating the warning diamond marking.)
- use, where practicable, of a limit line in advance of the crossing
- removal of the mandatory requirement to install an advance warning diamond.

It is illegal for a RCA to mark out or maintain any pedestrian crossing not meeting the requirements described above. Any crossing not meeting the requirements makes enforcement of road user obligations extremely difficult by providing a technical defence to an errant road user.

If the RCA is unsure whether all of the pedestrian crossings under its jurisdiction conform to the legislation, it is recommended a review of those pedestrian crossings be undertaken.

Like all traffic control devices, the planning, design, installation and operation of pedestrian crossings need to be undertaken under the supervision of a person with expertise in the area of traffic engineering.

¹ The following definitions appear in the rule:

visible means able to be seen from a **safe stopping distance**

safe stopping distance means the minimum distance required for a driver of **normal vision** travelling at a safe operating speed for the road to recognise a hazard and decelerate with **normal braking** to stop completely before reaching the hazard

normal vision means the visual acuity required of a person to obtain and hold a driver licence, in accordance with the *Land Transport (Driver Licensing) Rule 1999*

normal braking means the level of braking applied to a vehicle that does not lock any of the vehicle's wheels and permits the vehicle to decelerate without adverse directional control.